



2022-2025 Strategic Plan

Approved by Board of Directors

May 10, 2022

updated July 2023

VISION

A regional fiber system that is healthy, abundant and sustainable, where farmers, designers and artists make a living wage.

MISSION

To grow and support the fiber economy in Western North Carolina through education, inclusive programming, and services which add value to local products. We advocate for our regional community of farmers, artists, makers and designers.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- We value creativity and believe in a supportive environment where experimentation and innovation are encouraged.
- We value community and believe that an inclusive and welcoming environment that celebrates our common passion for fiber can enhance the economic success of local artists and farmers.
- We value collaboration and believe that the willingness to teach and share benefits the entire community.

STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

The following strategic directions will guide Local Cloth's work:

- Increase Community Outreach** - Raise the visibility and highlight the relevance of Local Cloth to prospective members and the broader community.
- Grow Educational Opportunities** - Expand the types, skill levels, and price points of classes and other learning opportunities.
- Expand Human Capacity** – Determine and secure adequate staffing levels, nurture volunteers, and strengthen the board of directors.
- Deepen Collaborative Partnerships** – Determine how to offer additional complementary, collaborative programs with other like-minded organizations.
- Develop Financial Sustainability** - Ensure larger and more diverse revenue streams for the organization as well as grow the income of local fiber artists and farmers.

STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS, GOALS, and OBJECTIVES

A. Increase Community Outreach -Raise the visibility and highlight the relevance of Local Cloth to prospective members and the broader community.	Who Leads*	By When	Status	Investment Needed over 2021 baseline
Key indicators of success <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Increased membership ● Increased traffic to website 				
Goal 1: Develop a buy local fiber campaign	Marketing Committee			
Objective 1a. Strengthen the “Local Cloth brand” Logo appears on every document Signage outside and inside the studio Locally made tags Objective 1b. publish a current Map of our Fibershed, highlighting farmers and artists. Objective 1c. Information cards Local Cloth should be created and put in the bag with each purchase. Objective 1d. Stories of artists and farmers should be displayed along with their items in the shop. Objective 1e. Find a Complementing audience to increase sales, i.e. invite Master Gardeners to a workshop on eco printing.) add QR Code to printed materials?	Retail Committee	Fall 2023		
Objective 6a: Identify and spotlight products in the retail store made of all local materials				
Objective 1: Name a Buy Local Campaign Committee				
Objective 1f: Develop Blue Ridge Fibershed branded tags, bags, & other packaging materials for use outside of the Local Cloth shop	Marketing Committee	Spring 2023	Complete	

Goal 2: Develop relationships with colleges and other craft nonprofit organizations				
Objective 2a: Put together a speakers' bureau to represent and promote Local Cloth in the community and at events	Marketing Committee	Summer 2023	completed as part of BRB Project	
Objective 2b: Connect with Haywood CC textile program, Warren Wilson textile crew, and other colleges and technical schools to explore partnerships, recruit student members, and increase visibility	Marketing Committee	Summer 2023	Haywood CC Warren Wilson	
Objective 2b: Obtain a booth at the Southern Highland Craft Guild fall show to raise the profile of the organization and sell a sampling of retail products	Joan Berner	Fall 2022	complete	
Goal 3: Grow our media presence	Marketing Committee			
Objective 3a: Do regular outreach to traditional media	Admin & Marketing Committee	ongoing	Completed and ongoing (press releases, posting on calendars, event advertisements)	
Objective 3b: Increase Local Cloth social media presence and post in other related Facebook groups	Admin & Marketing Committee	ongoing	Completed and ongoing	
Objective 3c. Create a LC speakers bureau to share info at events and with other organizations interested in sustainability	Marketing Committee	Fall 2023	completed as part of BRB Project; hosted Sustainability Month to raise awareness	
Goal 4: Conduct the next fiber census				

