

National Instrumentalist Mentoring and Advancement Network (NIMAN)

Leadership Group Meeting

Date: November 6, 2019 Time: 9:00-10:30am ET

Date: November 13, 2019 Time: 12:00-1:30pm ET

This meeting was offered twice with the same agenda to accommodate availability.

Location: Zoom Meeting

Attendees November 6th:

Lucinda Ali-Landing - Hyde Park Suzuki Institute

Abra Bush - The Peabody Institute at Johns Hopkins University

Christina Salgado - The Juilliard School

Stanford Thompson (Group Leader) - Play On Philly

Attendees November 13th:

Afa Dworkin - Sphinx

Richard Scerbo - National Orchestral Institute

Adrienne Thompson - Chicago Musical Pathways Initiative

Stanford Thompson - Play On Philly

Absent:

Jonathan Martin - Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra

MINUTES

1. Stan opened the meeting and welcomed the group. The goal for this meeting is to inform the Leadership Group about the work the other working groups have accomplished to date. As Jonathan Martin was not available for either meeting option his comments will be added to the minutes after his review.
2. Background Information:
 - a. This work began in September of 2018 when Walter Bitner reached out to colleagues in the pre-college space about forming a network to share information and best practices.
 - b. Stan created a briefing paper (available on the NIMAN website) outlining what it could be like if the entire pipeline was sharing goals and information; looking at classical musicians of color as one cohort to facilitate from one area of growth to the next and create forward progress.

- c. This paper outlined ten potential goals for the association, i.e. economies of scale.
 - d. Two months of exploratory meetings followed including two conference calls and one in-person meeting at the Sphinx Connect Conference where pursuing a national association was approved by the group.
 - e. Stan had initial conversations with two potential funders. The Paul M. Angell Foundation, out of Chicago, invited us to submit a letter of intent in July and then a full proposal in August for \$100K. A decision will be received by the NIMAN Convening. Stan also spoke with The Mellon Foundation. They are not interested now, but may be in the future. We are submitting a proposal to the Sphinx Organization Venture Fund for \$100K by November 15th. **November 13: The Angell Foundation awarded NIMAN \$50K.**
 - f. Stan spoke with two potential partners. The association does not want to start from scratch creating its own non-profit. There is interest from the Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra to serve as the incubator organization. Carnegie Hall was approached about playing a similar role but did not express interest. As a good faith gesture, Cincinnati is hosting The Convening.
 - g. **November 6: Christina asked if the incubator concept is still in flux? Would an incubator support all administrative needs in-house? Stan replied, yes, the Implementation Group is working on what we would need from an incubator, i.e. space, grant writing support, etc.**
3. Action Items of Working Groups: We have discovered that it is not ideal to have all of the groups working at the same time as there is much overlap. The Convening will help align all of the groups' work.
- a. By-Laws Working Group (Leader - Charlie Grode, Merit School of Music)
 - i. They are working on the Association Name, Purpose, Mission, Vision. They were supplied with ideas from the gathering at the Sphinx Conference for purpose and mission, as well as, the briefing paper.
 - ii. Membership Classification - It's been recommended that we have multiple classes, i.e. active member organizations, members who believe in the NIMAN mission, individuals who want to support.
 - iii. Nominating and Voting Rights - This encompasses voting, Executive Director hiring, Board Member recruitment. This will also define the process for members to dispute a particular action.
 - iv. Benefits and Obligations for Members
 - v. Term of Office

- vi. Duties and Powers of Board Members and Chief Executive - How is the power dynamic defined between the Board and the Chief Executive.
 - vii. Standing Committees and their Composition
 - viii. Fiscal Year Designation
 - ix. Conflicts of Interest - This may seem standard but needs consideration, i.e. If we have a collegiate over representation on the Board there could be a resource allocation issue.
 - x. November 6: Abra asked how the groups are doing. Stan replied that all groups have had two meetings. Minutes will all be posted. Charlie did a great job organizing this group so that they were very focused on getting the work done.
 - xi. November 13: Richard commented that he is interested in how we can work together in a non-competitive way to create broad base support for musicians. Though his experience is in the summer music festival space, he sees this as applicable to the college/conservatory admissions process also. Stan agreed and commented that he sees this at the Youth Orchestra and festival levels as well. How do we replace a sense of competition with a sense of alignment?
 - xii. November 13: Adrienne asked how we define conflict of interest. Stan replied that we need to refer to the group's minutes to confirm but we want to be sure that no organization exerts more control/influence than the others. This applies to Board membership and resource allocation as well. Conflicts of interest might inform how we build this organization.
 - xiii. Implementation Group (Leader - Carol Dunevant, Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra)
 - xiv. This group is tasked with drafting how the association would open, hire staff and start serving members.
 - xv. They are defining the preferred criteria for an incubator.
 - xvi. They are defining the profile for the Executive Director (skills and traits). The group is looking at this role realistically. This salary could be significant. Initially, this role might possibly be someone working part time or remotely while a more comprehensive search is conducted.
 - xvii. They are also creating a basic marketing and communications plan.
- b. Program Group (Leader - Hilary Dow Ward, Sewanee Summer Music Festival) This group is focusing on two main topics.

