



ASSOCIATION OF LEADERS IN VOLUNTEER ENGAGEMENT



ASSOCIATION OF LEADERS IN VOLUNTEER ENGAGEMENT STRATEGIC PLAN 2020-2024



May 25th, 2020

To Our ALIVE Members,

The mission of ALIVE is now more important than ever. This organization was founded in 2007 to enhance and sustain the spirit of volunteering by **fostering collaboration and networking, promoting professional development, and providing advocacy** for leaders in community engagement. It is our goal to strengthen volunteer engagement professionals and establish ourselves as leaders in this field, working collaboratively across sectors to legitimize the power that volunteerism holds throughout our society, nation and world.

In January 2020, ALIVE's Executive Committee gathered for a two-day retreat to discuss future strategic planning for our association. It was important for us to look at where our association has been for the past decade, where we are now, and what we envision the success of our organization for the future. This document illustrates what was discussed at our retreat along with our strategic plan for the next five years.

As a member-driven organization, we hope you read through this document, are excited about the direction of ALIVE and would like to further your involvement by volunteering your time on a special project, joining a committee or becoming a member of our board.

We are energized for what our future holds. Thank you for joining us on this journey and we look forward to working with you to see this vision come "ALIVE!"

Yours in Service,

ALIVE Executive Committee:

Megan Vixie, CVA, President
Michelle Raymer, CVA, President Elect
Mark Smith, CVA, Secretary
Sean Devereaux, Treasurer

Audrey Kidwell, Vice President Marketing
Cairn Reisch, CVA, Vice President Membership
Paula Allen, CVA, Vice President Programs & Advocacy

ALIVE Board of Directors:

Kelli Crawford, CVA
Allyson Drinnon, CVA

Michele Epifani
Kayla Paulson

Ashley Ramsdell
Jennifer Thompson, CVA

Gretchen Jordan, CVA, ALIVE Association Manager

THE PAST:

OUR MISSION, VISION & VALUES

MISSION

ALIVE serves to enhance and sustain the spirit of volunteering by fostering collaboration and networking, promoting professional development, and providing advocacy for leaders in community engagement.

We are:

- Professionals with expertise in volunteer management and engagement
- Advocates for the recognition and appreciation of Volunteer Management
- Trusted advisors for educational tools, research, and insights
- Educators of decision makers in all volunteer management arenas
- Influencers for redefining job descriptions, compensation, and the position of volunteer manager in our organizations
- Diverse, inclusive and member driven

VISION

ALIVE is the essential professional resource and advocate for those who engage, motivate, and celebrate volunteers and their vital contributions to our society.

VALUES

We Value Our Service by:

- Providing excellence in service, adhering to the ethics we promote, and exemplifying competence, quality standards and credibility within the profession.
- Being “on the pulse” of our professions by defining and following best practices, identifying current and future trends, encouraging the use of newest technology and providing access/links to cutting edge resources.
- Relevancy, progression and having impact within our profession.
- The promotion of learning and growth through training, connection of resources and providing forums for thought leadership to meet the needs of multi-level expertise within our membership.

We Value Collaboration by:

- Investing in the future of volunteerism through capacity building and being strong and viable in the communities we serve.
- Honoring current relationships within the field and building new ones.
- Building alliances that encourage innovation, creativity, vision, and passion.
- Being fluid and flexible in our approach with other organizations.

We Value Stewardship by:

- Diversity, inclusiveness, sensitivity and accessibility.
- Governing our organization with integrity and accountability by incorporating sustainable practices, both philosophically and financially.
- Building effective leadership on a local, statewide and national level and collectively influencing decisions that affect our profession.

