



Diversity, Equity, Accessibility & Inclusion Action Plan

Approved by Lane County Historical Society Board of Directors on March 16, 2022

Lane County History Museum Diversity, Equity, Accessibility & Inclusion Action Plan

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Message From the Board

On behalf of the Board of Directors of the Lane County Historical Society, I'm proud to introduce our Diversity, Equity, Accessibility, and Inclusion Action Plan, with the operative word being "action."

As a representative of our community, you will be alongside us throughout this journey. We invite you to hold us accountable for our progress across five dimensions: collections stewardship, education and interpretation, financial stability, facilities and risk management, and human resources.

Thank you in advance for your input as we take meaningful and measurable steps toward becoming the museum that respects and reflects every member of the community.

Sincerely,
Bart Aikens
Chair, Board of Directors
Lane County Historical Society

Plan Introduction / Background

In 2019 LCHS staff began conversations about what steps the organization needed to take to both change public perception of us as a “pioneer museum,” and to become a more equity-and-inclusion focused organization. An equity statement was crafted, and with it the realization that a larger organization-wide process was needed.

The Lane County History Museum was first envisioned and founded as a pioneer-era specific institution, and a significant amount of the collections reflect those specific narratives of Lane County history. Though the museum has broadened its scope, it has not grown its collections in an intentional way or reflected on its structures and programs to gauge its inclusivity. A superficial statement or rebranding is not sufficient to change an organization that requires systemic shifts.

After adoption of the strategic plan in 2020, a new Diversity, Equity, Accessibility and Inclusion (DEAI) Committee was created to begin to address the strategic plan goal to “put equity and inclusion into practice.” All members of the Board, the Board’s Advisory Council and the staff were invited to participate. Due to COVID-19 pandemic guidelines all but one meeting were done virtually using Zoom.

After several months of planning the committee embarked on a staff-led, institution-wide assessment to gain insight into the state of the organization from a DEAI perspective. The assessment was adapted from an American Alliance of Museum’s template that goes into detail on a departmental level. A summary of the data from that assessment follows this introduction. Notes were taken during meeting discussions to capture ideas, questions and larger themes. Participants were encouraged, but not required, to submit their assessment answers for data analysis.

From both the data collected and the notes from the monthly conversations, staff created a draft version of this DEAI Action Plan, which was adopted by the Board at their May meeting.

We thank everyone who participated in this process and gave their time, which ensured broader organizational buy-in. This plan is a living document, and as such will be reviewed and updated regularly.

Definitions

WILC Project - “Who is Lane County Project” This project is planned for September 2022 through September 2023. It includes a two-phase county-wide public engagement process to review LCHS policies, procedures, goals and plans as well as a new long-term exhibit that involves the community in its curation.

Staff - All paid staff of the Lane County History Museum.

Board - Volunteer Board of Directors, elected by the membership of the Lane County Historical Society.

Advisory Council - Board of Directors’ created advisory group.

Fundraising Committee - Board of Directors’ committee tasked with leading on fundraising planning and organization. The committee can include board, staff and volunteer members.

All Hands - Refers to work lead cooperatively with the board, advisory council and staff.

LCHS - Lane County Historical Society. This is the legal name of the organization and the Society runs the museum and all of its programs and activities under contract with the government of Lane County.

LCHM - Lane County History Museum. The Society has a dba (does business as) of Lane County History Museum and often uses this name to represent all the work done by the organization.

