



DISABILITY  
FOUNDATION

# Disability Foundation Network

## Strategic Plan 2023 - 2027



# The Disability Foundation Network of Affiliated Societies

DEVICES BREAKING BARRIERS

VIRTUAL WORKSHOPS

COMMUNITY FORUMS

HEALTHY LIVING PROGRAMS

PERSONAL TRAINING

HIKING

SAILING

KAYAKING

PADDLEBOARDING

ADAPTIVE CYCLING

GARDENING

COMMUNITY WORKSHOPS

MUSIC LESSONS

MUSIC RECORDINGS



## VISION

The Disability Foundation Network inspires and empowers people with disabilities to re-imagine what is possible.

## MISSION

Through our charitable societies, we will provide opportunities for people with disabilities to pursue their unique journeys.

## WHOM WE SERVE

Our primary participants are people of all ages with physical disability. Over time, we are broadening our delivery to include all disabilities.



Date of Origin: December 18, 1989  
Charitable Number: 130463649RR0001

**For over 30 years, ASABC (also known as the Disabled Sailing Association) has been providing opportunities for people with physical disabilities to experience recreational and competitive sailing in fully accessible sailboats. Adaptive sailing is a unique experience, leaving one's disability onshore to experience the freedom and exhilaration of sailing independently.**

**With eight adaptive Martin 16 sailboats, ASABC provides a program of hundreds of sails every summer at Jericho Sailing Centre on the west side of Vancouver. On top of sails for all levels of participants, ASABC with its amazing summer staff and dedicated volunteers support a race club, kid's days, and special regattas.**

Date of Origin: December 17, 1985  
Charitable Number: 11881 8723RR0001

**BCMOS provide opportunities for people with physical disabilities to access outdoor recreation.**

**These outdoor activities using adaptive equipment include: local hikes at Pacific Spirit Park, destination outings to all over the lower mainland, sunset hikes, kayaking and paddleboarding at False Creek in Olympic Village, and adaptive cycling near UBC.**

**BCMOS also runs a year-round virtual adaptive personal fitness program.**





Date of Origin: November 9, 1999  
Charitable Number: 869971184RR0001

**ConnecTra Society provides information, resources and opportunities for people living with disabilities. It is our mission to cultivate a safe and inclusive environment where questions can be asked and stigmas can be challenged, breaking down barriers for a greater quality of life and connection.**

**ConnecTra Society puts on in-person workshops, online healthy living programs, community forums on accessibility topics, and the popular annual Abilities Expo.**

Date of Origin: January 16, 2003  
Charitable Number: 861274157RR0001

**The Disabled Independent Gardeners Association (DIGA) provides opportunities for people living with disabilities to actively participate in gardening.**

**Scattered across Vancouver, DIGA cares for community gardens with our members and volunteers. DIGA also educates our members on the latest gardening trends through in-person workshops.**

**DIGA proudly developed and now maintains the 2,500 square foot central courtyard within the GF Strong Rehabilitation Centre in Vancouver.**

**DIGA supports at-home members with the personal self-irrigation planter program.**







Date of Origin: December 21, 1987  
Charitable Number: 140435108RR0001

**Tetra Society builds innovative solutions for people with physical disabilities to overcome environmental barriers, providing greater independence, quality of life, and inclusion.**

**With 40 chapters across Canada and growing, Tetra is the charity to assist people with disabilities requiring better access at home, work, or play.**

Date of Origin: April 11, 1988  
Charitable Number: 130463607RR0001

**Vancouver Adapted Music Society supports and promotes musicians with physical disabilities in the Metro Vancouver area.**

**VAMS adaptive studio provides instrument lessons to clients of all age and ability. The studio is a professional recording facility with the latest technology and adaptive instruments.**

**VAMS also provides performance opportunities at local venues and events.**

**New in 2023, a mini-school to provide participants with the education and experience to understand the music industry.**



The Disability Foundation is proud to serve the Network. Since 1996, it continues to provide guidance and support on core business functions for the main purpose of maximizing grant and donation value to the societies. These services include:

