

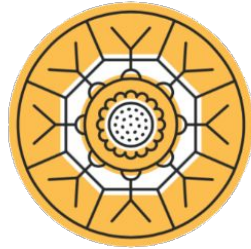
# Hello!

We'll have a little check-in and share:

- Your name (& pronouns)
- Your community (or org) name (if applicable)
- Something you're excited about with the warm weather!
- Experience with Organizational Visioning

# The Power of Purpose

Understanding the Why's and How's of  
Vision, Mission & Aims for Organizations



**Weave the People Cooperative**  
*Supporting Community Owned Community*

## Founder's Skillset Series

April – Collective Decision Making 101

May – Sociocracy Jump-Start: introduction & tools you can apply right away

June – Housing Coop Project Budgeting

July – Cooperative Operating Agreements & Bylaws

August – Conflict and Accountability for Communities

Sept – Introduction to Running a Co-op: Operational Tools and Tips for Cooperatives

Oct – Fundraising for Cooperatives

Nov – Navigating Real Estate, Land and Building Purchases for Cooperatives

Dec – Foundations for Community

# What are Vision, Mission & Aims?

Vision, Mission & Aims (VMA) are a set of statements

that **clearly and succinctly** state

an organization's **broad goal** of their work (Vision),

**how** they are accomplishing that goal (Mission) and

the **specific things they are doing** to fulfill that goal (Aims).

Note: there are multiple models for expressing visions and goals, and this is one of them that is most frequently paired with Sociocracy. It can be used with any decision making structure however. It is not a replacement for OKRs, KPIs and other individual project management tools, rather a big picture tool for organizational direction.

**Vision**



**Mission**

**Aims**



# Why do Vision, Mission & Aims matter?

A structure, and in this case an organization, is only as stable as its foundation.

The Vision, Mission & Aim are the foundation.

## Key Reasons for VMA:

- Group Cohesion
- Decision Making Guidance
- Compelling & Inspiring
- Practical
- A Roadmap for Action

# Group Cohesion

Help decide (narrow down!) who is a fit for the project.

Help create shared direction.

Help focus energy.

# Decision Making Guidance

When conflict or lack of clarity exists, it's a guide.

It can help prioritize.



# Compelling & Inspiring

When working in community, business or nonprofit sector, meaning matters!

It can help inspire the action from community, convert customers, and secure funding. It can help draw people to your project and inspire ongoing participation.

If your Vision and Mission are clear and concise, it can be **part of** a compelling one-liner (see [Marketing Made Simple](#) - [Chapter 4](#)) or elevator pitch - the gist is:

1. Problem
2. Solution
3. Result

The VMA can imply the problem, be the solution (mission & aims) and en(vision) the result. If you pair it with additional content it can become part of a one liner.

# A Roadmap for Action

The VMA provides a clear statement of what you actually do, and why.

As organizations grow and change, the concrete activities may develop and change (which would mean the aims may shift) as the organization learns and expands.

The ways in which these activities shift are driven by the clarity of the mission and vision.

# Practical

The Aims portion is a list of the very literal actions you are doing to work towards your mission.

It's a simple and practical list of your top activities, which helps you stay focused and know what to work on. It helps people

These should be concrete, but also clearly connected to the big fancy vision on the other end of the spectrum.

How do you think this applies specifically to Residential Communities?

Group Conversation

# What about within an organization?

A quick highlight on aims and domains

Working groups or departments can also benefit from having clear Aims and Domains. These are slightly different than the Vision, Mission and Aims of an organization.

In Sociocracy these working groups are often called circles.

Individual departments work towards the VMA of their organization but have their own specific aims (goals and tasks they are working towards) and domains (things they are responsible for).

Ideally any particular aim or domain is never held by more than one separate working group (though there may be sub-groups which handle aspects of their parent group's aims and domains).

These are important for similar reasons and more, but are beyond the scope of VMA's in general.

# How do you create a VMA?

It's important that there's an organizational process that brings everyone on board.

Would recommend not being an individual founder of communities, but this may be applicable in some organizations.

How exactly it's facilitated can take many forms. That isn't the focus of this workshop. There are many models for visioning and facilitating group process and many could work for this. Choose one that's right for your organization :)

This workshop focuses on the structure so that it can be more easily created as an individual or in a variety of group processes.

**Let's create some together to learn the structure!**

# Structure of a VMA:

## Vision:

- What you envision \*the world\* could be like!
- Paint the big picture!
- It may likely feel out of reach
- Don't include everything though! Be narrow in scope.
- *Simple Stem: "We envision a world where..."*

Eg.

"I envision a world with ice cream for everybody!"

## Mission

- The strategy we are using to create the world
- Action oriented, but not exactly completable.
- *Simple Stem: "To..."*

Eg. "To share the wonders of ice cream with my local community"

## Aims

- These are concrete, specific and actionable.
- It is likely to be a short list
- *Simple Stem: "By..."*

Eg.

"By

making ice cream that suits all dietary needs, running an ice cream store, and operating a weekly icecream truck service

*Do you have other ideas for aims that match this vision/mission?*

# Exercise: Make your childhood/ridiculous VMA

Write your own VMA that is super super super super super simple.

