



National Tax Association

To: Members, National Tax Association

From: Board of Directors, National Tax Association

Re: NTA Strategic Plan

Date: February 3, 2022

This document sets forth the National Tax Association’s Strategic Plan, as adopted on December 13, 2021, by the NTA Board of Directors, following a year-long strategic planning process.

The NTA has existed for over one hundred years, and it is a thriving and robust organization. The lifeblood of the NTA is its large, engaged, and global membership. The NTA excels in achieving many of its goals, which, as stated in the NTA Bylaws, are “... to educate and benefit its members, and to interest and inform the general public concerning taxation and public finance”, by carrying on a range of activities such as encouraging research in public finance, conducting conferences and symposiums on tax problems, bringing together for discussion public officials, taxpayers and their representatives, students, instructors in universities and colleges, and others interested in taxation and public finance, publishing conference and symposium proceedings and other publications, and promoting better understanding of the common interests of the nation, state, and local governments in the United States and elsewhere, in matters of taxation and public finance.

Until recently, the NTA has never engaged in a systematic examination of its long-term goals and ways to best achieve these goals. Times have changed since the NTA was first organized in 1907, and the NTA needs to continue to evolve to serve its members.

Accordingly, the NTA Board of Directors decided to engage in a strategic planning exercise, building on the NTA’s many successes over the years but also recognizing that there are areas in which the NTA can – and should – do better. This document is the result of this strategic planning exercise. The Strategic Planning process spanned one year, from December 2020 to December 2021. The NTA Board of Directors initiated the Strategic Planning process on December 4th, 2020. On February 26th, 2021, the Board discussed a January 2021 memorandum that proposed steps for the process, and the Board approved

the process. In April 2021, the Executive Committee of the NTA approved the selection of Vista Cova LLC as the firm to facilitate the process, following the solicitation of proposals and interviews. In preparation for a July 2021 Strategic Planning retreat, James Alm and Tara Sheehan formed and met with the Strategic Planning Committee (the Committee), and Vista Cova LLC conducted an NTA membership survey and a dozen interviews with previous NTA leaders. The Committee members were James Alm (chair), Michael Allen, Barry Johnson, Damon Jones, Drew Lyon, Katie Pratt, Kim Rueben, Molly Saunders-Scott, Juan Carlos Suarez Serrato, Daphne Kenyon (Ex Officio), James Mackie (Ex Officio), and Tara Sheehan (Ex Officio). Vista Cova LLC compiled data before the retreat, facilitated the in-person Strategic Planning Retreat on July 28-29, 2021, and later provided the Committee with a report on the retreat and an initial draft of the proposed Strategic Plan. In October 2021, the Committee revised the Strategic Plan and sent it to the NTA Board of Directors, which discussed, revised, and approved the Strategic Plan on December 13th, 2021.

The three major areas of the NTA Strategic Plan are: (1) Vision and Mission Statements, (2) Strategic Priority Areas, and (3) Goals and Metrics for Success for each area. This Strategic Plan has been discussed by the NTA Board of Directors, revised in accordance with this BOD discussion, and approved for implementation over the next three years. ***The suggested Goals for 2022 are highlighted in bold and italics***, and Metrics for Success are included for these 2022 Goals.

(1) Vision and Mission Statements

Vision: Communicates the organization's core aim to current and prospective members, stakeholders, partners, and other interested parties.

Empowering the broader tax community to develop fair and efficient government tax and spending programs through NTA members' research, education, and collaboration.

Mission: Communicates to current and prospective members the objectives and the activities of the organization to achieve its vision.

- Advance and disseminate cutting-edge research on tax policy and administration to a broad audience
- Foster collaboration among public finance professionals, including accountants, economists, lawyers, policymakers, practitioners, and tax administrators
- Provide professional development and mentoring to a diverse and inclusive membership
- Help the public understand the consequences of tax and fiscal policy

(2) Strategic Priority Areas: In keeping with the NTA's Vision and Mission statements, the Strategic Planning Committee specified four Strategic Priority Areas that the NTA should focus upon in the immediate future. One of these Strategic Priority Areas, increasing Diversity and Inclusion, is both listed as a priority area on its own and is incorporated

throughout all activities of the NTA. As the NTA implements this Strategic Plan, five groups should be considered and engaged in each of the Strategic Priority Areas: (1) early career professionals; (2) graduate students; (3) non-economists; (4) researchers; and (5) special interest organizations focused on underrepresented groups. More fully engaging these constituencies in the activities of the NTA is one of the overarching objectives of the Strategic Plan, as they are not the current core NTA membership groups.

- **Research Excellence:** Foster high-quality, policy-relevant research that includes diverse perspectives and, among other things, addresses the concerns of underrepresented groups; disseminate tax and fiscal policy scholarship; and increase the accessibility of research to a variety of audiences
- **Collaboration and Engagement:** Increase collaboration among diverse groups of public finance professionals, including accountants, economists, lawyers, policymakers, practitioners, and tax administrators; articulate the consequences of tax policy to a broader audience; and increase engagement with policymakers, media, and the public
- **Career Pathways:** Broaden access to tax-related fields and professions, and provide lifetime career development and learning opportunities
- **Diversity and Inclusion:** Embrace and increase diversity and inclusion in the tax community