*Governance Administration*

*Executive oversight*

*Strategic planning*

*Annual business planning*

*Finance*

*Fund Development*

*Communications*

*Promotion & Marketing*

*Information Technology*

*Human Resources*

*Piloting Initiatives*

*Volunteer Management*

*Facility Management*

*Legal Administration*

*Training & Education*



# CORE VALUES

## TRUST

The Disability Foundation Network will commit to a safe and equitable environment with mutual respect and understanding for all

## TEAMWORK

Every board directors, management, staff, and volunteer will effectively contribute to the goals of the Disability Foundation network

## LEARNING & GROWTH

Be your best self to reach your desired potential

## ACCOUNTABILITY

From board members to volunteers, we will keep our promises and commitments to each other

## ENVIRONMENTAL AWARENESS

Be aware of our environment and community; understand other's needs; seek to understand by actively listening and responding





# HISTORY

*Our founder, Sam Sullivan, wanted to rebuild his life following a high-level spinal cord injury. Sam broke his neck in a 1978 skiing accident, aged 19. He found himself tetraplegic, unable to dress or feed himself, let alone continue playing active sports or making music. Or so it seemed at the time.*



**Sam Sullivan**

Over the following few years, Sam sunk ever deeper into depression, feeling he'd never get a job or lead any kind of meaningful life. One despairing night in the early '80s he considered ending it all.

"I went through the motions of what it would be like to do that," he recalls. "But it was so traumatic for me, it actually made me think 'this is *my* life, what do I have, and what do I need?' From that, I figured out what I wanted from life and what I could do."

From this watershed moment Sam set out to redefine what he was capable of. "So far I'd learned not to expect too much so I wouldn't be disappointed. The hardest thing for me was to learn to tell myself a different story."

Armed with "\$100 per month and a business card," not to mention a renewed self-belief, Sam entered a new period in his life. He describes this as *enlightened self-interest*, finding leisure pursuits he'd like to follow, but soon realizing the real joy lay in turning these into initiatives that improve the quality of life of other people with disabilities.

Over an intensive 20-year period, Sam built a succession of non-profit groups offering opportunities to people with physical disabilities in Vancouver and across Canada. As much as anything, he formed the groups *because* of the years of depression – to send a message of hope to people in despair.

Today, Tetra Society of North America helps people with physical disabilities to renegotiate the physical environment around them. British Columbia Mobility Opportunities Society and the Adaptive Sailing Association make the outdoors accessible. Vancouver Adapted Music Society provides an accessible studio for recording music and cultivating the talent of its roster of musicians. ConnecTra brings people with disabilities together to improve awareness about community resources. The Disabled Independent Gardeners Association makes accessible the experience of gardening. The Disability Foundation was created to help raise funds so the various societies would continue to provide meaningful experiences.

Sam found that his greatest strength was in bringing people together to create self-maintaining groups: the people with disabilities who want to do more, and volunteers and other supporters who want to make a difference.

# FIVE PRIORITY GOALS

## **Funding Goal:**

**Ensure the organizations are positioned for long-term financial sustainability**

THE DISABILITY FOUNDATION AND ITS NETWORK OF SOCIETIES PROVIDE TIMELY AND RELEVANT PROGRAMS AND SERVICES TO OUR COMMUNITY BOTH LOCALLY AND ACROSS CANADA. TO DO THIS EFFECTIVELY REQUIRES THOUGHTFUL SPENDING AND A STRATEGY FOR LONG-TERM FINANCIAL STABILITY. THE NETWORK WILL CREATE AN ACHIEVABLE DEVELOPMENT PLAN TO ENSURE FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY THAT IS IN STRIDE WITH AFFILIATED SOCIETY GOALS AND COMMUNITY TRENDS.

## **Partnership Goal:**

**Develop long-term relationships with local and national organizations to maximize program impact and fundraising**

THE DISABILITY FOUNDATION NETWORK IS VERY GRATEFUL TO HAVE GENEROUS PARTNERS AND GRANTORS INCLUDING ALL LEVELS OF GOVERNMENT, PRIVATE FOUNDATIONS, FOR-PROFIT ORGANIZATIONS, NON-PROFITS AND CHARITIES, AND PRIVATE DONORS. THE DISABILITY FOUNDATION NETWORK WILL ENSURE CONTINUED ALIGNMENT TO OUR PARTNERS' GIVING MANDATES AND DEVELOP NEW RELATIONSHIPS TO REACH MORE PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES WITH OUR PROGRAMS AND SERVICES.