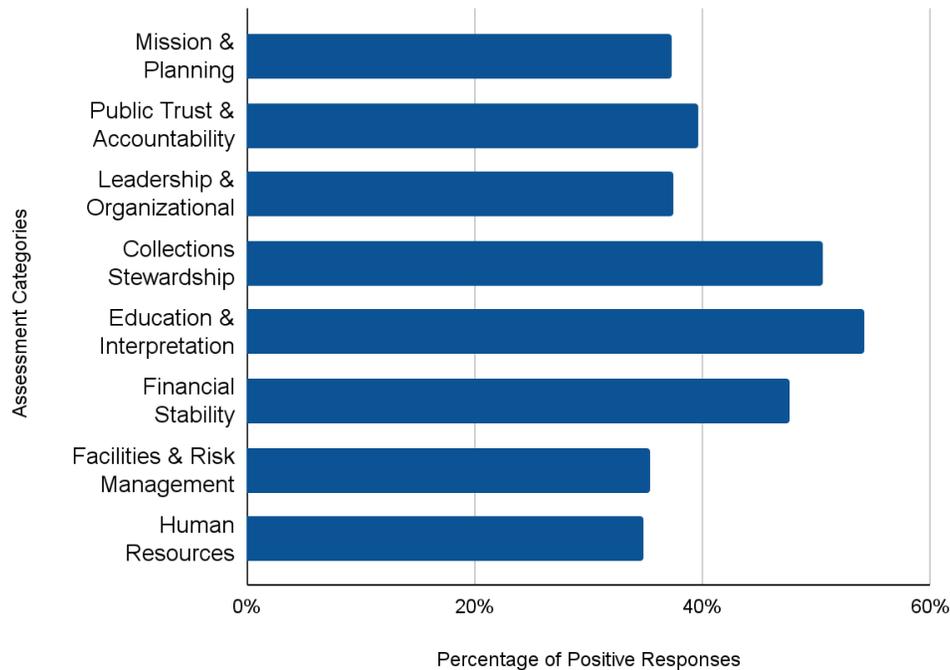
Collection - Physical and digital material under the stewardship and/or ownership of LCHS and/or Lane County Government. Collections are further divided into artifacts, archive, library, born-digital, and education collections.

Research Library - Refers to collections in the archive and library including books, manuscripts, bound material, photographs, maps, blueprints, ephemera, and other two dimensional or works on paper available to researchers of Lane County History.

DEAI Internal Assessment Summary

The internal DEAI Assessment was divided into seven categories, which were also used in this plan to divide the goals and actions to be taken. All participants in the DEAI Committee were invited to submit their assessment responses for analysis. Responses were coded as positive if the participant answered “Yes” or “In Process,” were coded as negative if they answered “No,” and the answer of “Not Sure” was given its own coding.

Assessment Responses by Staff



The above graph shows the percentage of positive responses by LCHS staff by category. Staff answered in the positive 47.12% of the time when looking at the entire assessment. The categories of Mission and Planning, Public Trust and Accountability, Leadership and Organizational Structure, Facilities and Risk Management and Human Resources received the lowest scoring with average positive responses under 40%. Financial Stability received an average positive score under 50%. Staff felt the organization was doing better in the areas of Collections Stewardship, and Education and Interpretation which both scored over 50% positive responses.

The categories that received the highest “Not Sure” responses from staff were Mission and Planning, Collections Stewardship and Financial Stability. The Mission and Planning “Not Sure” responses centered around what planning was happening at the leadership level and to what degree planning was coordinated across the organization. Staff weren’t sure about the scope of current policy in regards to collections and also had questions about fundraising. Overall, this data shows that while staff felt some areas were either already addressing DEAI practices or were in the process of addressing them, all areas still had work to do.

A common theme that staff routinely marked with a score of “No” was around the lack of clear policies and transparency. Additionally, over 80% of staff marked that the organization does not do a good job of assessing programs/projects in order to plan and improve future activity. There were also concerns about diversity on our board and committees with 80% responding with a “No” for currently having members from underrepresented communities on our board and committees. Staff also saw a lack of inclusion of underrepresented communities in our artifact and archive collections.

Staff reported confidence in the manner research and interpretation was conducted and shared with the community, but reflected that the scope of that research needed to be broadened to be more inclusive. While staff responded that the organization does or is in the process of striving to include diversity-based perspectives in all content including relevant discussions, over 70% of staff felt the organization was not actively engaging directly with underrepresented communities to determine their needs. Staff responses also showed a concern about the facility both for safety, accessibility and creating a welcoming/inclusive environment.

Board of Directors and Advisory Council members did not reach 50% participation in submitting their answers for analysis. With such a small sample size, reporting group specific data would make it difficult to maintain the anonymity that was assured at the beginning of this process. For these reasons only staff answers were analyzed and reported on, however input during discussions by Board and Advisory Council members was used to select goals and strategies for the DEAI Action Plan.

Goals and Actions 2021-2023

Mission and Planning

A museum’s mission guides museum activities and decisions by describing the purpose of a museum—its reason for existence. A mission statement articulates that the museum understands its role and accountability to the public and its collections.

Strategic planning produces a mutually agreed-upon vision of how the museum meets the needs of its audiences and communities. Such plans, covering all aspects of museum operations, should be actively relevant to under-represented individuals, families and interests and should document diverse participation of the communities we serve in the planning process. Good plans establish measurable goals and methods by which the museum will evaluate success in efforts of inclusion of all under-represented communities.

