2018-2023 STRATEGIC PLAN

pod NETWORK

Advancing the
Research and Practice
of Educational
Development in
Higher Education
Since 1976

INTRODUCTION

The POD Network has been advancing the research and practice of educational development in higher education since 1976. Since the organization formed more than 40 years ago, educational development—a growing and vibrant field encompassing support and enhancement of the work of colleges and universities, often with a focus on teaching and learning—has become an essential contributor to both quality and equality across a wide range of colleges and universities. This field now includes several sub-areas: faculty, graduate student, and postdoctoral scholar development, with a focus on individuals and cohorts of current and future faculty; instructional development, with a focus on courses, curricula, and student learning; and organizational development, with a focus on advancing structures, systems, and leadership in support of institutions' educational goals.

The strategic planning process began in the spring of 2017 with a comprehensive evaluation of progress on the prior plan. Development of this plan has included input from a wide range of stakeholders: the POD Network's Executive Committee and Core Committee (governing board), all POD Network committees and Special Interest Groups (SIGs), and the membership at large, between fall 2017 and summer 2018. The resulting strategic plan balances aspiration with realistic next steps in order to guide the organization into and through a crucial next phase, resulting in both observable gains and the capacity to lead for the future of the field.

The **vision, mission, and values** of the organization have been updated, remaining true to the POD Network's essential qualities, with revisions reflecting greater clarity and changes in the field of educational development. The strategic plan expresses substantive areas for change and growth in the coming years, beginning with two cross-cutting **strategic priorities** that thread through the rest of the plan—diversity and inclusion, and evidence-based practice. Three **strategic goals**, to *enhance member benefits, elevate educational development, and build organizational capacity*, are each accompanied by several **strategic actions**, representing steps that are apparent at the outset of the plan, with emphases on either or both of the strategic priorities. While it articulates overall directions and values-aligned actions, the structure of this strategic plan represents a flexible roadmap, leaving detailed methods open to input and adjustment.

The Executive and Core Committees oversee enactment of the plan, with use of a wide variety of strategic indicators (e.g., financial, membership, and survey data; resource use metrics; program assessment and evaluation reports) to monitor and adjust actions throughout the plan's lifespan, and shared leadership with members through Committees, SIGs, and other forms of member engagement. POD Network Committees and SIGs have already begun to identify concrete, operational ways to advance the new strategic plan, which will evolve over the life of the plan. Please refer to the "Implementation" section below for more about how this process will unfold.

The POD Network thanks all who have contributed to the planning process and expresses eagerness to work with members of our singularly collaborative network to accomplish these goals in the coming years.

VISION, MISSION, AND VALUES

VISION

The POD Network envisions that all post-secondary institutions value, support, and reward the work of their educators, scholars, and leaders, with an emphasis on teaching as a core scholarly activity, informed by research and reflection, and resulting in success for all students.

MISSION

The POD Network exists to provide professional development and a community of practice for scholars and practitioners of educational development, and to serve as a leading voice on matters related to teaching and learning in higher education.

VALUES

The work and decisions of the POD Network are informed by its commitments to:

- Collaboration: The POD Network strives to be collaborative and collegial, with distributed leadership as the basis for governance structures and operations. Sharing resources and expertise are hallmarks of member interactions.

- Equity: The POD Network strives to be transparent and inclusive, with ongoing efforts to promote equitable access and involvement, eliminate systemic inequities that result from biases, and support members in advancing social justice. The organization is strengthened by and committed to expanding diversity among and on behalf of members.

- Evidence: The POD Network strives to ground practices and decisions in evidence, adapt and reuse proven methods, and innovate to improve upon prior work. Diverse forms of evidence, a variety of inquiry methods, and a basis in theory are recognized as valuable and essential.

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STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

The following **cross-cutting strategic priorities** are of special importance at this time, for both the POD Network and higher education more broadly, and will be enacted across our strategic goals. Below, we synthesize why we highlight these priorities and describe initial levels of focus, yet we recognize that advancing these priorities will necessitate continual, deep discussions in the POD Network about both areas.

