

National Instrumentalist Mentoring and Advancement Network (NIMAN)
Leadership Group Meeting

Date: Tuesday January 21, 2020

Time: 9:00-10:30am ET

Location: Zoom

Attendees:

Lucinda Ali-Landing - Hyde Park Suzuki Institute
Rebecca Bogers - NEC Preparatory School
Abra Bush - The Peabody Institute at Johns Hopkins University
Hilary Dow Ward (Program Group Leader) - Sewanee Summer Music Festival
Charlie Grode (By-Laws Group Leader) - Merit School of Music
Jonathan Martin - Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra
Ahmad Mayes - Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra
Toni Paz - Independent Fundraising Professional
Richard Scerbo - National Orchestral Institute
Adrienne Thompson - Chicago Musical Pathways Initiative
Stanford Thompson (Leadership Group Leader) - Play On Philly

Absent:

Carol Dunevant (Implementation Group Leader) - Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra
Edgar Smith - World Pac Paper

M I N U T E S

1. Stan opened the meeting at 9:00am and welcomed the group.
2. The Leadership Group has the responsibility to decide on the building blocks of the association. This group will need to engage in some discussions around working group topics.
3. Stan reviewed the Cumulative Decision Document:
 - a. Association Name:
 - i. The working association name is the National Instrumentalist Mentoring and Advancement Network.
 - ii. The By-Laws Group offered an alternative name at the Convening - the National Association for the Advancement of Musicians of Color. This did not receive unanimous support. One convening participant strongly advocated for the name not to closely reflect the NAACP. This name focuses on standard orchestral instrumentalists that would exclude classical vocalist, pianist, conductors and composers.

- iii. Abra inquired why the name is intentionally limiting. Stan replied that we are trying to stay focused on a specific group of classical musicians: standard orchestral instrumentalists. But he is not opposed to discussion on a more neutral word like “musicians.”
 - iv. Rebecca commented that we should ensure that there are no trademarks on the chosen name.
 - v. Lucinda commented that at this point she supports the current name.
 - vi. Jonathan commented that it is advantageous from a fundraising perspective to keep the work focused on instrumentalists. A focus will be more positive as opposed to a broad range. Charlie echoed Jonathan’s opinion.
 - vii. Stan responded that we will table this discussion for now and move forward with the current name.
- b. Mission/Vision/Values:
- i. Some adjustments have been made from our November convening in Cincinnati. The Mission and Vision are closely tied together.
 - ii. The group supports the revisions.
 - iii. Rebecca encouraged us to be sure that the language reflects our specific focus. Stan commented that, technically, this is an association focused on our member organizations. We want a Mission Statement focused on the organizations collaboration aspect as opposed to the musicians. The Mission needs to address who we serve.
 - iv. Rebecca suggested that perhaps we should add something to the Values to emphasize this fact and make it clearer. She could see how someone might get confused.
 - v. Ahmad commented that we should consider creating a more precise way to communicate the Values. They are very wordy as listed right now. Can there be a truncated version for each one?
 - vi. Stan agreed that each value is too long. Stan and Ahmad agreed to work on a simplified version.
 - vii. Rebecca asked for the group to add a value regarding the organizations collaborating together.
 - viii. Lucinda agreed that the mission should be member organization focused.
 - ix. Ahmad commented that the fourth Value is the only Value to highlight a specific phase on The Bridge. Are we highlighting this phase because parents are involved? Stan replied, yes. This is where family support is most critical. But Stan recognizes the problem with only highlighting those phases. We can revise this value to clarify.
- c. Initial Strategic Priorities:
- i. The Board needs to be formed and they will create strategic priorities, but there are five important steps that need to be taken first:
 1. Identify an incubator organization. The Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra is committed to serving as the incubator organization.
 2. Define and build a Board of Directors.