Goal A1: Adopt mission, vision and values statements that supports our DEAI goals and directs our organization to make appropriate changes and build relationships.

Action	Lead	Work Period/Deadline
Use a DEAI lens to revisit and revise our current mission and vision statements and create a core values statement.	All Hands	February-May 2022
Ensure all statements can be clearly understood by the public through community engagement.	WILC Project	2022-2023
Reassess and update Strategic Plan with new mission, vision, values lens.	Advisory Council	TBD by Advisory Council
Use mission, vision, and values to guide all aspects of LCHS.	All Hands	Ongoing

Goal A2: Create procedures for LCHS to stay on-track and to make appropriate updates to our Strategic Plan.

Action	Lead	Work Period/Deadline
Advisory Council will review Strategic Plan progress and make recommendations for changes to the Board annually. (See also B1)	Advisory Council	June, Annually
Board review of Advisory Council review and recommendations for Strategic Plan annually and official response back outlining updates and actions to be taken or response to recommendations not taken. (See also B1)	Board	July, Annually

Goal A3: Create structures in place that help us stay accountable, on-track, collect feedback, evaluate our outcomes, and make informed next steps.

Action	Lead	Work Period/Deadline
Make planning, collecting feedback, evaluation and coordination of next steps standard procedure across the organization and in department or project specific ways.	WILC Project	2022-2023
Ensure communication happens between staff, board, committees, volunteers, membership, and the public during these processes. Communication should come in forms that work for the people/groups involved.	WILC Project	2022-2023
Create ways the communities we serve can be involved in planning and evaluation of programs and services.	WILC Project	2022-2023

Public Trust and Accountability

The effectiveness of a museum is directly related to the public’s perception of its integrity. In order for people to trust, attend and support museums generally, we need to see that institutions exhibit and obey ethical standards for making choices that are respectful to all individuals, families and interests. This demonstrates that the museum puts the interests of the public ahead of the interests of the institution or of any affiliated individual and encourages conduct that merits confidence.

Goal B1: Create a body of public documentation that enables transparency and accountability and is kept up to date as progress is assessed by staff, board and the communities we serve (as described in the previous section).

Action	Lead	Work Period/Deadline
Complete and make public our DEAI Action Plan.	All Hands	February-April 2022
Establish a DEAI Committee tasked with keeping the staff accountable. They will report on progress and shortcomings and work with staff on new goals & actions.	WILC Project	2022-2023 Work to start in 2024
Make the Advisory Council’s annual report on the Strategic Plan and the Board’s response available to the public in some form. (See also A2) .	Board/ Advisory Council	November, Annually
Identify and make publicly available internal documents in a way that is accessible to the communities we serve.	WILC Project	2022-2023

Goal B2: Develop deeper and more meaningful connections and reciprocal relationships with our communities, especially with BIPOC and other under-represented communities.

Action	Lead	Work Period/Deadline
Create intentional opportunities for relationship building with people and organizations from under-represented communities. This necessitates community informed planning, collaboration, and reaching people in different ways, including outside of our physical space, in different settings, mediums, languages, etc.	WILC Project	Ongoing - with emphasis & learning during WILC

Leadership and Organizational Structure

The effective operation of a museum is based on a well-functioning governing authority that has a strong working relationship with the museum staff. Inclusive governing authority and museum leadership are expected to reflect the diversity of the communities they serve and to prove they are accountable to those communities. Thus, expecting the inclusion of and commitment to under-represented persons and concerns in governance and senior staff may apply to any museum regardless of governance type, organizational structure or name. Museums should consult with supporting groups, e.g. advisory boards, auxiliary groups, community boards.

Goal C1: Instill goal-oriented planning in operations of all departments, committees and the Board of Directors.

Action	Lead	Work Period/Deadline
Create work plans that lay out specific goal-driven actions for each department, committee and board and methods for evaluating and updating these work plans regularly.	All Hands	Annually
Using completed work plans, make goals publicly available.	Staff	Annually, starting FY24

Goal C2: Set clear expectations and accountability throughout the organization through job descriptions and formally documented direction.

Action	Lead	Work Period/Deadline
Check that there is a written and detailed job description for each position, including staff, leadership, committees, and volunteers. Create any that we do not have yet and update those that are not accurate or adequately detailed. (Create a plan for ongoing reviewing and updating.)	Board/Staff	Complete by end of 2022
Create a process for onboarding new Board members and set periodic review of process and materials to ensure they are current.	Board	December, 2022
Create and formally adopt the Advisory Council charter.	Board/ Advisory Council	2022

Goal C4: Board and committee diversity is recognized as an important part of our mission and done with intention and using best practices.