(3) Goals and Metrics for Success for Each Strategic Priority Area

Research Excellence: Goals and Metrics for Success

- **Investigate new ways to disseminate tax policy research and to highlight National Tax Journal (NTJ) articles to a broader audience**
 - Compile a list of possible models for how the NTA can reach a broader audience, including, for example: webinars, podcasts, NBER Briefs, Tax Prof blog posts, SSRN, mini conferences on a topic of the day, EconoFact, TPC Tax Policy Briefing Book, posting of top downloaded tax articles, and tax data of the week.
 - Pick several examples from the above list, and explore the possibility/ability of the NTA doing similar things, while ensuring that the NTA is not replicating what other organizations are already doing
- **Stream videos from the annual conference on our website**
 - Pick 3 – 4 keynotes, panels, or other topical sessions from 2022 Annual Conference, and stream them to NTAnet.org
 - Make recorded videos available to graduate and undergraduate professors for educational purposes
- Investigate the feasibility of a new pilot program to fund annual conference registration for speakers whose papers are accepted but who cannot fund conference registration, due to lack of institutional support.
- Increase research awards like a Best Tax Paper of the Year, irrespective of where the

paper is published

Collaboration and Engagement: Goals and Metrics for Success

- **Increase interdisciplinary sessions**
 - Set aside at least five interdisciplinary sessions for each annual conference
- **Explore whether to include a one-year membership with conference registration for newmembers**
 - Determine what makes financial sense for the NTA and what would encourage new members to renew their membership
 - Determine whether there are rules that prohibit this for some government employees
- **Investigate new organizations with which the NTA can collaborate**
 - Compile a list of organizations, including:
 - Economics organizations (e.g., American Economic Association)
 - Tax policy organizations (e.g., American Tax Policy Institute)
 - Public administration organizations (e.g., Association for Public Policy and Management)
 - Tax law organizations, (e.g., American Bar Association Tax Section and American Law and Economics Association)
 - Accounting organizations (e.g., American Taxation Association, American Institute of Certified Public Accountants)
 - Business organizations (e.g., Tax Executives Institute) and
 - Affinity organizations that represent groups that are underrepresented in the tax community (e.g., American Society of Hispanic Economists, Association for Economic Research of Indigenous Peoples, Committee on the Status of Women in the Economics Profession, Committee on the Status of Minority Groups in the Economics Profession, International Association for Feminist Economists, National Economic Association, Sadie Collective)
 - Determine what types of collaboration might be feasible and effective (e.g., sessions at conferences, joint memberships, joint initiatives), and specify 3 – 4 desirable organizations for collaboration
- Produce products that disseminate information to a broader audience, including alternatives to the *National Tax Journal* (e.g., SSRN)
- Encourage members to highlight the value of the NTA to others (e.g., serve as NTA “ambassadors”)
- Share information on activities of other organizations broadly within the NTA membership

Career Pathways: Goals and Metrics for Success

- **Expand mentoring programs**
 - Compile examples of effectively organized mentorship programs and procedures
 - Review, develop, and execute more robust NTA mentorship programs

- (including a more precise definition of the mentorship programs)
 - Significantly increase the participation of NTA members in these programs
- **Expand fellowships for early career scholars from underrepresented groups, institute fundraising to finance these initiatives, and consider adding these initiatives to the regular NTA budget**
 - Significantly increase the participation of NTA members in these initiatives, double the 2021 fundraising level for these initiatives, and add these initiatives to the 2023 NTA budget
- Establish an NTA research award that recognizes outstanding research publications authored by early career scholars
- Expand short course offerings to include topics of interest to the broader tax community, and consider offering short course offerings virtually
- Make career development opportunities available both virtually and in person
- Increase the variety of professional development and learning opportunities for members
- Investigate the feasibility of awarding a junior scholar fellowship to buy out a course

Diversity and Inclusion: Goals and Metrics for Success

- **Add a new Diversity and Equity Committee to the current listing of NTA Board of Directors committees**
 - Establish a Diversity and Equity Committee, and assign members from the NTA Board of Directors
- **Define what diversity and equity mean to the NTA (e.g., racial, ethnic, sexual identity, disability status, organizational diversity, geography, research methods and focus)**
 - Assign the new Diversity and Equity Committee the task of determining what diversity means to the NTA and of producing a final product that includes a diversity and equity statement like the Mission statement
- **Ensure adequate representation of underrepresented groups in the NTA leadership**
 - Evaluate each annual slate of Board of Directors candidates presented to the NTA membership to ensure adequate representation of underrepresented groups and their interests
- **Benchmark the demographic composition of the membership, award recipients, and conference attendees**
 - Continue to collect demographic information from members and registrants to measure diversity
 - Inform the NTA membership regularly to keep them apprised of these efforts and to solicit feedback
- **Investigate the potential for collaboration with organizations that focus on underrepresented groups (e.g., American Society of Hispanic Economists, Association for Economic Research of Indigenous Peoples, Committee on the Status of Women in the Economics Profession, Committee on the Status of Minority Groups in the Economics Profession, International Association for Feminist Economists, National Economic Association, Sadie Collective)**
 - Determine what types of collaboration might be feasible and effective (e.g.,

sessions at conferences, joint memberships, joint initiatives), and specify 3 – 4 organizations for collaboration

- Determine the feasibility and costs of specific collaboration proposals by initiating discussions with 3 – 4 organizations
- Encourage research on topics relevant to underserved groups and conducted by authors from these groups
- Design conference sessions that reflect more diversity of fields and professions
- Update and implement the Code of Conduct