



# GOVERN for IMPACT – Our Future Focus

By Karen Fryday-Field, GOVERN, CEO

At GOVERN for IMPACT our vision is of a world in which boards of all organizations respond more astutely to their community of moral, legal, and financial owners.

... a world in which boards have clarity of purpose and vision, deep loyalty to fundamental values, strong determination to create lasting outcomes/impacts, and an unwavering dedication to the people for whose benefit their organization/business exists.

Ultimately, we believe that when all boards are empowered to function in this matter, our businesses, organizations, and communities will thrive in honor and support of our common humanity. This, we believe, is a very important vision, given governance is governance; with its positive power, it really has the capacity to create good on a world scale (i.e. governance of countries, cities, organizations, and businesses).

This is the essence of our vision. This is what we imagine can really happen. Together we can unleash the infinite possibilities ahead and help shift the world from where it is today to where we collectively believe it could be and what it could become. This is why we are creating the refreshed GOVERN for IMPACT organization.

We want a world:

- Where every child has food;
- Where cities are better prepared for disasters;
- Where injury or human life is not threatened by deceitful corporate practices that could have been prevented;
- Where families who are homeless find solutions with support;
- Where businesses thrive with prudence and strong ethics;
- .... And so much more.

So as a first step toward that inspiring horizon, the organization, with the engagement of our community and many new faces and key partners, must tackle three strategic priorities:

1. Achieving clarity and alignment;
2. Building an effectively working business model and operational approach with amazing value added programs; and
3. Expanding our community, advocacy, and resource development.

## 1. Purpose and Role Clarity and Alignment

We must ensure that our value proposition is not only inspiring but strategic. Our value proposition must position us as a unique organization that is meeting an important need for governance. It must portray us as an essential vehicle for principled accountability of boards to the larger society and to the creation of impact for the greater good.



We are identifying clear, ambitious, and yet realistic outcomes, which are measurable and can move the needle on establishing effective governance as a dynamic discipline all its own – and we must ensure strong alignment between our desired outcomes and the many activities in which GOVERN for IMPACT engages – leaders, staff, volunteers, and owners.

## 2. Business Model and Operational Approach

We need to build an operational model that is both financially sound and organizationally feasible. Such a model will depend on the engagement of many volunteer collaborators and will have lean executive and administrative infrastructure. We will pursue three major and interdependent areas of leadership and service: research, learning, and advocacy.

- We will study and examine systems, models, and outcomes of effective governance, built on:
  - a) Robust theoretical frameworks, fundamental values of excellence, and attention to stakeholders and constituents;
  - b) Principles of integrity and accountability;
  - c) An integrated set of sound policies; and
  - d) An overall systems approach to integrated board governance that permeates the whole organization and influences from owners through the board, the CEO, and the staff all the way to the beneficiaries.
- We will advocate for effective governance by:
  - a) Sharing what is learned through conferences, forums, and online programs; and
  - b) Developing a cadre of dedicated practitioners who fully understand the depth of such principles, the impact of such policies, and how to apply them effectively.
- We will develop and disseminate dynamic learning platforms to facilitate vigorous, intellectual discourse, and publications.

Our work ahead will build upon, and be inspired by, the principles of Policy Governance® and our collective efforts in applying the model and all that we've learned through practice. We will continue to serve as world leaders in developing the knowledge and application of Policy Governance.

While we may be embarking on new endeavors, our work together will always be anchored in the shared values of collaboration, community involvement, forward thinking, and respect for the incredible work that's been done, the history that brought us here, and the shoulders that we are standing upon.

## 3. Community and Resource Development

We cannot go as far as we all desire without people, organizational partners and resources. We will always be a grassroots organization with a lean operation in which a large number of volunteer thinkers and practitioners, and consultants will be involved in many aspects of the work. One of our key priorities is to keep you and many others in the community fully engaged. This is your organization and the group and its purpose need your help.



We believe that our business and organizations need effective board governance. We believe that our communities expect excellence in board governance. We believe that our world's health and sustainability depend in no small measure on all boards serving with integrity, prudence, and accountability. As such, we believe that what we envision is highly fundable by private funding agencies and philanthropic individuals within the outside our community.

To be successful, we need to set the tone and start here within our community to plant the seeds that will grow future funding. Toward that end, the first thing we've done, driven by sad circumstances, was to establish the Caroline Oliver Fund for a New Vision and launch our first real fundraising campaign.

The Fund, which commemorates a prominent leader in our community for who all of us have the greatest respect and affection, will fuel our effort to build the infrastructure and initial programming over the next 12 to 18 months. We will also work to continue to build our membership, seek grants, sponsorships, and engage other partners creatively.

Specific plans and programs will be shared in coming months along with opportunities for you and your colleagues to engage. When you have ideas for advancement of GOVERN for IMPACT, we invite you to share these with us. Please feel free to contact me at:

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