Something your 5 year old would want. It can be so ridiculous.

The thing isn't important, we just want to understand the form.

Use your “notes” app/program and draft it, then drop it in the chat **when it's complete**. Ask questions as needed with the hand raise button.

Vision, Mission and Aims (list of 3).



# Examples of VMAs

Analysis of real world examples!

# Example #1: Sociocracy for All VMA



## Vision

A world in which people engage together to meet their individual and collective needs in an equitable way, with respect for all living beings.

## Mission

To promote sociocracy locally and globally as a sustainable way of governance.

## Aims:

We do this by generating communities of practice and innovating by making decisions together, sharing what we learn, and inspiring each other through accessible and transferable materials, training, and resources.

## Specific Aims List:

- Spreading sociocracy with accessible, educational and inspirational materials about sociocracy ([articles](#), [videos](#), [webinars](#), social media) (primarily CC BY-SA-NC license) and through training and consulting. (Content Circles)
- Networking and supporting the sociocracy world, including SoFA members, sociocratic practitioners and promoters, and regional and language-oriented groups. (Ecosystem and International Circles)
- Providing SoFA infrastructure and administrative systems so that there is ease in running the organization. (Membership Circles)

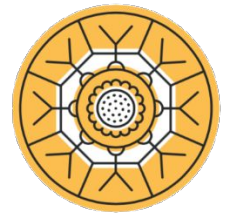


## Example #2: Asheville Movement Collective\* VMA

We envision a world that moves in harmony where all are free to be their authentic selves within a loving community.

Our mission and aim are to inspire authenticity and healthy community through free-form dance by hosting dance waves for personal and community transformation.

*\*AMC used to operate sociocratically, but no longer does. It's aims have not been re-evaluated since its founding.*



## Example #3: Weave the People VMA

*We envision a world where land and home are collectively stewarded by cooperative-based communities and we hope to co-create this world by demonstrating and sharing a model of harmonious co-stewardship through the practice and evolution of co-living systems and the stewarding of a community space for our cooperative members and our broader community.*

# Example #4: Rainbow Community School



## Vision

[Not stated on website, but inferred to be:] a socially just, spiritually connected, and environmentally sustainable world.

## Our Mission

We develop accomplished, confident, and creative learners who are prepared to be compassionate leaders in building a *socially just, spiritually connected, and environmentally sustainable world*.

## Our Method

We provide an engaging, nurturing learning environment to educate the whole child using The [Rainbow Seven Domains™](#).

We inspire academic excellence with a program in harmony with the stages of child development.

We model within our community the kind of world in which we aspire to live.



# 12 Baskets Cafe (an API project)

## **VISION:**

A beloved community that celebrates mutuality, abundance, and equity.

## **MISSION:**

To build community and educate about the realities of poverty.

*(Aims - not defined as such)*

- Dismantling stereotypes, reducing fear, and empowering hope *through telling stories across socio-economic differences.*
- A steadfast presence for over a decade, Asheville Poverty Initiative builds community and *promotes economic justice from our community center at State St. and Haywood Road.*
- Our programs, 12 Baskets Café and Realities of Poverty prioritize inclusivity, abundance, and dignity to address hunger, housing, and poverty. Everyone has, and everyone has needs. Come for the food, stay for the community.

# Craft Example VMA's - Breakouts

Craft a VMA for an imaginary organization (no name needed).

This time, let's try to make it compelling!

1. Let's all brainstorm some problem spaces

2. Breakouts:

- Each person share a vision - choose one that's "good enough for now" for all of you
- Each person share a mission for that vision - choose one OR re-write one that's "good enough for now" for all of you
- Each person come up with 1-2 aims for that mission.
- Put it all together and refine it a bit - "good enough for now"

3. We'll come back and share!

# Vision

## Vision: a world in which...

- Everyone is guaranteed safe housing
- **People know their neighbors and bond with them across value systems**
- Bicycles are used for transportation regularly
- Incentivises cooperation in order to meet individual and collective needs
-



# Mission

## Mission: To...

- Collaboratively steward shared spaces to provide opportunities for connection
- Create opportunities for conversations with neighbors
- **Localize sourcing of needs (L)**
- **Identify shared needs and values and emphasize them collectively**
  - *Identifying and emphasizing shared needs and values with our neighbors (MCC)*

# Aims

We envision a world where people know their neighbors and bond with them across value systems.

To do that we identify and emphasize shared needs and values with our neighbors.

## Aims By...

- Supporting led Community projects
- **Support common spaces and resources that meet community needs** (Public common spaces with shared maintenance)
  - Tool library
- **Create ongoing systems of feedback with our neighborhood**
  - A community needs assessment
  - Network for communication
- Free community dinners
- ~~Workshop~~
  - ~~Listening skills training~~
- 
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# Where do we go next?

Reflections?

Excitements?

# Weave the People Next Steps

Check out the [Weave The People Community Forum](#) - a very new platform for discussion, networking and community

[Cooperative Founder's Skillset Series](#) - future workshop dates still TBD (always at least a month out)

Community of Practice - shifting to a closed group model soon - stay tuned!

[Schedule a Consult](#) - via the form or reach out :)

Check out the [Tea Growing Workshop](#) BTW!

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