i. Campus touring and visits

1. What should visits entail? Could include: private lessons; tours; NIMAN playing a role in tours and working with institutions to provide a deeper experience; minority led affinity group meetings; meetings with students to discuss the transition. All of this could help provide a reality check for what is needed to apply, as well as, the application process.
2. November 6: Abra commented that it would be interesting to bring leaders of affinity groups together and work with them in a formidable way to develop a new generation of leaders. Stan will be sure that the Program Group and Convening planners get this suggestion.
3. Creating a CRM-style Database of Musicians (Customer Relations Management)
4. This database could help organizations manipulate data in powerful ways, i.e. Can a conservatory have a one-stop-shop for an applicant, information, video etc.
5. This could help institutions find potential students early and begin to build a relationship a year or two before applying. This would also apply to summer camps and pre-professional organizations.
6. Could we have an outside evaluator assign a rating to student performances for ease of sorting.
7. November 6: Abra commented that the CRM concept makes her slightly uncomfortable but she understands the value of a database. Abra feels it's incumbent upon us not to rely on a crutch for recruitment. Students should not feel like they are being pigeon holed. While this is valuable for information sharing, we would not want to be so reliant on a database that we would not still aggressively look in obscure spaces. Stan agrees with Abra's concern about not using the database as a crutch. We want to balance the database with other tools such as site visits. We still need to do the work of building relationships and we need to discuss strategies for doing this more. We want students to know years before applying that a place is comfortable for them
8. November 6: Christina commented that we need to keep a logistical perspective on this. A database like this is very

hard to maintain and keep updated. Stan shares this concern and hopes that there will be strong enough participation from member organizations to keep momentum going to keep information updated.

9. November 13: Afa asked if our vision is to become a de facto membership organization? Stan replied, yes. We would be a member driven service organization that does not compete with initiatives that already exist, but rather, create alignment. The Bridge concept demonstrates that there are already existing initiatives and best practices that other organizations can emulate.

10. November 13: Afa asked if the association would be funded by member contributions. Stan replied, yes, members would pay dues. One concept is for these dues to be modest plus services at a premium cost. What would it be worth to participate in the resources we provide, i.e. the CRM.

c. Ratification (Leader - Toni Paz)

- i. Application for Members - What information should we collect? Should they self-select membership by us sharing the expected values of the association.
- ii. The group is examining mission, vision, values alignment - making sure that we have the right people around the table.
- iii. The group is considering offering a Founding Members level of membership with certain benefits, i.e. opportunity to vote on the bylaws and to nominate the first group of Board members; recognition as a Founding Member.
- iv. Dues Structure -
 1. Will all classes pay dues?
 2. Flat rate or scaled
 3. Payment plan or waivers
 4. Special formula to calculate dues based on budget

d. Leadership Group (Leader - Stanford Thompson)

- i. It is important to recognize that there will be many opinions and ideas that do not reach consensus or majority. The Leadership Group is there to steer the launch and solve impasses.
- ii. The group will serve from the present until we announce the launch in January. There is a possibility that we would extend the duration of this existing group or form another group to continue. We will re-evaluate at the end of January.

4. Timeline

- a. September 3, 2019 - November 4, 2019: Working Groups
- b. November 5-14, 2019 - NIMAN "Drafting Convening" Planning
- c. November 15 & 16, 2019 - NIMAN "Drafting Convening"
- d. November 17-30, 2019 - Compile Minutes/Notes from Convening
- e. December 2019 - Minutes are Made Public and Leadership Team Reviews - The public can present comments and questions to the Leadership Group - We have a mailing list of 130 people representing 75 organizations
- f. January 2020 - Two Leadership Team Meetings - Stan to send a note to the group after the Convening to schedule dates. We will continue with Zoom meetings.
- g. February 6, 2020 - NIMAN Launch Announced at Sphinx Connect
- h. February - March 2020 - Founding Membership Application Opens On-Line and closes at the end of March. Non-founding members can always sign up.
- i. April 2020 - By-Laws Adopted and Board Nominations Open
- j. May 2020 - Board is Confirmed and Officers Elected
- k. Summer 2020 - Staff is Hired and Programs are Launched

5. Open Discussion

- a. November 6: Christina asked if the work that NIMAN is doing is an off-shoot of the work that Walter Bitner is doing? Stan replied, yes, but Walter is continuing to focus solely on the pre-college space.
- b. November 6: Lucinda joined the group late in the call and introduced herself.
- c. November 6: Abra complimented all the groups on great organization and looks forward to the convening.
- d. The November 6th meeting adjourned at 10:10am.
- e. November 13: Richard is looking forward to working with the Leadership Group.
- f. November 13: Adrienne asked if there is a profile for potential Board members. Stan replied that we do not have this yet but he will bring the suggestion to the By-Laws Group.
- g. November 13: Afa asked for the one or two goals for this group as a result of our meeting. How can we most constructively contribute? Stan replied that over the next several months we will need a tremendous amount of positivity. We will get more clarity as we move forward but it may take 1-2 years to begin adding value as an association. Thankfully, we are already getting much support from organizations like Sphinx and the Cincinnati

Symphony Orchestra. We are grateful for the \$50K award from the Angell Foundation. The Knight Foundation is also closely watching what we are doing.

- h. November 13: Adrienne is interested in sharing best practices and how we can work together to eliminate competition and realize we are all working to serve the greater good.
- i. November 13: Richard agreed with Adrienne and is excited to move beyond doing work in silos. Please let him know if there is anything he can do before the Convening. Afa echoed this offer.
- j. The November 13th meeting adjourned at 12:40pm.