3. Secure at least \$250K in funds by the Fall of 2020. Approximately \$61,000 has been raised as of January 15, 2020. About half of that was spent on the November 2019 Convening in Cincinnati. There is still some interest from other funders, e.g. Knight, Mellon, Angell. We will need to put out more feelers but we are headed in the right direction.
 4. Hire a Managing Director. A list of ideal traits for the Managing Director is outlined on pages 22 and 23 of the November 2019 Cincinnati Convening Report.
 5. Begin implementing key initiatives that help connect our members to our mission and build value for their membership in NIMAN.
- ii. Jonathan commented that this is clear, focused, and can be clearly articulated to an outsider.
 - iii. Ahmad asked if we should assign a more specific timeline, assuming that this will all take place in the next calendar year? Stan replied, yes, but more discussion is needed. Stan to draft dates for this calendar year.
- d. Definition of Membership:
- i. Active Organizations: Organizations currently engaged in the training and/or mentoring of underrepresented musicians. NIMAN prefers that active organizations' values align with the national association in the following ways:
 1. Removing barriers to access for musicians from underrepresented ethnicities
 2. Focus on training/mentoring musicians from underrepresented ethnicities for advancement towards a professional career in classical music
 3. Prioritize the important role diversity, inclusion, and equity has in the field of classical music
 4. Demonstrated commitment to cultural equity
 - ii. Supporting Organizations and Individuals (Friends): Organizations and Individuals who are committed to removing barriers to access for musicians from underrepresented ethnicities and dedicated to diversity, inclusion and equity, but do not have a project, concept, initiative or goal at any phase of a musician's development with associated human and financial resources. This membership level might still make a monetary contribution, but not require dues.
 - iii. Abra commented that it is good that we are making this as inclusive as possible.
 - iv. Jonathan commented that there is enough detail without being too complicated. It makes sense with how organizations will intersect with NIMAN. It is good from a fundraising perspective.
 - v. Lucinda likes the clarity but is not sure exactly how the benefits will differ. Stan to discuss later in the meeting.

- vi. Hilary asked what the expense differentiation would be. Stan replied that we have not made that decision yet. The fairest way might be to look at the size of one's budget. But we need to examine the intricacies of this. Another option is a flat rate.
 - vii. Hilary responded that she would rather the fee was based upon our specific budgets, or possibly the size of the staff, not the budget. For many people this might be the decision point for membership even if they support the mission.
 - viii. Rebecca asked where other umbrella organizations (Supporting Organizations) fall, e.g. Sphinx. Stan replied that any organization that can prove that they are adding value can qualify for that member level. Rebecca clarified, so in theory someone at the Supporting Organization level could move up to the Active Organization level. Stan replied, yes, also a Supporting Organization individual could become a Board Member.
 - ix. Abra asked how we help members determine their appropriate level. Stan replied that we might need a "membership task force" of peers who review applications so this decision is not determined by one person. This task force might even review renewals in both directions – promotions, demotions or removals.
- e. Benefits of Membership - We may need to create criteria for how certain benefits are accessed and by whom:
- i. Board nomination and voting privileges; this may be reserved for Active Members only. We may need to consider how benefits apply to one group or the other.
 - ii. Receive newsletter and general communications;
 - iii. Receive invitations and discounts to conferences, performances, and other events;
 - iv. Access libraries of recommended readings, documents, and/or other curated information;
 - v. Access recommended tools, policies, procedures, and best practices;
 - vi. Access data and/or outcomes;
 - vii. Access sponsored program funding opportunities;
 - viii. Use the name "Member of the National Instrumentalist Mentoring and Advancement Network";
 - ix. Access to group financial benefits such as discounted tuition to national programs or instrument purchases;
 - x. Access to free/discounted consulting, technical assistance, and training opportunities;
 - xi. Participate in national program evaluation, outcomes measurement, or other research projects.
 - xii. Richard commented that some of the benefits should be reserved for members only. Until we know the criteria for Friends this might not be worth dissecting yet. Rebecca agreed. This might be a Board task.
- f. Ways Members Can Engage:

- i. Serve on the NIMAN Board of Directors
- ii. Serve on a NIMAN Task Force. This is a concept addressing the evolution of the Working Groups into something more permanent and also to create more volunteer opportunities for people who want to engage.
- iii. Attend our annual convening / board meeting
- iv. Participate in ongoing virtual meetings, seminars and trainings
- v. Provide feedback to NIMAN staff and Board of Directors
- vi. Collaborate with other NIMAN members on local and national initiatives
- vii. Provide information on musicians served in order for NIMAN to assist in their advancement.
 - 1. This reflects the creation of a musician database. This sensitive project requires much more thought. We need a data driven approach to how we help musicians and provide resources. We will need members to populate this database. How will we receive information and get buy-in from members?
 - 2. Rebecca asked if we should consider how the National Guild gathers information via survey, but maybe we are considering gathering more personal information. Perhaps we would communicate the benefit to member organizations of having access to this information to further their own missions. Stan agreed.
 - 3. Ahmad commented that we should not undervalue what being a part of this database could mean for students and parents. This could very much help them with access to opportunities, as well as, help them to market themselves. This could be a similar situation to how student athletes are assisted.
 - 4. Rebecca suggested that this might be similar to the Common App process for university applications. There is opportunity here, but it becomes complicated when organizations are providing data.
 - 5. Jonathan commented that this is difficult. You cannot manage what you cannot measure. And you cannot measure what you do not have data on. We need a respectful, thoughtful way to do this. This database represents one of our most essential elements.
 - 6. Lucinda suggested that we consult the Cultural Data Project. Some of this information may already be out there.
- g. Board Structure:
 - i. This structure is still a work in progress. There will be a process where the by-laws will be vetted by lawyers.
 - ii. The Board will be nominated and elected by Members of the organization.
 - iii. Each qualifying Member will be given one vote to be exercised in the election of members to the Board of Directors.
 - iv. The founding Board will be comprised of 17 to 22 members.