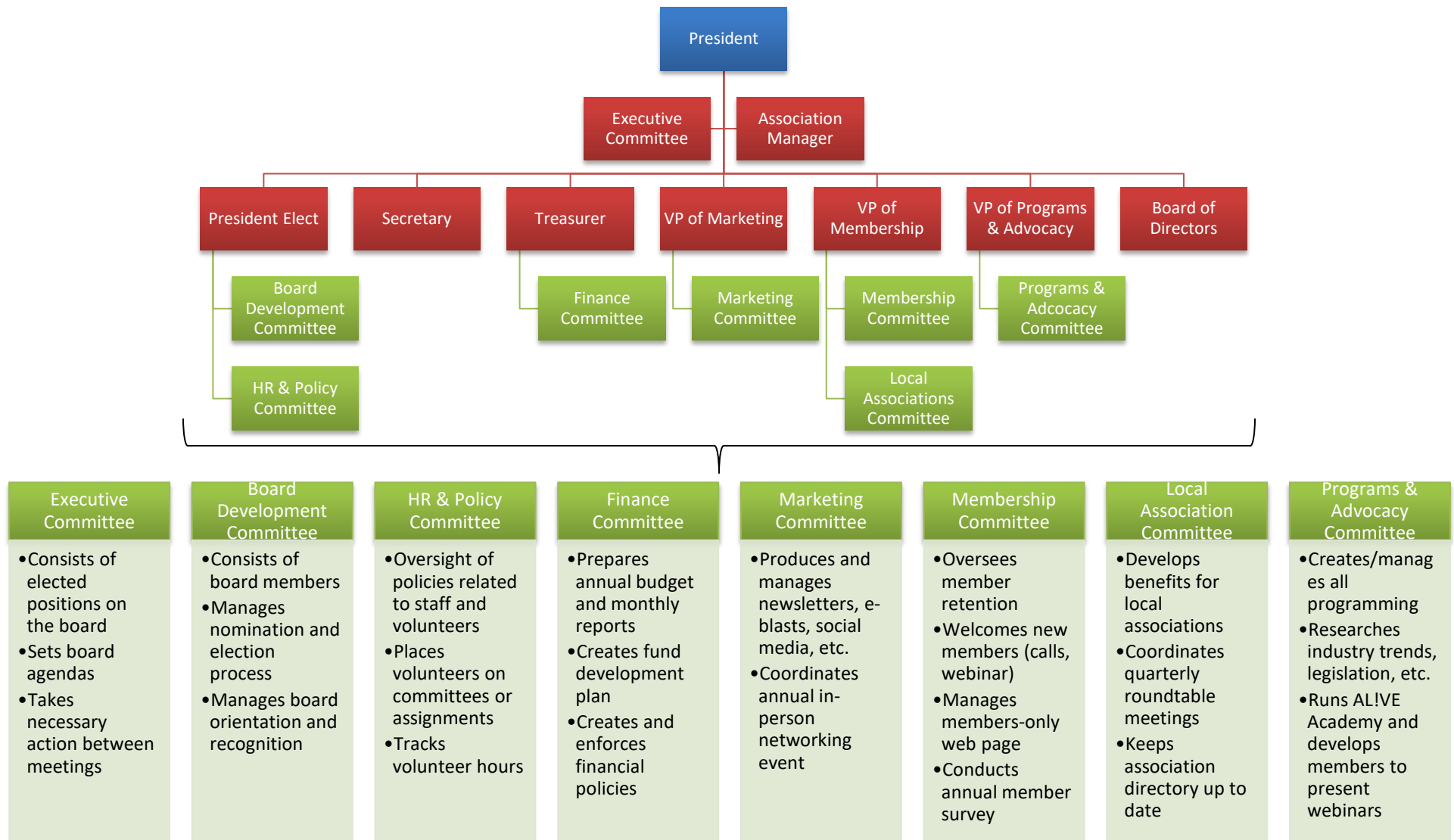
We Value Our People by:

- Attracting, retaining, fostering and honoring the best and brightest talent.
- Engaging and recognizing the talents of volunteers in the mission and work of our organization.
- Open, proactive, transparent communication through being visible to all members.

Strategic Plan 2020

Organizational Structure

As a membership organization, each level of ALIVE's structure consists of dues-paying members at each level. Our association's bylaws (also located on the ALIVE website [here](#)) has designed the following organizational structure that assists with all areas of the association:



A LOOK AT ALIVE'S SUCCESSES

While ALIVE has cultivated many successes since inception, our board focused on the progress made over the last three years. Listed below are the highlights of goals set and accomplished by our board and committees. This information has been presented to our members over the last three Annual Meetings each November.

