

Strategic Planning Goals and Progress

Mission Statement: Edessa School of Fashion engages talented students to become successful professionals in the global fashion industry.

Goals with Progress:

1. Recruit and retain a diverse student body with a passion for excellence in all fields of fashion.

1.1. Establish an outreach program including the recruitment of former Art Institute of Wisconsin students who were unable to complete their programs due to the school's closure.

2022 PROGRESS: Five former Art Institute of Wisconsin students enrolled with several considering enrollment.

2023 PROGRESS:

1.2. Identify local retailers and establish an outreach program offering corporate or store associates an opportunity for educational advancement within those organizations.

2022 PROGRESS: Cultivated partnerships with Indie Fashion (national), Nordstrom, Anthem BC/BS, Black Arts Festival, and Goodwill locally and NYFW BLK (national). Other partnerships are pending. Our partnership with Milwaukee Artist Resource Network is still going strong.

2023 PROGRESS: Additional relationships developed with Kohls Corporation, Greater Milwaukee Foundation, NOIR Fashion Week, Milwaukee Art Museum Art in Bloom, GEE's Clippers, Macy's, Audubon High School, Boys & Girls Club, Milwaukee Fashion Week, Florentine Opera, Courage MKE, Gallery Night, Runway MKE, Breast Cancer Showhouse, Bray Architects, VISIT MKE, Historic Third Ward Association, Unfinished Legacy, and Lela's Boutique

1.3. Make professional connections with regional high school art teachers, with special receptions, and presentations.

2022 PROGRESS: Working out details of a joint pre-college program with the University of Wisconsin Milwaukee and Milwaukee Public Schools. Facilitated middle school summer camp with Full Steam Ahead and MSOE. Fashion Fest MKE is upcoming, facilitating illustration activities with the children's area.

2023 PROGRESS: Completed first joint pre-college program. Partnered with a group redeveloping Milwaukee Fashion Week as part of Fashion Fest MKE.

2. Expand Edessa’s outreach with increased promotion and branding.

2.1. Create a branded omnichannel recruitment package that shows the fashion student “Where they will go, what they will do, and who they will become”.

2022 PROGRESS: Edessa is developing partnerships with local organizations to develop a recruitment package.

2023 PROGRESS: Ongoing

2.2. Use targeted social media, ad spend, and other digital affiliate programs.

2022 PROGRESS: Edessa has a presence in several social media outlets, including Facebook, LinkedIn, Instagram, and Twitter. We have been featured in Six television news segments and have been mentioned and featured in ten publications.

2023 PROGRESS: Continued progress on local television news segments, National Public Radio, PBS, and Spectrum 1 cable news segments.

2.3. Design a website that is appealing to high school students and their parents.

2022 PROGRESS: Our website, www.edessa.fashion is undergoing an upgrade and refresh currently.

2023 PROGRESS: The first phase of the website upgrade has been completed. The next phase is in progress.

2.4. Develop collateral materials and recruitment brochures.

2022 PROGRESS: Current collateral materials are attached, and we are continuing to develop recruitment brochures.

2023 PROGRESS: New marketing materials and collateral are under development.

2.5. Purchase names of high school students from standardized testing. Identify those who have expressed interest in art and design and send a special recruitment mailing.

2022 PROGRESS: Under development.

3. Increase the earned and contributed income to be self-sustaining and financially viable.

3.1. Operationalize the Board of Trustees to jump-start community outreach and “friend”-raising.

2022 PROGRESS: We have held several events that have garnered volunteers, supporters, and committee members. Still developing.

2023 PROGRESS: Ongoing

3.2. Create volunteer support groups of individuals interested in fashion and education.

2022 PROGRESS: ESoF is our friend’s group and it is under development through our volunteers.

2023 PROGRESS: The ESoF group has formed and continues to develop.

3.3. Establish an “inside membership organization for the fashion industry” to collaborate with and inform the world about the value and quality of Edessa's education.

2022 PROGRESS: Ongoing discussions with Nordstrom and Goodwill Industries of Southeastern Wisconsin. We have already engaged with Goodwill on the development of their historic costume collection, its preservation, and storage. We are creating an archive of this collection for student and public consumption currently.

2023 PROGRESS: Developed collaborative networking organization of apparel design business owners, industry professionals, and collaborators who meet 6 times per year.

3.4. Cultivate the industry group to participate in educationally related activities and also provide support for fundraising events.

2022 PROGRESS: Partnership with the MAC is under development. We would facilitate fashion and educational activities for them under the guidelines of the partnership. Also, see the answer above.

2023 PROGRESS: Ongoing

3.5 Establish a healthy fundraising program and process.

2022 PROGRESS: Contracted with a third party to develop fundraising programs. Have submitted many grants, and have begun to see funding develop. Also developing corporate sponsorships.

2023 PROGRESS: Our development committee continues to seek out and submit grants for growth and development.

4. Cultivate the Board of Directors to provide leadership and support for Edessa.

4.1. Maintain and adapt Edessa's By-Laws that include the roles and responsibilities, including fundraising, of the Board of Trustees.

2022 PROGRESS: Edessa's By-Laws are a living document that we will amend as our growth and development dictate. No new amendments since our last renewal.

2023 PROGRESS: Our governance committee is developing amendments and policies to strengthen operational effectiveness and growth.

4.2. Circulate our case statement to introduce the significance of the Edessa School of Fashion.

2022 PROGRESS: The Edessa case statement has been revised and recirculated as it is a living document that is edited and restated as we grow and define our structural/developmental needs.

2023 PROGRESS: Ongoing.

4.3. Develop a matrix that identifies the characteristics of the ideal Board member.

2022 PROGRESS: The board is continuing to grow and define what an ideal Board member looks like. The matrix is under construction.

2023 PROGRESS: The governance committee is tasked with this initiative.

4.4. Establish a list of candidates for the Board and compare them with the matrix to create a diverse well-rounded Board of Directors.

2022 PROGRESS: The candidate list will be properly developed from the matrix as it takes shape.

2023 PROGRESS: Four new board members were identified and joined.

4.5. Prioritize the membership candidates, including a notation of which candidates would be the best to recruit first in order to gain credibility and encourage others to participate.

2022 PROGRESS: Pending matrix development.

2023 PROGRESS: Ongoing

4.6. Determine the top candidates and develop the nominating committee to cultivate each individual.

2022 PROGRESS: Pending matrix development.

2023 PROGRESS: Governance committee activity.

4.7. Guide the existing Directors to engage in discussions with the Board committees to delegate some of the responsibilities for their leadership.

2022 PROGRESS: Our committee structures are evolving as our structure and developmental needs are defined.

2023 PROGRESS: Ongoing.

Future Vision

In 5 years, our school will:

1. Be Title IV certified.
2. Be Regionally Accredited.
3. Have completed two full graduating classes.
4. Have an enrollment of over 160 students.
5. Provide graduates assistance in securing gainful employment within their respective fields.
6. Have a training partnership with regional industry organizations.
7. Have achieved international accreditation.
8. Cultivate partnerships with local and international schools e.g., Milwaukee School Of Engineering and Paris American Academy.