Action	Lead	Work Period/Deadline
Research and create a plan/strategies for creating and maintaining a diverse Board of Directors that reflects the communities we serve.	Board	January, 2023
Set up board outreach and recruitment opportunities in community organizations and groups representing people under-represented in or excluded from LCHS activities.	Board	January, 2023
Collect data on policies and procedures that support participation from a diversity of people (i.e. meeting times, reimbursements or compensation, etc) and put into practice.	WILC Project	2022-2023

Collections Stewardship

Collections are held in trust for the public and made accessible for the public's benefit, and are an important means of advancing the museum's mission. The national standards require that ethical considerations of collections stewardship are incorporated into the appropriate museum policies and procedures. Collecting and caring for materials by, about and from historically under-represented individuals, families, and communities requires: a deft understanding of past and current legal conditions surrounding these populations and sensitivity to the qualities and types of language, materials and ephemera that may represent their lived experience. The most generous possible access to and use of the collections is encouraged for all communities we serve.

Goal D1: Collections policy and procedures are reflective of the needs of LCHS and the communities we serve.

Action	Lead	Work Period/Deadline
Rework internal collections policies and procedures so that they address the cultivation of collections from underrepresented communities in Lane County, create procedures for addressing cultural preferences for care of collections, community access, and procedures for ensuring donor privacy and copyright.	Staff	Summer 2022
Review and refine collections policy and procedures with the communities we serve and an update schedule.	WILC Project	2022-2023
Make all collection policies publicly available.	WILC Project	2022-2023

Goal D2: Our collection supports the stories of under-represented communities in Lane County.

Action	Lead	Work Period/Deadline
Work with Lane County government to address and possibly rework official policies, as they appear in our contracts, establishing directive (Order 78-5-17-13, c.1978) , and the Lane County Manual (section 60.410 Disposal of Museum Deaccessioned Property).	Staff	Work to begin Summer of 2022.
Rework acquisitions, collections, deaccession, and access policies to be diversity and equity centered.	WILC Project	2022-2023

Goal D3: Best practices for the care and stewardship of LCHS collections.

Action	Lead	Work Period/Deadline
Continue the work to inventory all artifact collections to support deaccessioning, community access and future relocation.	Staff/ Volunteers	2022-2023 and beyond
Continue work to compile and organize all administrative collections documentation, both physically and digitally.	Staff/ Volunteers	2022-2023 and beyond
Continue to complete the backlog of cataloging of all collections, incorporating data from compiled documentation.	Staff/ Volunteers	2022-2023 and beyond

Education and Interpretation

Museum education enhances each visitor's ability to understand and appreciate museum collections, exhibitions and public programs. Exploration of themes and subjects from under-represented communities is encouraged even if long perceived as hidden or sensitive. Programs can accommodate families of all compositions. Educators are front-line specialists who help develop and strengthen museums' roles as inclusive and welcoming public institutions.

Goal E1: Interpretation takes into account the broad scope of needs of the communities we serve and policy/procedures are publicly accessible.

Action	Lead	Work Period/Deadline
Create an Interpretive Plan for museum exhibits.	Staff	Summer 2022
Review with the community our Interpretive Plan for museum exhibits.	WILC Project	2022-2023

Goal E2: Community oversight and collaboration is an integral part of education and interpretation work and the organization strives to ensure it includes multiple and diverse voices, with specific attention to reaching previously underserved communities.

Action	Lead	Work Period/Deadline
Create procedures for sharing authority through collaboration in education and interpretive work, including exhibits, publications, programs, and digital projects.	WILC Project	2022-2023

Goal E3: Our organization maintains contemporary awareness around cultural sensitivity and navigating discussions about many different identities, etc.

Action	Lead	Work Period/Deadline
Provide training and walkthroughs specific to exhibits, when new exhibits are created or before docented events. These would be required for staff or any volunteer docents.	Staff	Ongoing as appropriate

Financial Stability

Nonprofits like museums look to their communities for support in establishing and maintaining financial sustainability. Transparent and solid fiscal performance can demonstrate value and accountability to under-represented communities that have a long history of disenfranchisement. Audiences and supporters seek reassurance of institutional stability through evidence of financial and programmatic outcomes demonstrating the value of museum operations and mission impact for all individuals, families and interests.