2017

- Established new financial procedures budget format
- Launched fundraising campaign and added Amazon Smile, Paypal Giving
- Established membership committee and welcomed 95 new members
- Expanded membership categories (e.g., individual, organization, association)
- Recruited 34 host sites across US and Canada for ALIVE's Hybrid Conference
- Increased presence on social media (1,000+ followers)
- Became website host for the International Journal of Volunteer Administrators (IJOVA)
- Supported the National Summit on Volunteer Engagement Leadership hosted by Minnesota Association of Volunteer Administrators (MAVA) and collaborated with like-minded thought leaders to carry objectives of the summit forward
- Continued to cultivate partnerships with Better Impact, Council for Certification in Volunteer Administration (CCVA), Samaritan Technologies, Sterling Volunteers and VolunteerMatch

2018

- Developed partner sponsorships to support ALIVE's budget
- Increased ALIVE membership by 20%
- Supported 34 local associations of volunteer engagement professionals through membership
- Recruited 41 host sites across US and Canada for ALIVE's Hybrid Conference and boasted 800+ attendees
- Hosted 18 ALIVE Academy and partner webinars, including request for proposals from members to present for members professional development
- Launched Communities of Practice for members in same sector to connect (e.g., rural areas, large associations)
- Launched pilot of Emerging Leaders Mentor Program
- Established Marketing Committee to assist with social media strategy and promotions
- Enhanced website with more information and created a more streamlined look
- Continued to expand online presence (1,500+ emails, 1,500+ Facebook, 2,800+ Twitter, 3,500+ LinkedIn)
- Cultivated new partnerships with CIMA/Volunteer Insurance Services, Minnesota Association of Volunteer Administrators, and VolunteerPro

2019

- Developed goals tracking document and areas of responsibility
- Facilitated succession planning for Executive Committee
- Created volunteer application process for members to get involved with ALIVE
- Welcomed 132 new members and enhanced the Members Only page of the website with more resources and features for professional development
- Launched mentor program and handbook for local associations of volunteer engagement professionals
- Partnered with CCVA for cross promotion to CVA's for ALIVE membership
- Recruited 48 host sites across US and Canada for ALIVE's Hybrid Conference and boasted 900+ attendees
- Implemented Impact Awards at Hybrid Conference for celebrating outstanding professionals in our field
- Set up and increased activity on Instagram account
- Supported the creation of the National Alliance for Volunteer Engagement, serving as its fiscal agent and providing administrative support

2019 Member Survey Responses

The ALIVE Membership Committee launched a member survey in September 2019 that elicited 43 responses. This was an opportunity to help guide our strategic planning efforts and enhance our offerings to current and future members. The highlights from this survey are below:

MEMBERSHIP VALUE

- 83.3% are likely to recommend ALIVE to a friend/colleague
- 81% are likely to renew membership
- 81.5% believe the value of membership matches the membership fee

INVOLVEMENT

- 32.6% (14) would be interested in volunteering with an ALIVE Committee

COMMUNICATION

- 74.4% believe ALIVE's official communication channels keeps them well informed
- 81.4% read all of the bi-monthly ALIVE newsletter
- 74.4% visit the ALIVE website at least once a month (11.6% visits weekly)
- Comments re: more e-blasts /monthly email news update; reminders on perks, benefits, etc.

How useful are the following at keeping you informed?

| Benefit | Total | Extremely useful | Moderate | Slightly | Neither Useful or Useless | Not Useful at All | I Don't Use This Platform |
|------------|-------|------------------|----------|----------|---------------------------|-------------------|---------------------------|
| Newsletter | 40 | 29 (73%) | 9 (25%) | 2 (5%) | 0 (0%) | 0 (0%) | 0 (0%) |
| Website | 35 | 17 (49%) | 11 (31%) | 5 (14%) | 1 (3%) | 0 (0%) | 1 (3%) |
| Facebook | 34 | 7 (21%) | 6 (18%) | 5 (15%) | 7 (21%) | 1 (3%) | 8 (24%) |
| LinkedIn | 31 | 6 (19%) | 4 (13%) | 4 (13%) | 6 (19%) | 1 (3%) | 10 (32%) |
| Instagram | 30 | 3 (10%) | 3 (10%) | 1 (3%) | 6 (20%) | 1 (3%) | 16 (53%) |
| Twitter | 30 | 2 (7%) | 2 (7%) | 0 (0%) | 5 (17%) | 0 (0%) | 21 (70%) |