Objective 4a: Apply for grant funding to hire researcher	Finance Committee	Winter 2023		
Objective 4b: Consolidate key data and talking points about fiber's impact	Eileen Hallman & TBD	Fall 2024		
Goal 5: Promote in-person fairs and sales/networking opportunities	Marketing Committee			
Objective 5a: Participate in outreach booth at Southern Highland Craft Guild, Farmers markets, Big Crafty, Mount Mitchell fair, Mountain State Fair, etc	Marketing Committee/Events	quarterly	Purl's Nov 22 Participate in Local Cloth-sponsored/involvement events	
Objective 5b: Secure outreach booth on Toe River Arts tour	Marketing Committee	2x/year starting Fall 2022	Evaluate whether to continue; will follow up with Board	
Objective 5c: Name an Events Committee	Board Chair	Fall 2022		
Objective 5d: Explore holding monthly demos or hands-on activities in the studio - 2nd Saturdays & 3rd Thursday evenings (can we tap other interest groups?)	Events Committee & Handwork Circle	Spring 2023	Nov 22-in studio	
Objective 5e: Host juried exhibits in Local Cloth studio	Events Committee	Fall 2022	SAQA show - Oct 22	
Goal 6. Develop new fiber events outside the Local Cloth studio				
Objective 1a. Organize farm and artist studio tours		Fall 2023		
Objective 2a. Explore the feasibility of another fashion show		2024		
Objective 3a. Hold Celebration Events, like International Women's Day and WWKIPD, Volunteer Appreciation				

Objective 4a. Explore recruiting interns from local colleges and universities		2023		
Objective 5a. Engage Local Schools, perhaps with make and takes. (note - Grants are available from the NC Arts Council for art in the schools)				
Objective 5b. Engage art teachers in order to reach students				
Objective 6a. Explore how to partner with marginalized groups effectively (BIPOC, queer), especially bringing in more diverse teachers				
Goal 7. Hold more events for visitors				
Objective 1a. get to know staff at Explore Asheville,				
Objective 2a. Need to create a visitor-focused page for our website				

B. Grow Educational Opportunities - Expand the types, skill levels, and price points of classes and other learning opportunities.	Who Leads*	By When	Status	Investment Needed over 2021 baseline
Key indicators of success <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 75% of workshops are consistently full ● Expand types of classes ● Add at least 5 new teachers ● Expand venues: both online and in person, offsite, at least one of each 				
Goal 1: Expand learning opportunities				
Objective 1a: Expand the teacher pool in more fiber areas	Workshop Comm.	Summer 2023		
Objective 1b: Host classes in additional venues to better recruit younger students and families	Workshop Comm.	Summer 2023		
Objective 1c: Expand online offerings, offer pre recorded workshops and advanced classes to supplement in-person beginner or refresher classes	Workshop Comm.	Summer 2024		
Objective 1d: Coordinate with organizations that have a summer program to do a guest class and/or look for a grant for “artist in a school”	Workshop Comm.	Summer 2024		
Objective 1e: Offer quarterly family-oriented class (eg, silk tie easter egg dying)	Workshop Comm.	Summer 2023		
Goal 2: Advocate for sustainability of textile fiber - reusability, mending, repurposing				
Objective 2a: Offer classes or interest group related to mending or repurposing clothes	Workshop Comm.	Summer 2023		
Objective 2b: Host a swap and shop	Workshop Comm.	Fall 2023		
Objective 2c: Host an open dye day (e.g., indigo dye your old clothes)	Workshop Comm.	Fall 2023		

Goal 3: Explore Ways Resident Artists Spaces Can Provide Opportunities for Learning and Professional Growth				
Objective 3a: Look at studio affordability for emerging artists				
Objective 3b: Gather information from colleges about what students need when they graduate.				
Objective 3c: Invite artists from other places to do residency and mentor recent grads. Hold a Master class for experienced artists.				
Objective 3d. Consider a coworking model with more resident artists sharing equipment and space.				

C. Expand Human Capacity – Determine and secure adequate staffing levels, nurture volunteers, and strengthen the board of directors.	Who Leads*	By When	Status	Investment Needed over 2021 baseline
Key indicators of success <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local Cloth is recognized as a good place to volunteer, students apply to do internships. Volunteer turnover is reduced. 				
Goal 1: Make sure we don't burn out our Board members and volunteers. We want to stick with a volunteer-led, grassroots organization model	Exec Comm			
Goal 2: Investigate and plan out possible staffing plan and timeline				
Objective 2a: Determine which responsibilities/areas would benefit most from regular staff attention (eg, marketing/promotion, fundraising, retail manager)	Executive Comm	Summer 2023		
Objective 2b: Create a new contract position to create a plan and organize to accomplish Goal A. Increase Community Outreach	Board	Winter 2022/23	recruited	\$8,500/yr
Goal 3: Increase the racial and age diversity of the membership, board, instructors, and students				
Objective 3a: Conduct racial equity training for board + members	Executive Co	Summer 2023		
Objective 3b: Network with individuals, organizations, and communities of color	Executive Co	Summer 2024		
Goal 4: Leverage and increase the use of members and volunteers				
Objective 4a: Name a Volunteer & Membership Committee	Board Chair	Summer 2022		
Objective 4b: Develop a more structured process for recruiting, orientation, training, retention, and appreciation of volunteers	Volunteer Committee	Fall 2022		
Objective 4c: Grow our skills in recruiting and retaining volunteers	Vol. Comm.	Fall 2022		
Objective 4d: Develop well-defined job descriptions for vol. roles	Vol. Comm.	Winter 2023		
Objective 4e: Investigate internship and work exchange options	Vol. Comm	Summer 2023		