# FIVE PRIORITY GOALS

## **Internal Capacity Goal:**

**Build an inclusive, healthy, effective, and sustainable staff and Board**

THE WORKPLACE CULTURE PRIORITIZES RESPECT, WORK-LIFE BALANCE, TEAMWORK, TRUST, LEARNING & GROWTH, EFFICIENT PROCESSES, AND FINANCIAL ACCOUNTABILITY TO FUNDERS AND BOARDS. SUCCESSFUL PROGRAM DELIVERY BEGINS WITH A COMMITTED AND PASSIONATE TEAM WHO ARE THE BEST AT WHAT THEY DO. THE AIM IS TO BUILD A STRONG AND DIVERSE WORKFORCE COMMITTED TO THE MISSION OF THE NETWORK.

## **Volunteering Goal:**

**Develop a robust and growing system of volunteer engagement and stewardship**

THE DISABILITY FOUNDATION NETWORK RELIES ON A TALENTED, DEDICATED, CARING, AND ENTHUSIASTIC GROUP OF VOLUNTEERS FROM COAST TO COAST. THE VOLUNTEER MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK FOCUSES ON RECRUITMENT, ENGAGEMENT, RETENTION, AND STEWARDSHIP IN ORDER TO ENSURE SAFE AND REWARDING EXPERIENCES FOR OUR MANY VOLUNTEERS.

# FIVE PRIORITY GOALS



## **Program Goal:**

**Impact and empower more people with disabilities, their families, friends, and community**

THE COMMUNITY THE NETWORK IS A PART OF INCLUDES PARTICIPANTS AND THEIR FAMILIES, FRIENDS, CAREGIVERS, MEDICAL PROFESSIONALS, AND OTHER SUPPORT ORGANIZATIONS. THE DISABILITY FOUNDATION NETWORK WILL BUILD ON PROVIDING MEANINGFUL PROGRAMS AND SERVICES FOR THEM THROUGH COLLABORATION, AWARENESS, AVAILABILITY, AND GROWTH.

Tetra Society Adapted Crib

## FUNDING GOAL:

Ensure the organizations are positioned for long-term financial sustainability

OBJECTIVES	STRATEGY	OUTCOME
Implement an effective long-term fundraising plan	Create a detailed five year development plan that provides guidance to what fundraising efforts to focus on and the expertise required to execute.	2023: Complete development plan with recommended revenue mix and resources identified.  2023 – 2027: Implement development plan by including activities in each of the annual business plans. Work with the boards' Community Engagement Committee to assist and monitor progress.
Establish a legacy fund (Investments) plan in order to build sustainability to carry the Disability Foundation Network forward	Establish an investment plan, monitored by board experts, to begin building for long-term program sustainment and self-sufficiency.	2023: Under the Board Development Group, work with our banking institutions to create a repeatable process to build the investment pools  2024 – 2027: Implement investment plan by including activities in the annual budgets including investment targets for each society
Determine the most appropriate revenue mix	Based on history, current trends, program alignment, and the strategic plan, understand revenue sources and focus on maximizing funding opportunities closest to our mission.	2023: Research and recommend the most appropriate mix of revenue sources and activities. Include as part of the fund development plan  2024 – 2027: Revisit revenue mix annually to monitor for accuracy and recommend changes
Explore social ventures	Research and trial innovative revenue opportunities through the societies' expertise including barrier-breaking devices, food security methods, and donation programs.	2022-2024: Pilot netClé as a retail product; research TrailRider desirability and DIGA greenhouse proof-of-concept  2024-2027: Expand donation programs – VAMS instruments and ASABC boat donations