BENEFITS

| Benefit | Participated in past 12 months | Rank which benefits are most important to you. | | | | |
|--|--------------------------------|--|----------------|-----------|----------------------|------------|
| | Yes | Total | Very Important | Important | Not at All Important | No Opinion |
| ALIVE Academy | 31 (72%) | 43 | 30 (70%) | 9 (21%) | 0 (0%) | 4 (9%) |
| Resource library/Calendar | 23 (53.5%) | 42 | 20 (48%) | 17 (40%) | 1 (2%) | 4 (10%) |
| Advocacy for profession & professional development | 18 (41.9%) | | | | | |
| Hybrid Conference | 12 (27.9%) | 41 | 14 (34%) | 17 (41%) | 3 (7%) | 7 (17%) |
| Opps on Committees/Board | 8 (18.6%) | 40 | 11 (28%) | 19 (48%) | 3 (8%) | 7 (18%) |
| Partner Discounts | 5 (11.6%) | 41 | 9 (22%) | 19 (46%) | 7 (17%) | 6 (15%) |
| IJOVA | 12 (27.9%) | 40 | 14 (35%) | 10 (25%) | 3 (8%) | 13 (33%) |
| Communities of Practice | 4 (9.3%) | 39 | 12 (31%) | 12 (31%) | 2 (5%) | 13 (33%) |

| Benefit | Participated in past 12 months | Rank which benefits are most important to you. | | | | |
|------------------------|--------------------------------|--|----------------|-----------|----------------------|------------|
| | Yes | Total | Very Important | Important | Not at All Important | No Opinion |
| Member Skill Database | 6 (14%) | 39 | 7 (18%) | 15 (38%) | 5 (5%) | 12 (31%) |
| Mentor Program (Indiv) | 7 (16.3%) | 40 | 11 (28%) | 12 (30%) | 3 (8%) | 14 (35%) |
| Mentor Program (Assoc) | 5 (11.6%) | 41 | 9 (22%) | 14 (34%) | 2 (5%) | 16 (39%) |

What member benefits would you like to see added or enhanced?

- Speakers list/ Speaker/Presenter for local associations
- Online networking/ forum for VEP's to ask questions and share resources
- Access to previous webinars

COMMENTS AROUND ADVOCACY

- Provide practical, efficient tools for members to advocate for themselves
- Create brand/movement around volunteering
- Promote profession to the general public/ increased visibility, encourage funders to understand impact and value of sector
- Get Department of Labor to include Volunteer Services Manager as a recognized profession
- Tell members how ALIVE is advocating on a national level and create calls to action
- Advocacy resources (building a national presence, support for the field for advocating with for volunteer-friendly laws, regulations, and policies)
- Pay parity and salary comparisons for volunteer engagement professionals
- Development of national standards for volunteer engagement

COMMENTS AROUND PARTNERSHIPS

- Work with state/existing organizations to centralize/come together
- Mobilize local organizations affiliated with ALIVE to increase awareness and bring resources on a localized level
- Research/ publish research on the value and impact of the sector tailored to funders