Diversity and inclusion.

One of the POD Network's values is that of equity; diversity and inclusion are important building blocks in service of that value. This priority reflects member priorities, a strong focus at many post-secondary institutions, and the recognition that progress toward equity requires great intentionality in order to reverse marginalization of historically underserved and underrepresented populations at all levels articulated below. Although the POD Network Diversity Committee contributes substantially to this work, efforts must be distributed across many working structures. This priority addresses multiple levels of focus:

- Diversity and inclusion within the POD Network, as displayed via the organization's leadership, event themes and coverage, membership, and publications and other outputs.

- Supporting members' work on diversity and inclusion on their campuses—two- and four-year institutions, public and private, of varying size and specialization—through the provision of resources, exploration of evidence-based practices, and distribution of research.

- Connections with other organizations, so that the POD Network may bring an educational development lens to issues related to diversity and inclusion in higher education more broadly.
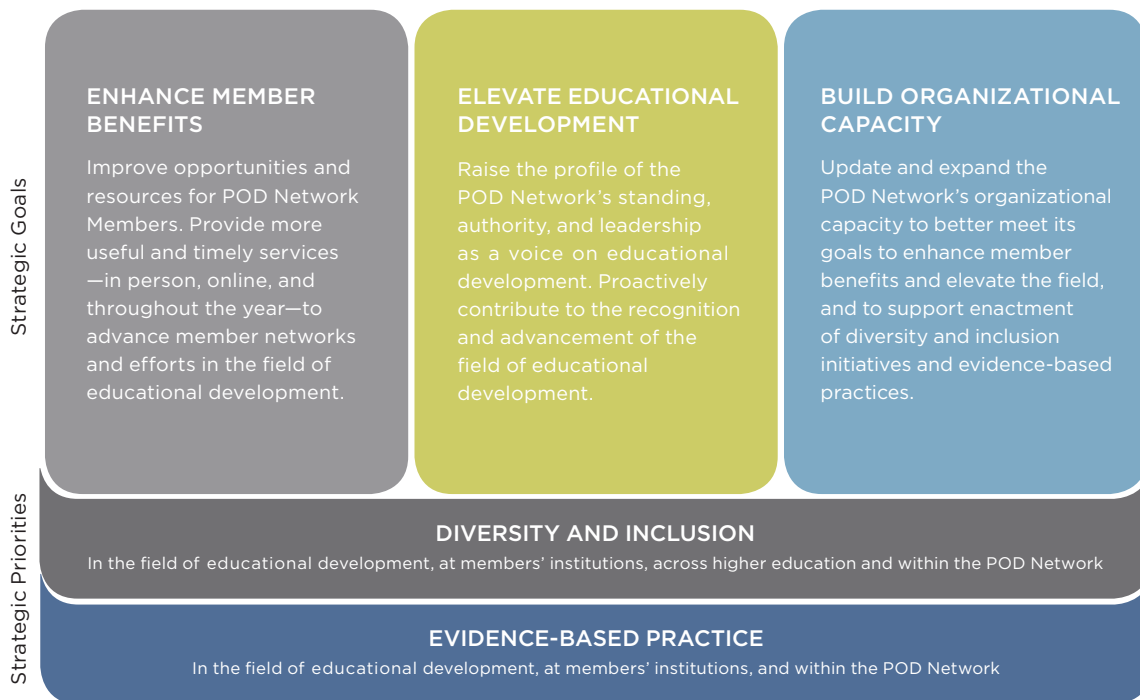
Evidence-based practice.

The POD Network's emphasis on evidence-based practice mirrors its increasing role in teaching and learning; recognizes increased demands for institutional accountability; and supports educational developers' desire and need to demonstrate the impact of their work. This priority also addresses multiple levels of focus:

- Evidence-based decision making for the POD Network's plans and operations, including strategic planning as well as ongoing and new programs and services.

- Evidence of the effectiveness of educational development for higher education broadly.

- Measuring effectiveness of local/campus-based methods and approaches for educational development work.