D. Deepen Collaborative Partnerships – Determine how to offer additional complementary, collaborative programs with other like-minded organizations.	Who Leads*	By When	Status	Investment Needed over 2021 baseline
Key indicators of success <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of groups partnered with • Number of members involved with a partnership 				
Goal 1: Participate in the Make it With Wool Campaign				
Objective 1a: Recruit farmers and artists to apply	Susan Proctor & Marketing C	Summer 2023	?	
Objective 1b: Recruit judges from local colleges, craft programs, or Southern Highlands Craft Guild	Board Chair	Summer 2023		
Goal 2: Connect to other fibersheds and related organizations				
Objective 2a: Determine key list of partner organizations and have each board member follow/participate in regularly and research other similar guilds (eg, weavers guild)	Board Chair	Fall 2022	several monthly updates	
Objective 2b: Identify other fibershed groups pursuing similar projects (ie Blue Ridge Blankets, workshops, fleece sales) and hold joint meetings via zoom	Marketing Comm	Spring 2023	Completed	
Objective 2c: Determine how to reach out to Extension offices throughout the region to expand work with farmers	Marketing Comm	Summer 2023	Completed as part of BRB Project	
Goal 3: Expand relationship with Southeast Animal Fiber Fair				
Objective 3a: Conduct Fleece to Shawl exhibit at annual fair	Events Comm	Fall 2022	blanket exhibit	
Objective 3b: Offer experiential hands-on needle felting class (eg. learning how to dye) as precursor to and preparation for fair and also in the booth at the Fair	Workshop Comm	Fall 2022	very popular in booth	

E. Develop Financial Sustainability - Ensure larger and more diverse revenue streams for the organizations as well as grow the income of local fiber artists and farmers.	Who Leads*	By When	Status	Investment Needed over 2021 baseline
Key indicators of success <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$xx annual sales generated to support the organization • \$xx annual workshop revenue 				
Goal 1: Grow retail sales				
Objective 1a: Expand local customers beyond tourists	Mrktng Com.	Ongoing	?	
Objective 1b: Expand proportion of sales coming from supplies (as opposed to finished goods)	Retail & Mrktng Com.	Ongoing	need baseline	
Objective 1c: Diversify and increase the number of vendors	Retail Comm.	Fall 2022	baseline?	
Objective 1d: Develop a thematic show to increase foot traffic	Events Comm	Spring 2023		
Objective 1e: Develop and maintain policies (e.g., product quality standards, volunteer requirements, sales percentages going to artists, shelf time limits, inventory goals by product, etc.)	Retail Comm.	Fall 2022		
Objective 1f: Analyze sales/traffic data to determine which days/times are most lucrative	Retail Comm.	Fall 2022	need baseline	
Goal 2: Increase financial viability of local artists and farmers				
Objective 2a: Ask interest groups to provide demos in the retail space (or in the park) to build local interest and sales	Retail Comm.	Summer 2022	? revise to 2023	

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Objective 1b: Expand proportion of sales coming from supplies (as opposed to finished goods)	Retail & Mrktng Com.	Ongoing	need baseline	
Objective 1c: Diversify and increase the number of vendors	Retail Comm.	Fall 2022	baseline?	
Objective 1d: Develop a thematic show to increase foot traffic	Events Comm	Spring 2023		
Objective 2b: Offer constructive feedback options for those interested	Retail Comm.	Ongoing		
Objective 2c: Determine how to better engage and involve retail volunteers (e.g., demonstration of artists' craft)	Retail Comm.	Ongoing		
Goal 3: Grow non-retail revenue				
Objective 3a: Name a Fundraising and Finance Committee	Board Chair	Spring 2023		
Objective 3b: Develop a fundraising plan to include specific plans on grants, events, planned giving and donation campaign.	Treasurer	Summer 2023		
Goal 4: Review the strategic plan bi-annually				
Objective 4a: Bring a strategic plan status update to the board twice a year	Board Chair	Jan & Jul each year		