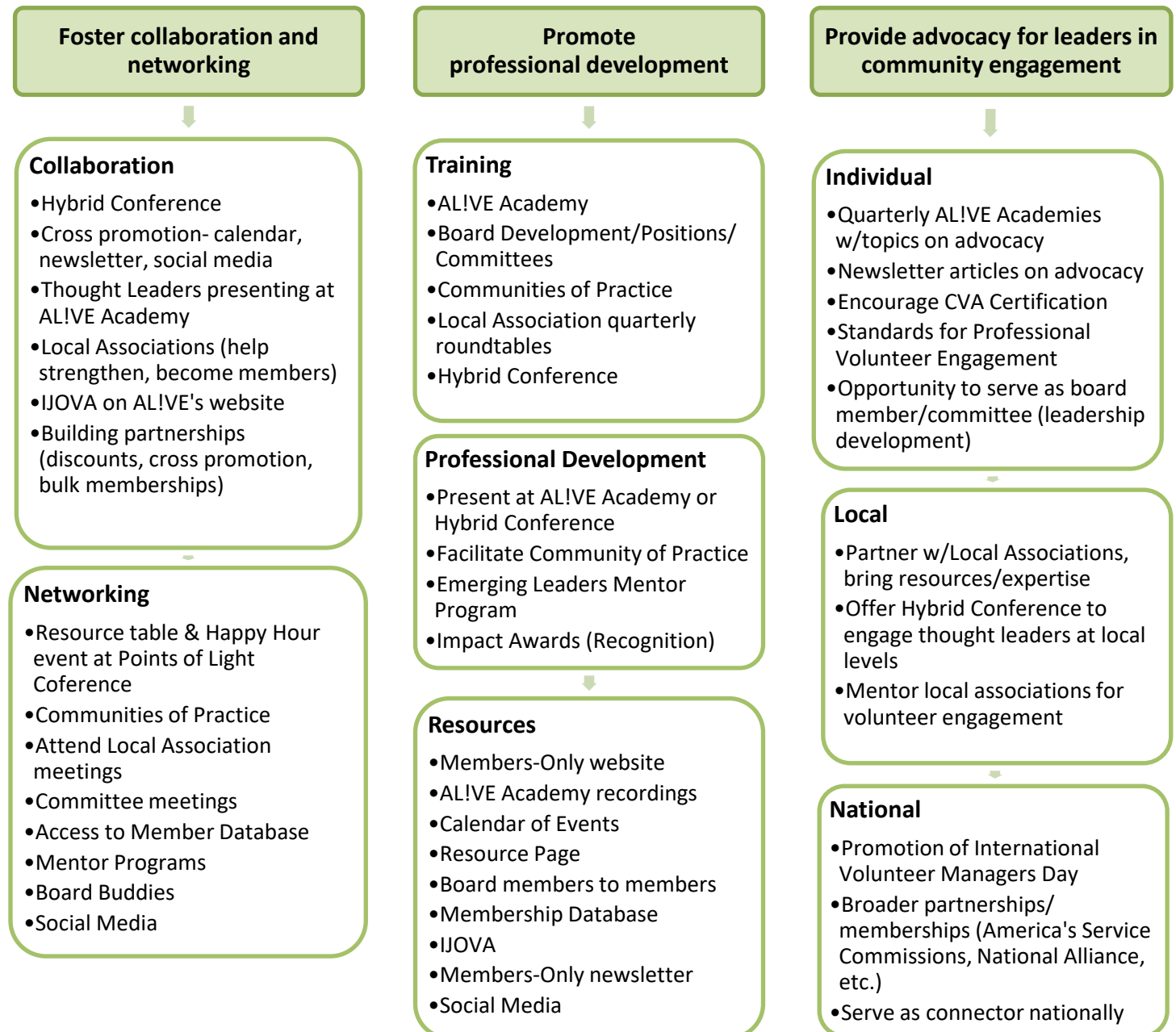
COMMENTS AROUND TRAINING & DEVELOPMENT

- Create opportunity for members to share a video with volunteer leaders; a 20-30 min video
- Develop forum of all the different options for VEP's to better themselves
- Offer various types of training- both basic management and leadership
- Live or in a venue where others can come together and network and talk face to face
- Make trainings available to local associations
- Take active role in helping to plan conferences/ regional face-to-face gatherings
- Mentoring short-term or peer-to-peer discussions
- More Communities of Practice and webinars (e.g., create a CVA support group/mentoring)

THE PRESENT:

Current Benefits

The following table below demonstrates how our current benefit offerings correlate with our mission:



Partnership Analysis

It is important to look at the field of volunteer engagement as a whole to understand what others are offering to volunteer engagement professionals so services are not duplicated. Below is a snapshot of our analysis of what makes ALIVE unique in the market as an association dedicated to volunteer engagement professionals. Note, this is not an exhaustive list and while there may be some services offered by ALIVE and others, we consider the array of services offered as a whole by ALIVE to be unique and advantageous to our members.

