

# Explaining What You Do: Purpose & Vision Statements

Your members want to fully understand what they are 'buying into'. Having a clear sense of direction and effectively articulating this ambition through Vision and Purpose statements is key to recruit and meaningfully engage members. Sometimes, communities are hosted within a larger organization, meaning they are ultimately part of a larger mission, but have their own purpose. That's why here we are referring to Purpose Statement, rather than Mission Statement.

## What are they?



### **Purpose Statement:**

A brief description of what your community does, how it does it, and who it does it for. Ideally, this should be no more than 12 words and include at least one active verb.



### **Vision Statement:**

A brief description of the version of success your community is working towards (i.e. the 'world you want to see').

For inspiration, here are some examples of other communities' Mission or Purpose statements:



**"To give people the power to share and make the world more open and connected."**



**"To connect the world's professionals to make them more productive and successful."**



**"To give everyone the power to create and share ideas and information instantly, without barriers."**

And here are their Vision statements:



**"People use Facebook to stay connected with friends and family, to discover what's going on in the world, and to share and express what matters to them."**



**"Create economic opportunity for every member of the global workforce."**



**"To be the world's most diverse and inclusive company."**



# Template: Articulating your Community’s Purpose Statement:

PROMPT	OUTCOME
<p><b>Core questions:</b>            What does your community do?            Who is it aimed at?            What change does it create?            Why is it important?</p>	
<p><b>Discussion time:</b>            Ask team members to write down any ideas, key words, and phrases that come to mind when answering these questions.            Note: Post-its are a great tool to collect words and phrases</p>	
<p><b>Narrowing it down:</b>            Prompt the group to select the best words and phrases. If there are too many, allow people to vote for 3 favourite words or concepts.</p>	
<p><b>Drafting the Purpose Statement:</b>            Using the themes you’ve collectively identified, craft a couple of statements that best describe your community’s purpose. Keep your statements short and snappy, and remember the first draft is unlikely to be the final one.</p>	
<p><b>Refining and publishing:</b>            To fine-tune your statements, ask other people in your community and network to read them and share their feedback. Let them sit for a day or two before you read them again, and arrive at an agreement on the final purpose statement.</p>	


**Note:** You should review your statements every couple of years to ensure they still reflect your community’s activities, goals and your broader Theory of Change (If your community doesn’t have one already, check out our Explaining How You Do What You Do: Theory of Change resource on how to write your Theory of Change).

# Template: Articulating Your Community’s Vision Statement:



PROMPT	OUTCOME
<p><b>Core questions:</b>            What would the world look like without your impact community?            What is the world you’d like to see?</p>	
<p><b>Discussion time:</b>            Ask team members to write down any ideas, key words, and phrases that come to mind when answering these questions.  <i>Note: Post-its are a great tool to collect words and phrases</i></p>	
<p><b>Narrowing it down:</b>            Prompt the group to select the best words and phrases. If there are too many, allow people to vote for 3 favorite words or concepts.</p>	
<p><b>Drafting the Purpose Statement:</b>            Using the themes you’ve collectively identified, craft a couple of statements that best describe your community’s vision. Keep your statements short and snappy, and remember the first draft is unlikely to be the final one.</p>	
<p><b>Refining and publishing:</b>            To fine-tune your statements, ask other people in your community and network to read them and share their feedback. Let them sit for a day or two before you read them again, and arrive at an agreement on the final vision statement.</p>	

The Mesa is the first B2B community platform specifically designed to bring together philanthropists, inheritors and changemakers to learn, connect and give better. [Click here to check out our other resources:](#)



- ▶ SWOT Assessment
- ▶ Consulting Your (Potential) Community Members
- ▶ Building Your Community Member Persona
- ▶ Refining Your Purpose & Vision Statements
- ▶ Developing your Theory of Change
- ▶ Defining Your Member Journey
- ▶ Empowering Your ‘Super Members’

Do you have any follow up questions? Any feedback? Are you interested in knowing more about how you can ensure members in your community can be kept actively engaged and are thus likely to give more and better as a result of that? Get in touch with our team by contacting [info@themesa.org](mailto:info@themesa.org).