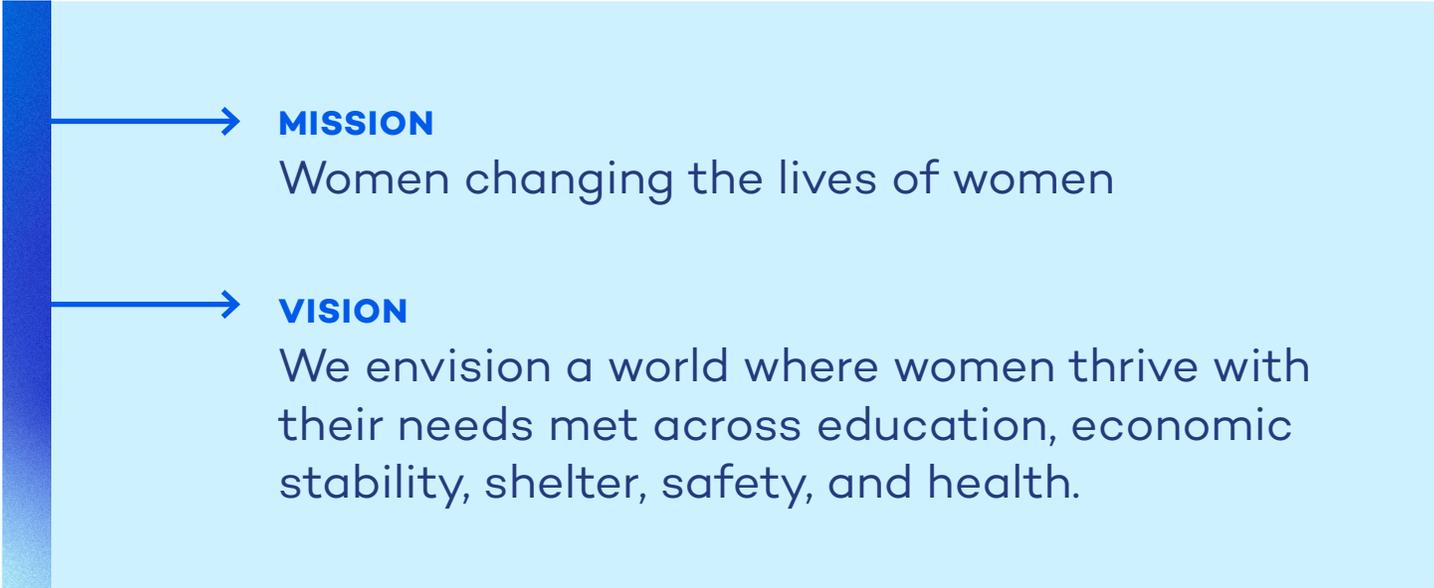




# WOMEN CHANGING THE LIVES OF WOMEN.

WCA Foundation Strategic Framework

*Approved January 2023*



**MISSION**

Women changing the lives of women

**VISION**

We envision a world where women thrive with their needs met across education, economic stability, shelter, safety, and health.

## A Legacy of Women Supporting Women

The WCA Foundation, a Signature Fund of the Minneapolis Foundation, is a volunteer-led grantmaking organization committed to supporting women in communities across the Minneapolis-St. Paul metro area. Founded in 1866, WCA Foundation was Minnesota's first charitable organization.

Since its inception, WCA Foundation has been a membership organization directed by the voices of women in the community. Today, WCA Foundation has more than 40 volunteer members who steward an endowment of approximately \$18 million. WCA Foundation's members, local women interested in learning about and responding to the most urgent needs of women in our community, are its decision-makers. They contribute their time, talent, and care to advance the foundation's mission and are not required to donate their own financial resources to the fund. These volunteer members are committed to ensuring that women have access to resources supporting education, economic stability, shelter, safety, and health.

WCA Foundation joined forces with the Minneapolis Foundation in 2020, which provided an opportunity to increase efficiency and gain access to further expertise in grantmaking, community issues, finance, investments, and evaluation. WCA Foundation and the Minneapolis Foundation share a resolve to meet today's challenges and are excited by the opportunities to build a brighter future together. This partnership along with the WCA Foundation's thoughtful, strategic stewardship has resulted in an increase in annual grantmaking by 65% since 2015 and a distribution of nearly \$1 million to the seven-county metropolitan area in 2022.



## The Present Moment

For over 150 years, WCA Foundation has honored its commitment to supporting women with a tradition of recognizing and responding to the evolving needs of women. Today, we are living in extraordinarily turbulent times marked by the COVID-19 pandemic and the social unrest following the murder of George Floyd in Minneapolis. These events continue to have significant and enduring societal impacts that intersect with WCA Foundation's priority focus areas of education, economic stability, shelter, safety, and health.

WCA Foundation is mindful of both the new and exacerbated barriers women face to meet their basic needs in Minnesota, particularly following the emergence of the COVID-19 pandemic.<sup>1</sup> In addition, we recognize that funding to support women remains insufficient. In 2019, women's and girl's organizations received less than 2% of overall charitable giving in the U.S.<sup>2</sup> The WCA Foundation, as a foundation led by women and dedicated to the support of women, is in a unique position to help change these statistics.

<sup>1</sup> For more information about the experiences of women in Minnesota, WCA Foundation recommends [2022 Status of Women & Girls in Minnesota](#)

<sup>2</sup> For more data on charitable giving dedicated to women and girls, we recommend [The Women & Girls Index: Measuring Giving to Women's and Girls' Causes](#) (October 2022)

## BUILDING A STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK THROUGH COLLECTIVE CONVERSATION

We view this moment as an opportunity to strengthen how we deliver on our mission. With the conclusion of the WCA Foundation's 2017-2022 Strategic Plan, the foundation embarked on a member-led conversation in 2022, to identify our vision for the future together. By intentionally centering the "why" in these collective conversations, we articulated a series of intertwined questions and goals that formed the foundation of this Strategic Framework.

The new Strategic Framework grounds us in our mission and the insights of our members. We intend to use it as a tool to provide guidance as we explore and evolve our approach as grant makers, our role as facilitators of community-directed solutions, and our impact on women. As the WCA Foundation looks to the future, the Strategic Framework will guide our continued collective conversation as we deliver on our mission of women changing the lives of women.

# Framework Objectives

We recognize that there is no one-size-fits-all solution to changing the lives of all women and instead we strive to meet everyone where they are on our collective journey to achieve a world where women thrive.

<b>CORE PARTNERS →</b>  <b>GUIDING PRINCIPLES ↓</b>	<b>Nonprofits</b>  We value our partnerships with nonprofits to facilitate community-directed solutions.	<b>Members</b>  We value our shared commitment to a world where women thrive.
Trust	Develop authentic and mutually accountable relationships by demystifying our process, increasing transparency, and recognizing the prevalent power dynamic in the funder-grantee relationship.	Align all policies, practices, and resources with our guiding principles.
Engagement	Build trusting partnerships with nonprofits, while increasing proximity to community organizations and leaders implementing solutions in our areas of focus.	Deepen relationships among members and with the community organizations of which we are a part, while amplifying the work of our partners to address the needs in community.
Responsiveness	Respect the time and capacity of organizations to raise funds by ensuring nonprofits see their priorities and needs reflected in our grantmaking approach.	Cultivate a welcoming and inclusive community where members feel valued, have opportunities to learn, and know their contributions are purposeful.