- v. The chief executive officer of NIMAN will be an Ex Officio, non-voting, member of the Board of Directors and will serve in addition to the total number of voting members of the Board. Initially, this role will be filled by the Managing Director.
- vi. Board Members can serve two terms of three years each. One-third of the total number of Directors' terms shall expire annually. Initially, this would need to be staggered so the cycle of leaving works.
- vii. We need to have a broad range of skills and capabilities among Board Members.
- viii. Rebecca asked if we are considering NIMAN to be its own 501(c)(3) entity. If not, what is the relationship between NIMAN and the Cincinnati Symphony Board? Ahmad replied that this is a big question, and we are not sure if we have the answer yet. It is a priority for Cincinnati's Board that NIMAN succeed. The Board supports NIMAN but we have not settled the dynamics between the two yet. Jonathan agrees with Ahmad and also with Stan, in that the Board needs to be populated with individuals who have governance experience and fundraising capabilities. Toni agrees. The Board needs to bring skills and leverage from funding connections.
- ix. Abra asked if there is an opportunity for representatives from the Cincinnati Board to sit on the NIMAN Board for a specific number of years to provide support. Jonathan replied that this has not been discussed yet. Rather than be prescriptive about slots perhaps this should be more organic. Six to nine years is an approximate time for forming a start-up so we would not want to be too prescriptive. But Jonathan likes the idea.
- x. Rebecca commented that it is critical to have people with financial and social capital. Will the NIMAN Board point toward the Cincinnati Symphony Board? Jonathan replied that he does not see it like that. We need to keep a clear separation. Cincinnati Symphony has a complicated structure. Some issues are legal. We need clarity and separation from a governance perspective. Rebecca cautions that we should clearly articulate the relationship between the two Boards.
- xi. Stan asked Rebecca if there lessons to be learned in her experiences with BEAM. Rebecca replied that strategy can shift in large organizations. We just need to stay aware.
- xii. Hilary asked how many people would be on the national Board. Stan replied 17-22. Hilary asked how many would be from Cincinnati. Stan replied that we do not know yet. We may have a percentage for geographic representation. There has been a lot of conversation around numbers vs percentage. It is still on the table, but it sounds like we are getting closer to not limiting numbers, but also hearing that we want people on the Board that can help move the organization forward.
- xiii. *Jonathan left the call at 10:00am.*

4. NIMAN Launch:

- a. Stan shared the unfortunate news that the Sphinx organization has decided not to engage with NIMAN.
- b. Ahmad and Stan were planning a public launch at SphinxConnect. They had multiple planning conversations with Sphinx and later were told that they were not in a position to provide more support for the pre-conference session than a room for us to use.
- c. With that, since Cincinnati is the most likely candidate to serve as our incubator, we might now launch in Cincinnati in the spring. This gives us more planning time and Cincinnati might also provide opportunities for musicians connected to their diversity initiatives to participate in a similar way as the November Convening. This gives more people time to plan to participate virtually or in-person.
- d. Ahmad shared that the target date of April 25, 2020. They are considering a webcast presentation with a live audience in the room. Nothing is set in stone but hopefully we will confirm soon.
- e. Rebecca loves the idea of involving students. Would we consider trying to involve students from other programs to promote national collaboration. Ahmad loves this idea, even remotely.
- f. We want to be certain that our local stakeholders are on board.
- g. Adrienne asked that we keep her posted. They should be able to participate.
- h. Abra should be able to participate.
- i. Stan added that Ahmad and he would send our regrets to Sphinx, as well as, a note to our mailing list about a delay to our launch announcement.
- j. Stan will follow-up with this group individually for feedback before putting a second draft together. We may require one more meeting as well.

Action Items:

1. The group to research any trademark issues regarding the name of the association.
2. Stan and Ahmad to work on a simplified version of the Values.
3. The group to add a Value regarding the organizations collaborating together.
4. Stan to revise the fourth Value to clarify why this is the only phase on The Bridge to be highlighted in the Values.
5. Stan and Ahmad to draft a more specific timeline and task list for initial strategic priorities.
6. Stan to follow-up with each individual in this group for additional feedback.