- Strengthening and promoting the scholarship of educational development.

- Supporting members as they support higher education faculty and instructors in using evidence-based teaching practices.

STRATEGIC GOALS

The **three strategic goals** below each express an overarching category of *intended change* during the strategic plan period.

I.   **ENHANCE MEMBER BENEFITS:** Improve opportunities and resources for POD Network Members. Provide more useful and timely services—in person, online, and throughout the year—to advance member networks and efforts in the field of educational development.

II. **ELEVATE EDUCATIONAL DEVELOPMENT:** Raise the profile of the POD Network's standing, authority, and leadership as a voice on educational development. Proactively contribute to the recognition and advancement of the field of educational development.

III. **BUILD ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY:** Update and expand the POD Network's organizational capacity to better meet its goals to enhance member benefits and elevate the field, and to support enactment of diversity and inclusion initiatives and evidence-based practices.

Strategic Goals

ENHANCE MEMBER BENEFITS

Improve opportunities and resources for POD Network Members. Provide more useful and timely services —in person, online, and throughout the year—to advance member networks and efforts in the field of educational development.

ELEVATE EDUCATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Raise the profile of the POD Network's standing, authority, and leadership as a voice on educational development. Proactively contribute to the recognition and advancement of the field of educational development.

BUILD ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY

Update and expand the POD Network's organizational capacity to better meet its goals to enhance member benefits and elevate the field, and to support enactment of diversity and inclusion initiatives and evidence-based practices.

Strategic Priorities

DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION
In the field of educational development, at members' institutions, across higher education and within the POD Network

EVIDENCE-BASED PRACTICE
In the field of educational development, at members' institutions, and within the POD Network

STRATEGIC ACTIONS

Each POD Network Strategic Goal is associated with **strategic actions** that are apparent at the outset of the plan and indicate early priorities. Every action will be informed by the POD Network's values of collaboration, equity, and evidence. Each action also emphasizes and is intended to significantly advance one or both of the strategic priorities—diversity and inclusion, evidence-based practice—as indicated in the columns below. The POD Network views this strategic plan as a dynamic document: actions may change or be added during the life of the plan, with input from distributed leadership across the organization, and detailed methods associated with each action will be developed in collaboration with members, Committees, and SIGs.

I. **ENHANCE MEMBER BENEFITS**: Improve opportunities and resources for POD Network Members. Provide more useful and timely services—in person, online, and throughout the year—to advance member networks and efforts in the field of educational development.	DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION	EVIDENCE-BASED PRACTICE
1 Identify, prioritize, and address common member needs for new resources relevant for members at a variety of institution types; e.g., best practice summaries, literature reviews, and innovations in the field.		✓
2 Address member needs for resources, materials, and opportunities relevant to underrepresented groups of institutions, as well as individuals underrepresented at institutions.	✓	
3 Increase year-round availability of opportunities for members to engage with and through the POD Network, including regional and online opportunities, thereby expanding access and inclusion.	✓	
4 Expand outreach, grants, and professional development opportunities focused on the future of the profession and participation by previously underrepresented institutions and/or individuals.	✓	✓
5 Cultivate and support members' use of evidence-based practices in their institutional efforts and scholarship.		✓
6 Aid current and potential members in navigating pathways to and through the profession of educational development, including early-career recommendations for those from diverse backgrounds, mid-career transitions, and advanced career development.	✓	✓
7 Create connections among members to develop future-oriented innovations addressing emergent educational development topics: e.g., new technologies, social media, data analytics, and higher education changes.		✓