What makes ALIVE unique?

- National presence as a membership association for volunteer engagement professionals
- Virtual Mentor Program to connect those without access to other volunteer engagement professionals locally
- Support for Local Associations to help build local professional networking and development
- Virtual Hybrid Conference to bring international thought leaders to local associations
- Member-driven; Committee work that informs all benefits and offerings to our members
- Peer-to-peer opportunities to present at national level through ALIVE Academy
- Fiscal agent/incubator for other organizations (e.g., National Alliance, IJOVA)
- National peer recognition for volunteer engagement professionals through Impact Awards presented at Hybrid Conference
- Networking event at conference for members to connect in-person
- Exposure and access to free professional journals (e.g., Energize, IJOVA)
- Discounts/special offerings from multiple partners for member utilization
- “Hub”/connector across country to bring thought leaders, organizations and members together
- Accessibility to board and committees (we are all members)
- Strong Association Manager to keep progress moving and offer continuity

We are continually thankful to our current partners for working with ALIVE to offer their services and offerings to our members in a variety of ways.



SWOT Analysis

We looked at the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (i.e., SWOT) analysis around key areas of ALIVE to help develop 5 year strategic plan. Below is a snapshot of our analysis:

| Strengths | Weaknesses |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Involved board of directors • Increasing memberships • Meeting budget goals • Freedom in decision making • Member driven, we listen • Personal touch; follow up from a peer • Built credibility with other organizations in field • Experience as fiscal agent/incubator • Data-driven in decision-making • Developing new leaders; giving them a platform • Member fees low (never raised fees) • Hybrid Conference – connection to local associations • Serve as hub/connector for local associations • Strong relationships with partnerships • Organized recordkeeping and data storage • Strong Association Manager | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Articulating ALIVE's value to the profession • Plan and strategy for advocacy work • Heavily working board (no succession for roles) • Not currently working with others to plan conferences • Visibility/awareness of who ALIVE is • Defining how we partner with larger organizations • Strengthening of committees for better succession planning • Additional diversity in funding (e.g., grants, partnerships) • Diversity/equity/inclusion • Detailed policies and procedures to aid succession planning; unclear policies and procedures that aid board with decision making • Plan for volunteer opportunities, creating a pipeline for involvement • Strategy for engagement of past board members |
| Opportunities | Threats |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continued development of board recruitment • Expansion of mentor program • More outreach to those new to the profession (e.g., Volunteer Centers, AmeriCorps Alums) • Differentiate ALIVE's value from local associations • Create future partnerships not yet established • Virtual gathering specifically for local associations • Build out advocacy for the individuals as well as for organizations (e.g. legislation) • Be THE hub for volunteer engagement professionals • Host summit (tandem to a larger conference) • Differentiate of what's a benefit to members <u>only</u> • Opportunities for scholarships (full/partial) • Work towards ALIVE to become a service enterprise • Advocacy for volunteer engagement professional added to Occupational Handbook (Department of Labor) • Intentional Plan for diversity/inclusion • Expand funding; create paid internships/fellowships • Build out volunteer tracking mechanism for all involved with ALIVE • Develop annual report | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Retirement of Association Manager • Possibility of recession – fewer members, less funds • Strategic direction of other national organizations changing continually • Duplication of efforts with other organizations • Competition for funding • Brand confusion (who is doing what) • Others expect ALIVE to do things outside of our mission • Organizations that may not want to partner • New workforce not seeing ALIVE as benefit • Cyber Security (phishing) |

THE FUTURE:

Strategic Plan: Desired Outcomes

After reviewing all information, the Executive Committee developed an action plan and prioritized desired outcomes over the next five years. While the table below places these items in time frames for completion and priority (e.g., high, medium, low), all these items are important and will continually review our plan to ensure these desired outcomes remain relevant and are in the best interests of ALIVE and its members.