Goal F1: LCHS budget is viewed as a moral document and spending supports our mission, vision and core values

Action	Lead	Work Period/Deadline
LCHS budget is made publicly available in a form that illustrates how it supports our mission, vision and core values.	Co-Directors/ Board	FY24 goal (2023-2024 budget)

Goal F2: Budgeting and financial planning take into account the long-term sustainability of the organization, not just the present needs.

Action	Lead	Work Period/Deadline
Annual budget discussions include a 2-3 year outlook.	Board	FY24
A goal for growing the endowment fund is assessed and set every 3 years.	Board	July, 2022
Donation structures are put in place to encourage donors to become long-term supporters.	Fundraising Committee	2022
LCHS strives for a diversity of income streams.	All Hands	Ongoing
Create a Fundraising Plan, and update/review regularly	Fundraising Committee	2022

Goal F3: LCHS budget supports ongoing DEAI-specific needs.

Action	Lead	Work Period/Deadline
Provide necessary annual funding in appropriate line items that matches the needs in the DEAI Action Plan.	Board/Staff	Annually, June

Facilities and Risk Management

Museums care for their buildings, grounds, collections and other assets in trust for the public. The safety of staff, visitors and neighbors must be assured and risk to all of these minimized.

The facilities cues presented to visitors via signs, colors, images and language can help make a museum holistically welcoming. Establishing an open, welcoming environment and presenting potentially sensitive materials in exhibits may expose facilities and visitors to risk. Identifying risks and allocating resources to reduce them help individuals and families feel safe and welcomed in museums, as well as protecting collections and programs.

Goal G1: LCHS uses its facility to meet the needs of staff, volunteers, collections and the communities we serve that are driven by our mission, vision and core values.

Action	Lead	Work Period/Deadline
Discuss and create a museum entrance and lobby that is welcoming and professional. (This includes all signage)	WILC Project	2022-2023
Review existing museum “rules” for visitation with a DEAI lens so they don't deter from creating a welcoming and inclusive space. (They will be reviewed by public during WILC Project)	Staff	March, 2022
Seek out education and create a plan/policy for responding to disruption by dissenting visitors or protesters.	Staff	2022
Rework our exhibits space so that it is more flexible, allows purposeful space for reflection, and breaks for the overwhelmed visitor	Staff	2023

Goal G2: Ensure restrooms within the facility are inclusive and meet the needs of the communities we serve.

Action	Lead	Work Period/Deadline
Make immediately actionable changes to restroom facilities that take into account gender-neutrality, accessibility, families, sanitation and internal needs. Create a proposal for any additional longer-term improvements.	Staff	2022
Using the above plan, determine financial need and budget accordingly.	Board/Staff	2022-2023

Goal G3: The organization’s facility feels safe for all staff, volunteers, leadership, and visitors.

Action	Lead	Work Period/Deadline
Seek out a consultation on our fire and other emergency safety equipment and procedures using an accessibility lens.	Staff	2023
Compile documentation about the risks and subsequent needs in our facility from a community perspective.	WILC Project	2022-2023
Communicate with the County about our needs for public and internal personnel safety in the event that we remain in this facility.	Staff	Ongoing 2022-2023

Goal G4: The uncertainty around LCHS’s lease ending is mitigated with planning efforts for different scenarios.

Action	Lead	Work Period/Deadline
Continue working with Lane County in partnership on meeting the needs of LCHS and its future location using a DEAI lens.	All Hands	Ongoing
Create a timeline and plan for the relocation of collections.	Staff	2022-2023

Human Resources

Human Resource Management can be defined as the effective management of people in an organization. HR management helps bridge the gap between employees' performance and the organization's strategic objectives. LCHS sees its staff as a valuable museum asset and recognizes that many HR functions and duties relate directly to DEAI.

Goal H1: Onboarding of staff and volunteers includes orientation of mission, vision and core values. (Also see C3)

Action	Lead	Work Period/Deadline
Formalize the onboarding process for staff, and ensure all materials are current. (See also H4)	Staff	2022
Formalize the onboarding and training process for volunteers that includes communicating the role of the staff they work with, the policies/procedures of the area they are assigned, process for addressing problems, and expectations with regards to working with the public on behalf of the organization.	Staff	2022 and ongoing.

