



Lodestar Center
for Philanthropy
and Nonprofit
Innovation

Arizona State
University

2024-2028 Strategic Direction

A roadmap to sustainable growth and global impact.



Who we are

Iyamidé May served in our Public Allies Arizona AmeriCorps program where she was placed at Experience Matters, a nonprofit organization whose programs are now housed within the ASU Lodestar Center.

Better nonprofits for better communities.

Arizona State University's **Lodestar Center for Philanthropy and Nonprofit Innovation** educates, empowers and connects nonprofit and philanthropic leaders.

Housed within ASU's Watts College of Public Service and Community Solutions and its School of Community Resources and Development, the ASU Lodestar Center has been guided by a vision and a mission for nearly 25 years:

Our vision

The quality of life in communities is enriched with impactful philanthropy and effective nonprofit leadership.

Our mission

To build the capacity of the social sector by enhancing the effectiveness of those who lead, manage and support nonprofit and philanthropic organizations.

In this work, we serve individuals locally and around the globe who currently, or aspire to, lead and support nonprofit organizations, as well as organizations and networks in the philanthropic sector.

What we do

The ASU Lodestar Center provides education, research, practical tools and convenings for nonprofit professionals, philanthropists and volunteers who seek to solve problems and realize their communities' highest aspirations. From professional development opportunities to a broad portfolio of capacity-building programs, **our work makes nonprofits and their teams better, accelerating social impact.**

We meet our mission through:

- **Academic excellence and accessibility**
We continuously enhance the quality of programs and services while maintaining affordability for learners wherever they are in their personal and professional journeys, and representing all socioeconomic, geographic and demographic backgrounds.
- **Local impact, social embeddedness**
We leverage the ASU brand to strengthen our network of teaching, learning and resources for nonprofit and philanthropic organizations, which are essential social institutions that enhance the quality of life in our communities.
- **Solutions-oriented research**
We advance knowledge and understanding of the nonprofit and philanthropic sector through research, education and community engagement activities.



Our story

Our core values



Collaboration

Empowering and leveraging resources to strengthen communities and increase impact.



Creativity

Generating and disseminating knowledge based on a leading-edge, innovative and transformational culture.



Excellence

Offering relevant services and programs of the highest quality.



Inclusiveness

Respecting, valuing and intentionally engaging the range of diverse individuals within communities served by the Center.



Trust

Demonstrating integrity, transparency, accountability and ethical principles as a commitment to public value and the common good.

Our past, present and future

We were originally founded in 1999 as the Center for Nonprofit Leadership and Management, developed from ASU's American Humanics program (now the Nonprofit Leadership Alliance). In 2008, thanks to a naming investment from the Lodestar Foundation, we became the ASU Lodestar Center for Philanthropy and Nonprofit Innovation. As we approached our 25th year, we began work on a new strategic plan, informed by a thoughtful and thorough process involving stakeholder input and guided by the board that we call our Leadership Council. The 2024-2028 plan will be our own lodestar in achieving the "3.0" vision for the Center.

1.0
1999

2.0
2008

3.0
2024

Our impact is growing beyond Arizona's borders. By scaling our programs, we will accelerate social impact globally.

Learners from ASU's California Center take in the Los Angeles skyline. The ASU Lodestar Center reaches across geographies virtually and with in-person services in many locations, including nonprofit stakeholders in LA.





Our home at ASU and the Watts College

The Lodestar Center resides within ASU's Watts College of Public Service and Community Solutions.

Watts College is driven by a set of aspirations that communicate what the college desires to be: a vehicle through which we make the world a better place. These aspirations – **equity**, **community**, **justice**, **participation** and **potential** – are a fundamental lens through which we view our own work.

The ASU Lodestar Center “is fundamental to our mission. Lodestar supports our nonprofit students on the academic-degree side, Lodestar engages in solutions-oriented research, and [also] does continuing education and direct-service provision. Lodestar’s really unique not just based on its size, depth and breadth, but also that it is one of the few units within our college that is truly engaging all of the aspects of our strategy” to build more vibrant, healthy communities.

– Cynthia Lietz, dean of Watts College

ASU's design aspirations as a New American University

Two decades ago, ASU set forth a new and ambitious trajectory to become a comprehensive knowledge enterprise dedicated to the simultaneous pursuit of excellence, broad access to quality education and meaningful societal impact. From that point forward, all of its energy, creativity and resources have been brought to bear on the design of a uniquely adaptive and transdisciplinary university committed to producing master learners. Today, ASU exemplifies a new prototype for the American public research university.

Nine design aspirations guide the ongoing evolution of ASU as a New American University. These institutional objectives are integrated in innovative ways throughout the university to achieve excellence, access and impact.

In developing our Strategic Plan, the ASU Lodestar Center incorporated each of the university's design aspirations into our goals and objectives to ensure alignment and to best leverage the resources of this institution we call home.