II. ELEVATE EDUCATIONAL DEVELOPMENT: Raise the profile of the POD Network's standing, authority, and leadership as a voice on educational development. Proactively contribute to the recognition and advancement of the field of educational development.	DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION	EVIDENCE-BASED PRACTICE
1 Engage in a strategic and coordinated reputation-building and recognition campaign among peer and partner organizations to promote the expertise of the POD Network and its members in development and implementation of policies and practices—in higher education and within members' institutions and systems.	✓	✓
2 Proactively lead and engage in national and international conversations about higher education that are evidence-based and that advocate for and recognize the contributions of educational development.		✓
3 Build mutually-beneficial relationships and collaborations, in a coordinated fashion, particularly with organizations focused on broadening participation by populations traditionally underrepresented in higher education and the POD Network.	✓	
4 Empower and prepare POD Network members from a variety of institutions and backgrounds to serve in leadership roles in higher education.	✓	
5 Develop mechanisms to mobilize and make visible the expertise within the POD Network, with particular attention to including diverse perspectives, institutions, voices, and backgrounds.	✓	✓
6 Expand access to and use of POD Network publications that contribute to the scholarship of educational development, such as *To Improve the Academy*, so that the work informs higher education policy and practice.	✓	✓

III. BUILD ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY: Update and expand the POD Network's organizational capacity to better meet its goals to enhance member benefits and elevate the field, and to support enactment of diversity and inclusion initiatives and evidence-based practices.	DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION	EVIDENCE-BASED PRACTICE
1 Create a multi-year financial and operational plan to sustainably support additional staff and link goals to realistic revenue projections consistent with emerging needs and POD Network values.		✓
2 Improve the usability, content, accessibility, and discoverability of materials on the website; improve electronic and other forms of communication related to POD Network web content, publications, and opportunities.	✓	✓
3 Provide training and professional development for organizational governance (Core Committee, Executive Committee, Committee and SIG Chairs) on strategic and financial planning and inclusive leadership development.	✓	✓
4 Maintain relative stability of internal governance structures (i.e., administrative and operational committees; special interest groups) following governance restructuring during the prior strategic plan period, with a commitment to ongoing evaluation.		✓
5 Create pathways to all levels of participation in POD Network communities and leadership by: increasing the transparency of POD Network governance, committee, and SIG operations; and by making opportunities more widely known, accessible, and welcoming to diverse members.	✓	
6 Continue to make targeted improvements to key functions, such as the annual conference and year-round services, in alignment with strategic priorities, goals, and ongoing evaluation.		✓

IMPLEMENTATION

Following this plan's formal adoption, the Core Committee will work with the POD Network Executive Director, Executive Committee, and other Committees and SIGs to roll out implementation. Committees and SIGs will have regular opportunities to align their initiatives with the priorities, goals, and actions suggested here, as well as to bring forward emerging ideas. The Core Committee will coordinate prioritization of efforts, allocation of resources, and monitoring of progress. As articulated in our governance by-laws and guidelines, the POD Network remains committed to sharing progress and status of the organization with members, including observable developments associated with the strategic plan, through channels such as the seasonal newsletter, the member meeting during the annual conference, and publication of board meeting minutes online. With this plan's focus on enhancing organizational capacity, we look forward to developing new ways of connecting with and engaging members in the strategic work of the organization—work that we truly share, and that taps directly into areas of member expertise.

The POD Network considers implementation of the strategic plan to be an adaptable and emerging process. As a learning organization, we look forward to both discovery and progress. We invite you to join our aspirations for the field of educational development and for all of our higher education institutions and efforts between now and 2023, and beyond.

2018 POD Network Executive Committee

Hoag Holmgren,
Executive Director**

Cassandra Volpe Horii,
President*

Angela Linse,
President Elect**

David Sacks,
Chair of the Finance
Committee**

Mary Wright,
Past President

Core Committee

Isis Artze-Vega*
Dorothe Bach**
Gabriele Bauer**
Lindsay Bernhagen
Stacy Grooters
Jonathan Iuzzini
Katie Linder**
Carl Moore**
Robin Pappas
Christine Rener
Sandra Sgoutas-Emch
Greg Siering
Richard Swan

Strategic Planning Ad-hoc Committee

Victoria Bhavsar
Donna Ellis
Jake Glover*
Debie Lohe
Cheryl Richardson

*Strategic Planning Ad-hoc Committee Co-chairs
**Also served on the Strategic Planning Ad-hoc Committee