Goal H2: Training for staff and board is ongoing and includes cultural sensitivity, inclusion, equity, accessibility, and/or other DEAI related information.

Action	Lead	Work Period/Deadline
Training is made available as part of our ongoing DEAI process and required for all staff and Board members	Staff (2022-2023)	Annually
If space allows, any training should be made available for volunteers with public-facing duties. Alternatively, staff can be tasked with communicating DEAI considerations in the work they do with their respective volunteers.	Staff	Annually, with extra emphasis before the Lane County Fair.

Goal H3: Pay structures and benefits are transparent and market based.

Action	Lead	Work Period/Deadline
Do research to determine appropriate wages and benefits for each distinct job type based on industry, local conditions and competitors for employees.	Staff	2022
Create a transparent wage range for all distinct job types.	Staff	2022
Do research on different ways LCHS could support employees' ability to access necessary health care.	Staff	mid-2022

Goal H4: Employment policies are consistent with our DEAI values.

Action	Lead	Work Period/Deadline
Assess and rework the Employee Handbook using a DEAI lens, including non-discrimination policies. This should include both covert and overt discrimination, law-based, and microaggressions.	Staff	2022
Create processes that ensure LCHS reaches individuals from underrepresented communities in the history and museum fields in recruitment efforts and makes them feel welcome during the process.	Staff	Integrate into the next hiring process.

LCHS Leadership and Staff 2022

Board of Directors

Bart Aikens, President & Treasurer

Bill Barrett, Vice-President

Allie Christianson, Secretary

John Barnum

Karen Olsen

Jared Sweezey

Steve King

LCHS Advisory Council

Alice Parman

Mark Harris

Yvonne Fasold

Casey Barrett

Wayne Parker

Staff

Robert L. Hart
Executive Director

Allison Fischer-Olson
Archivist and Research Librarian

Stephen O'Brien
Digital Assets Manager

Jennifer Yeh
Membership and Volunteer Coordinator

Adrienne Gaudette
Office Manager

Marin Aurand
Historian

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Attachment A - DEAI Action Plan Calendar

DEAI Action Plan Calendar 2022-2023		Project Leads																									
		All Hands			Staff			Board			Advisory Council		WILC Project		Committees												
		2022						2023																			
Goal	Action	Lead	Frequency/ Notes	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Mission and Planning Goals and Actions																											
A1	Use a DEAI lens to revisit and revise our current mission and vision statements and create a core values statement.	All Hands																									
	Ensure all statements can be clearly understood by the public through community engagement.	WILC Project																									
	Reassess and update Strategic Plan with new mission, vision, values lens	Advisory Council	TBD by Advisory Council																								
	Use mission, vision, and values to guide all aspects of LCHS.	All Hands	Ongoing																								
A2	Advisory Council will review Strategic Plan progress and make recommendations for changes to the Board annually. (See also B1)	Advisory Council	June, annually																								
	Board review of Advisory Council review and recommendations for Strategic Plan annually and official response back outlining updates and actions to be taken or response to recommendations not taken. (See also B1)	Board	July, annually																								
A3	Make planning, collecting feedback, evaluation and coordination of next steps standard procedure across the organization and in department or project specific ways	WILC Project																									

Education and Interpretation																
E1	Create an Interpretive Plan for museum exhibits.	Staff	Summer 2022													
	Review with the community our Interpretive Plan for museum exhibits.	WILC Project	2022-2023													
E2	Create procedures for sharing authority through collaboration in education and interpretive work, including exhibits, publications, programs, and digital projects.	WILC Project	2022-2023													
E3	Provide training and walkthroughs specific to exhibits, when new exhibits are created or before docented events. These would be required for staff or any volunteer docents.	Staff & Volunteers	Ongoing													
Financial Stability																
F1	LCHS budget is made publicly available in a form that illustrates how it supports our mission, vision and core values.	Board & Staff	FY24 (7/1/23-6/30/24)													
F2	Annual budget discussions include a 2-3 year outlook.	Board	FY24													
	A goal for growing the endowment fund is assessed and set every 3 years.	Board	2022													
	Donation structures are put in place to encourage donors to become long-term supporters.	Fundraising Committee	2022													
	LCHS strives for a diversity of income streams.	All Hands	Ongoing													
	Create a Fundraising Plan, and update/review regularly	Fundraising Committee	2022													
F3	Fund "DEAI" line item in the budget annually at a level that matches the needs in the DEAI Action Plan.	Board	Annual Budget Process													