**PARTNERSHIPS GOAL:**

**Develop long-term relationships with local and national organizations to maximize program impact and fundraising**

OBJECTIVES	STRATEGY	OUTCOME
Develop new strategic alliances with partners that help us reach our mission	Reach out to local similar-minded organizations and develop formal and informal alliances	2023 – 2027: Partnerships are the ideal requirement for government initiatives. Use partnerships when applying for government grant opportunities
Cultivate corporate and academic partners for volunteer engagement and employee giving programs	The volunteer framework has developed a process to engage secondary schools, universities, and for profit companies with volunteering opportunities and internal giving programs. The new development plan is to include volunteering organizations as a source of revenue	2023: Refine volunteer framework's corporate partnership program to include new target of 10-15% each year  2024 – 2027: With each year, increase partnership numbers by 10-15%
Networking/promotion to help the DF Network become better known and enhance our brand	Create new communication strategy selecting platforms that are best value and most reach  Engage other non-profits to share communication platform posts	2023: The new communication strategy will include cost-effective tactics to reach our community  2023 – 2027: With each year, increase promotion partners by 10-15%
Formalizing partnerships & relationships	Produce memorandum of understandings and similar legal documents to detail deliverables and obligations between partners	2023: Create MOU for partnership collaboration  2024 – 2027: With each year, increase formal partnerships by 10-15%

## INTERNAL CAPACITY GOAL:

### Build an inclusive, healthy, effective, and sustainable staff and Board

OBJECTIVES	STRATEGY	OUTCOME
Staff appropriately within the respective functions of the organization	Implement a workforce to ensure all functions are well looked after including finance, operations, IT, facilities, and program operations	2023: Review job descriptions and requirements to current industry standards  2024 – 2027: Hire diverse staff and contractors to fill required positions
Competitive wages and benefits	Develop a workforce plan that balances workload to competitive wages and benefits, optimal number of FTEs, and career opportunities	2023 – 2027: Review each year the benefits package and industry wage amounts including cost of living adjustments
Opportunity for growth and advancement	Develop career paths for the major roles within the organizations including management, program delivery, technology, finance, and administration.	2023 – 2027: Update and implement employee training and education plan; include in each staff performance plan a training schedule

ConnecTra Abilities Expo 2022



**INTERNAL CAPACITY GOAL *continued*:****Build an inclusive, healthy, effective, and sustainable staff and Board**

OBJECTIVES	STRATEGY	OUTCOME
Ensure effective governance through strategic recruitment and Board development	Board directors will build a balanced mix of expertise and lived experiences within each board.	2023 – 2027: With the Board Development Group, determine the right mix of skills and experience and build skills matrix
Greater stability of staff with less turnover	Focus on workplace culture, organizational values, career advancement, competitive wages, and benefits, and meaningful work that directly impacts the employee and community	2023 – 2027: Review human resource strategy; update employee handbook to reflect annual changes; survey staff on a regular basis to understand effectiveness of workplace culture and values
Enhance diversity and inclusion throughout the organization	Monitor hiring process, ensure appropriate accommodations, and develop a respectful, diverse and inclusive workforce	2023 – 2027: Review human resource strategy to ensure diversity and inclusion are integrated in all aspects of the work environment and the hiring process

**VOLUNTEERING GOAL:****Develop a robust and growing system of volunteer engagement and stewardship**

OBJECTIVES	STRATEGY	OUTCOME
To have a volunteer strategy that will support expansion, retention, stewardship and recruitment	Refine volunteering framework with next level of detail including stewarding elements	2023: Work with IT to create a volunteer-centric application that can be used by volunteers to self-update  2023 – 2027: Build on each stage of the volunteering framework to include proper tools to maximize recruitment, retention, and stewardship. The goal is to retain at least 50% of volunteers from previous year.
Have a diverse group of volunteers including PWD and youth	Expand base of volunteers to include youths, people with disabilities, the indigenous community, and culturally-diverse groups	2023 – 2027: Expand volunteer base by reaching into schools, senior groups, and cultural communities like MOSAIC and SUCCESS
Have volunteers who have needed skills	Provide a skills matrix within the framework to focus on much-needed skills and experience	2023 – 2027: Develop over time specific skill needs for the societies. Examples include teaching music, creating crafts, and expert gardening.
Provide volunteers with desired skills and education	Refine how we onboard volunteers with learning and education opportunities including job shadowing	2023 – 2027: As part of retention and volunteer experience, provide job-related training from social media to IT assistance.
Provide meaningful volunteer opportunities, recognition of contribution and experiences	Find ways to celebrate volunteer achievements and their impact on our programs and clients	2023 – 2027: Find new ways to celebrate volunteer achievements.



