

Whether you've got [a new idea for an outreach effort](#) or are a part of an established organization or effort, crafting a strong mission and vision statement is important for success. Having a succinct conversation starter with your leadership, potential partners, and, most importantly, the community the idea is designed to serve, is key to confirming support for your work.



## The Value of Mission and Vision Statements

From conversation starter – often referred to as an “elevator pitch” – to implementation, it is easy for the edges of programmatic scope to begin to blur. While the intent of the blurring may seem harmless as it seeks to serve the community better, the blurring can be problematic when it dilutes efforts to an extent that the entire program’s success is at risk.

A proven means of inoculating against loss of scope focus is to have a clear vision and mission statement for your program. The vision and mission statement are key to the elevator pitch in all contexts in which the program is shared with others. It helps your audience understand what your program is about, and it helps you internally maintain focus.

## Brainstorming Your First Draft

According to Merriam-Webster, a mission statement is “something that states the purpose or goal of a business or organization.” The vision statement is similar, but with a forward focus. The vision represents what future goal the organization is pursuing.

Strong mission and vision statements begin in the same way a new idea development process does: with conversations with all relevant constituencies about the values and objectives behind the program and its purpose. Often conducted via a facilitated group discussion, a conversation that includes representatives from your leadership, sponsors, partners, and the individuals the program will serve helps identify consensus thoughts and verbiage that will form the first draft of the mission and vision statement.

## Refining for Clarity and Impact

The most longstanding and compelling mission and vision statements are succinct and clear. To get there, first draft statements often need wordsmithing by a great writer. The process then becomes iterative as the writer presents a revised version for review and there is back and forth as statements become the best possible version of succinct, clear, compelling writing of the program’s purpose and future goal.

As an example, the following are the mission statement – or “Our Purpose” statement – and vision for the Episcopal Community Foundation for Middle and North Georgia:

**Our Purpose:** We partner with Episcopal communities in Middle and North Georgia to lift up people facing poverty and oppression, creating sustainable impact for individuals, families, and communities.

**Our Vision:** Through Episcopal service, we envision thriving communities in Middle and North Georgia that are spiritually strong and free from poverty and oppression.

For an additional resource in crafting your mission and vision statements, this [Guide to Creating Mission & Vision Statements](#) has been a helpful resource for our grant applicants.



Following Christ's example and the tradition of The Episcopal Church, we partner with Episcopal communities in the Diocese of Atlanta by providing funding, leadership, and resources to enable Episcopalians to lift up people facing poverty and oppression and to achieve significant, long-lasting change in our communities.

#### **SUPPORT ECF**

Your one-time or monthly donation allows us to serve people experiencing poverty and oppression throughout our Diocese. [Make a donation at https://episcopalcommunityfoundation.org/donate/](https://episcopalcommunityfoundation.org/donate/)