| TIME FRAME | DESIRED OUTCOME |
|------------------|---|
| 1-2 YEARS | |
| HIGH | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ADVOCACY: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Define what advocacy means to ALIVE ○ Create opportunities or partnerships that increases advocacy for the profession at the individual, organizational and national level • BOARD DEVELOPMENT: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Continue to strengthen succession planning for board recruitment and future sustainability ○ Strengthen board buddies (follow up with each other, build bonds) ○ Build strategy to engage past board members to stay active with ALIVE • EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE: Review of structure (e.g., programs/advocacy, membership) to ensure structure meets the current and future needs of ALIVE • FINANCE: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Analyze any risk to cyber security to protect ALIVE's financials ○ Develop committee and operating procedures • HUMAN RESOURCES: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Establish Human Resources Committee and review all ALIVE policies and procedures ○ Strengthen policies and procedures for serving as fiscal agent and for partner agreements ○ Formalize volunteer engagement recruitment/process <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ More project-based opportunities for members to be involved (e.g., writing blog post for Impact Award recipients) ▪ Establish tracking volunteer time and metrics • LOCAL ASSOCIATION: Host annual meeting for current local association members • PARTNERSHIPS: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Explore opportunities to assist with conference planning ○ Explore opportunities to utilize Annual Progress Report through VolunteerPro for members ○ Explore opportunities with CCVA to advocate for and increase certification in volunteer administration |
| MEDIUM | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ADVOCACY: Create ALIVE Academy on how to talk to your legislators • MARKETING: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Create process for how we update Resources page and what should be included on page ○ Increase exposure to Impact Awards (e.g., recognition/promo after Hybrid Conference) • FINANCE: Explore grant opportunities that can further strategic plan • MEMBERSHIP: Identify reports that are in ALIVE's archives that should also be on the Members Only website page (e.g., committee work, budgets) for further transparency to members |

| TIME FRAME | DESIRED OUTCOME |
|------------------|---|
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PARTNERSHIPS: Develop matrix of partnerships, developing criteria for successful partnerships and what ALIVE can bring to partnerships • EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE: Create avenues for transparency through communications (e.g., finance, benefits) |
| LOW | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PARTNERSHIPS: Review partner discounts (can be transitioned to Membership Committee for advisement) • LOCAL ASSOCIATIONS: Recruit more local associations for membership and continue to mentor new associations • MARKETING: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Create list of speakers that are members (those that have presented at ALIVE Academies, conferences, etc.) to provide to local associations in need of speakers ○ Market upcoming six months of ALIVE Academies for people to view in advance • MEMBERSHIP: Establish a scholarship program along with option for public to donate funds • PROGRAMS: Expand Emerging Leaders Mentor Program; create structure where program is member-driven |
| 2-4 YEARS | |
| HIGH | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MARKETING: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Create Annual Report ○ Conduct review of current website service and determine if refresh or new site is needed |
| MEDIUM | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Explore membership fees structure for various membership types ○ Build out diversity and inclusion across organization (e.g., board, members) • MEMBERSHIP: Create structure to follow up on lapsed members |
| 3-5 YEARS | |
| MEDIUM | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ADVOCACY: Add job of Volunteer Engagement Professional to occupational handbook (Department of Labor) • LOCAL ASSOCIATION: Create 6-month follow up meeting of the hybrid conference for attendees • MARKETING: Create brand awareness strategy • EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE: Explore advocacy structure of ALIVE and recruit members interested in advocacy to assist with strategies |
| LOW | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PROGRAMS: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Create standards for volunteer engagement professional for organizations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Can be a project-based opportunity for members ▪ Develop a community of practice around standards for members to learn and discuss ▪ Have Committee review periodically to test relevance and keep up to date • PARTNERSHIPS: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Create strong relationships with larger organizations (national, international) ○ Identify opportunities to partner with niche volunteer engagement membership organizations (e.g., government, zoos, museums, libraries) |

Next Steps

ALIVE's Board of Directors have integrated more immediate desired outcomes into the current 2020 goals. A summary of all progress on goals is provided at the membership's Annual Meeting each November.

Should members be interested in helping us move these objectives forward, please review current opportunities and complete an application [here](#).

Should you have any questions, please feel free to reach out to us at info@volunteeralive.org.

Thank you!