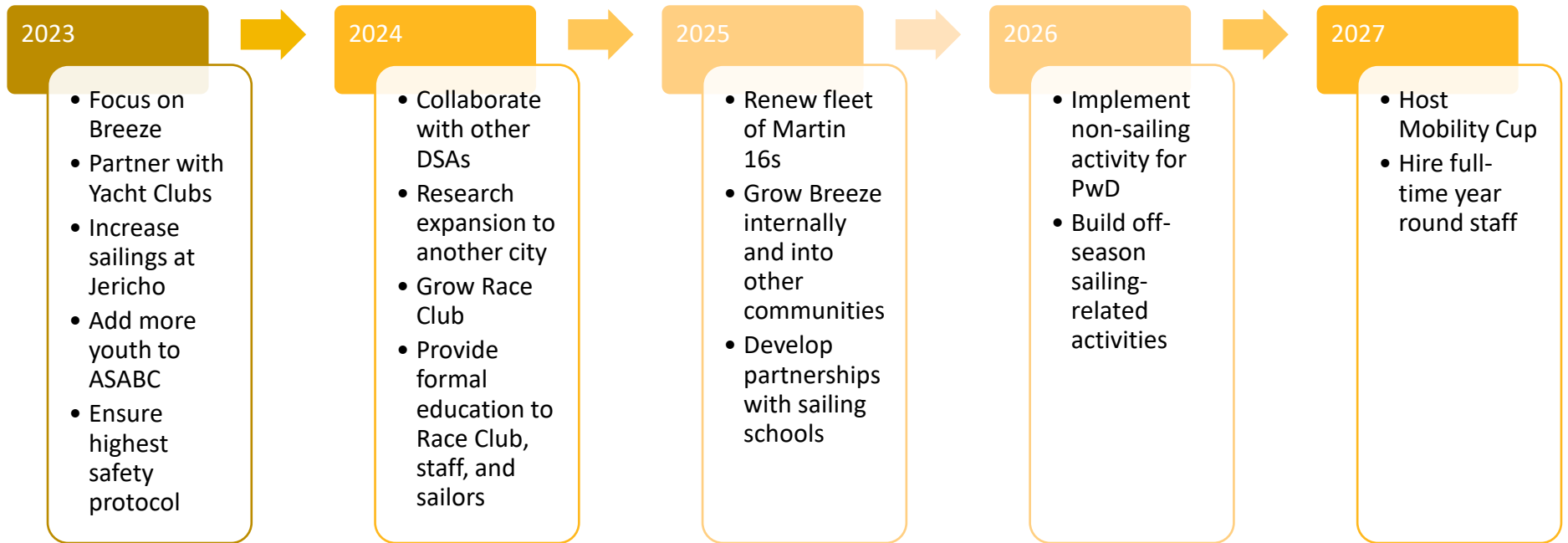
## BCMOS Volunteers

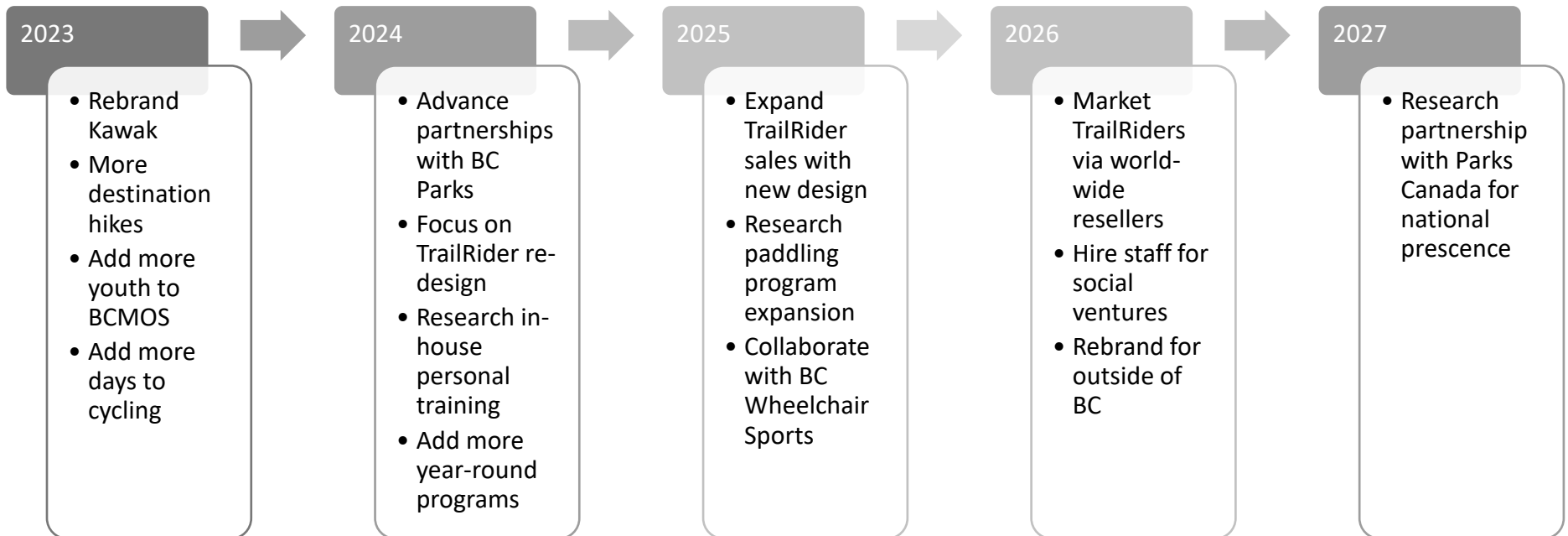


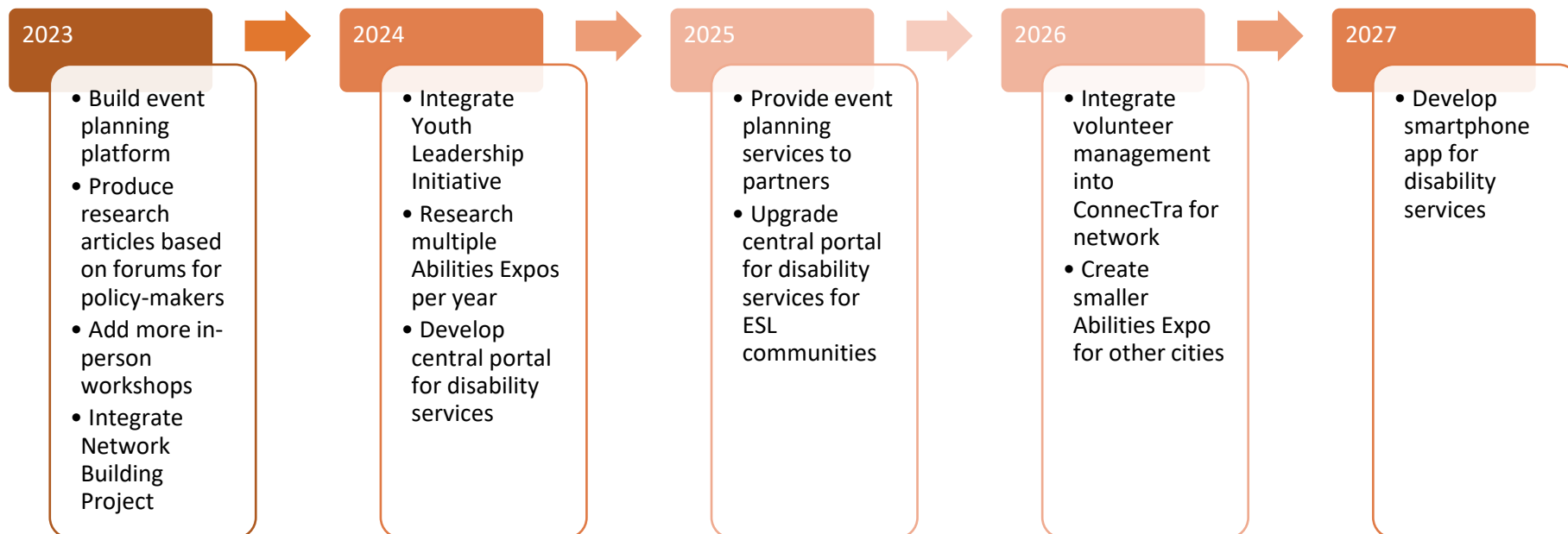


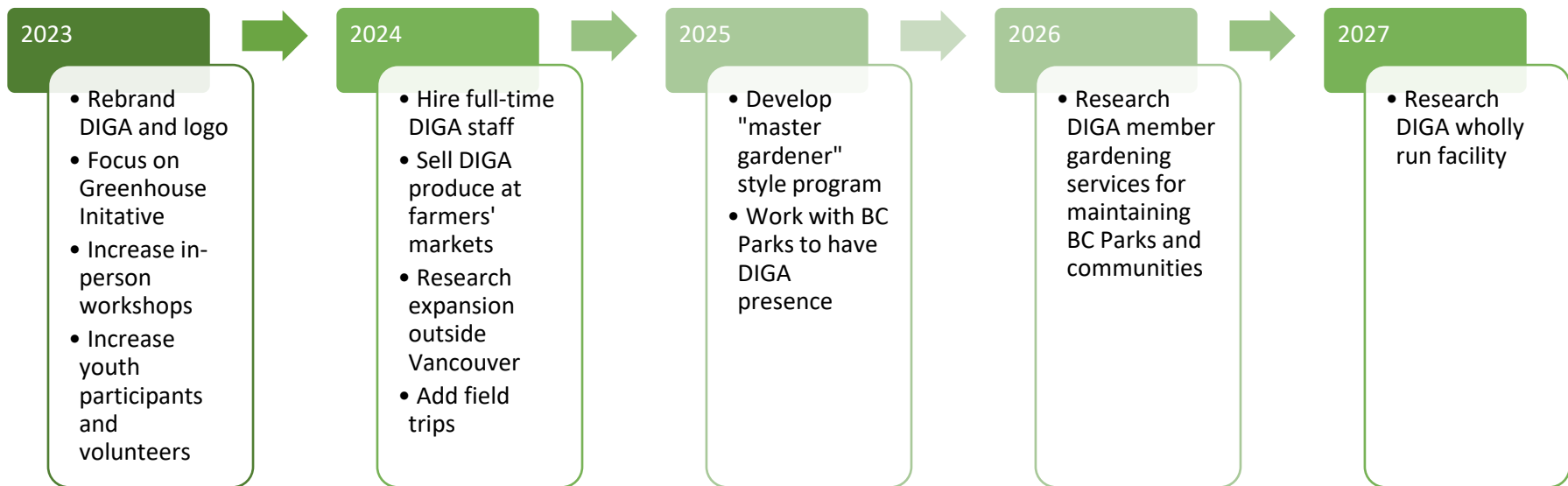
**PROGRAM GOAL:****Impact and empower more people with disabilities, and their family, friends, and community**

OBJECTIVES	STRATEGY	OUTCOME
Enhance brand awareness of our family of organizations and programs through effective communication / promotion	Implement new communications strategy that targets optimal usage of digital services, social media platforms and traditional media offerings	2023: The new communication strategy will include cost-effective tactics to reach our community and increase our brand  2023 – 2027: With each year, increase our reach by 10-15%
Ensure effective, modern, consistent, accessible, and distinctive branding	Implement new communications strategy and annual plans to be mindful of changing norms and be in-pace with new accessibility standards	2023 – 2027: Research new ways to increase accessibility to our communication platforms
Enhance awareness, training, and capacity to serve more people	Expand society programs and services – within existing locations as well as new locations	2023: Develop program expansion strategy for each society  2023 – 2027: Implement program expansion strategy
Diversify programs to be more exciting, relevant, and appealing to a broader population	Develop a new programs and enhance existing ones to increase engagement	2023: Develop program expansion strategy for each society  2023 – 2027: Implement program expansion strategy
Take a measured but courageous approach to growth, staying mindful of capacity and funding	Use reporting from Salesforce to understand participant trends in order to assess current needs  Survey community to research new expansion opportunities	2023: Develop program expansion strategy for each society  2023 – 2027: Implement program expansion strategy  2026 – 2027: Combined multipurpose facility of offices, workshop, and studio space