**Leverage
our place**

**Transform
society**

**Value
entrepreneurship**

**Conduct
use-
inspired
research**

**Practice
principled
innovation**

**Enable
student
success**

**Fuse
intellectual
disciplines**

**Be socially
embedded**

**Engage
globally**

A night-time photograph of the ASU Lodestar Center. The building is a modern, multi-story structure with a prominent 'ASU' logo on its upper facade. In the foreground, a large, illuminated wireframe sculpture hangs from the sky, resembling a funnel or a series of concentric circles. The sculpture is lit with blue and red lights. Below the sculpture, there is a small fountain with water spraying upwards. The building's interior lights are visible through the glass windows, and the overall scene is illuminated by streetlights and building lights.

ASU Lodestar Center

Operational pillars

- **People**
- **Programs**
- **Growth and markets**
- **Operations**
- **Financial**

People

By 2028, the Center will have...

Depth at the leadership, staff, council, instructor and participant levels that is fully representative of the stakeholders the Center currently serves and are striving to serve.

Goals and aspirations:

Ensure that Center staff, management and Leadership Council represent the social, cultural and racial demographics of the state.

Cultivate an environment where successful talent is recruited, developed and retained for roles that align with the needs of the “3.0” Center.

Ensure continuity of leadership and staff to support the Center’s ongoing mission.

Justice

Participation

Potential

Sisters Jackie Phillips (left) and Eshawn Peterson founded Phoenix-based Onward Hope. To help the organization grow its impact, they both enrolled in ASU Lodestar Center professional development programs.



The McDowell Sonoran Conservancy enrolled in the ASU Lodestar Center's Service Enterprise Initiative to rethink how they manage their 700 volunteers and earn the nationally recognized accreditation in strategic volunteer engagement.

Programs

By 2028, the Center will have...

Relevant, nimble and sustainable programming through fees for service, philanthropic support, and strategic partnerships that deliver high-value to our stakeholders.

Goals and aspirations:

Assess internal infrastructure and invest where necessary to build the Center's capacity.

Increase revenue generation, through strategic program implementation, so that we can scale our impact to better serve stakeholders.

Prioritize research and the creation of original knowledge to advance the field of nonprofit/philanthropic leadership practice.

Potential

Participation



Growth and markets

By 2028, the Center will have...

Digitally transformed, innovative services and programming (in-person and virtual) for those who lead, manage and support nonprofit and philanthropic organizations in Arizona, nationally and internationally.

Goals and aspirations:

Develop key strategies to effectively reach our geographic audiences: local, state, national and global.

Brand building and promotion: Leverage both the ASU and the Center brand to enhance reach and awareness.

Maggie Saucedo returned to school after 15 years away. Along with a degree and Certified Nonprofit Professional credential through ASU, she has completed the ASU Lodestar Center's Public Allies Arizona program and online courses from our Nonprofit Management Institute.

Equity

Community





Operations

By 2028, the Center will have...

Efficient and effective strategic operations, management, processes and infrastructure that can scale to meet the promise of the Center's mission, its stakeholders and that is fully aligned with the goals of ASU, the Watts College of Public Service and Community Solutions and its School of Community Resources and Development.

Goals and aspirations:

Alignment of Lodestar Center operations with the Center's 3.0 vision.

Ensure the Center's leaders are able to make informed management decisions based on technology/data-driven information and within the framework of principled innovation.

Potential

Principled innovation

Financial

By 2028, the Center will have...

Reliable revenue through diversified sources to sustain current and new programs/services, while building the necessary cash reserve to support critical innovative and transformative programs, services and initiatives.

Goals and aspirations:

Engage Leadership Council members with an expected commitment to give to the Center and share connections.

Enact strategic mergers, acquisitions, partnerships and collaborations that enhance the mission of the Center. Scale revenue generation and sponsor opportunities.

Explore new revenue models that are relevant to achieve the Center's 3.0 vision.

Create a business resource-development function dedicated to building reliable, principled revenue through a sustainable pipeline of donors and sponsors, including individual, corporate, planned gifts and foundation giving.

Equity

Community

Potential

Principled innovation





Accelerate social impact when you help us educate, empower and connect nonprofit leaders.

Nonprofit and philanthropic organizations are essential social institutions. **But they are only as effective as the individuals who serve in leadership and management roles.**

If you're inspired by our Center's mission, contact us to learn about opportunities for partnerships, collaborations and gifts.

With your support, we can expand educational and professional development opportunities for the nonprofit community; build a pipeline of diverse nonprofit leaders; fund critical research on the sector; help nonprofits find innovative solutions to community challenges; and so much more.

Explore our suite of programs and services today, for yourself or your network.

Scan
to learn
more



lodestar.asu.edu



Nonprofit professionals in Arizona gather for information about an ASU Lodestar Center leadership program. The Center offers a variety of opportunities for members of the nonprofit community to learn and network.



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