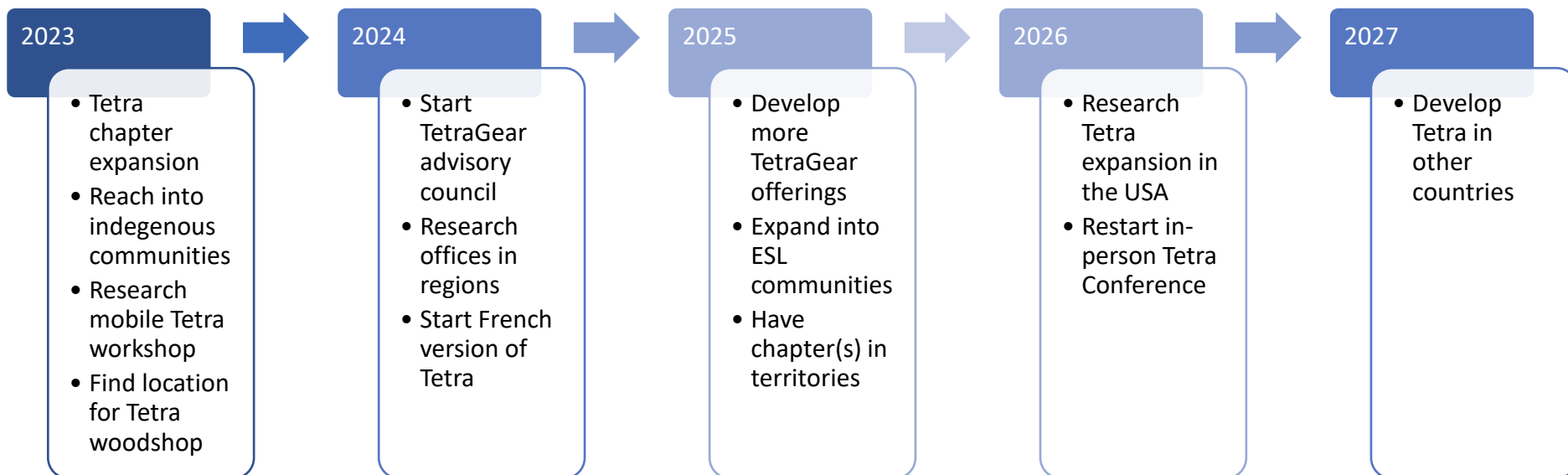


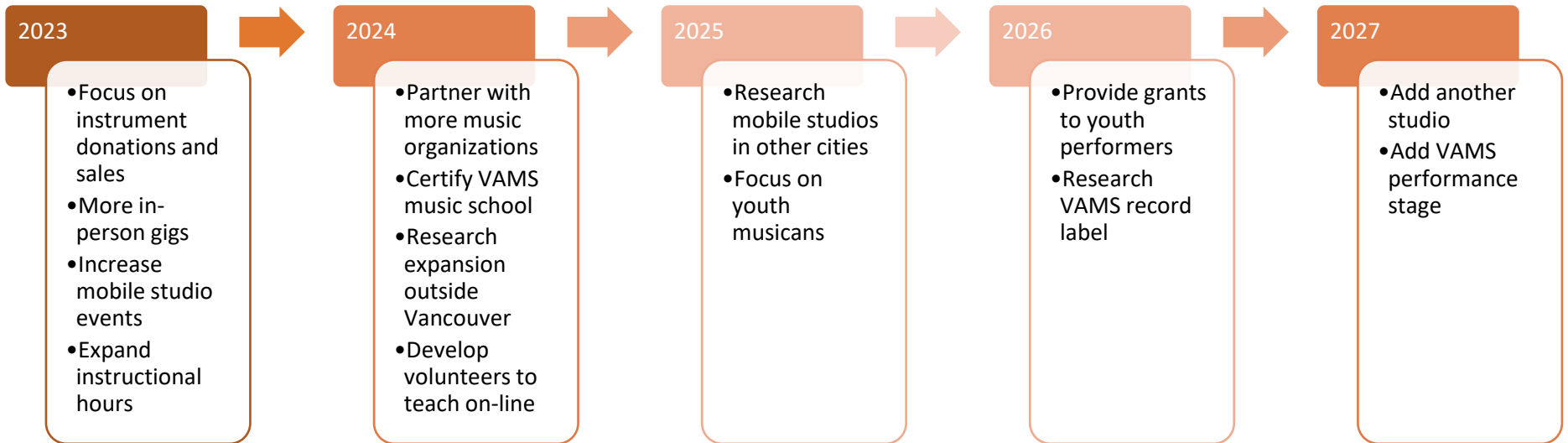














## Growing the network...together

DIGA participant Elizabeth showing off harvest





VAMS Strong Sessions Concert

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