

# Sandbox 414

Strategic Plan: 2022-2024

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# Executive Summary

From our inception, Sandbox 414 has posed the **question**: *How can we create a better reality for nonprofits, artists, and entrepreneurs?* We've since focused our efforts on **providing changemakers with the capital they need to thrive**:

- Physical capital (Space to work)
- Social capital (A network of people to collaborate with)
- Intellectual capital (Ongoing training and resources)
- Financial capital (Via a profit-sharing model)

Our three-year strategic plan expands our vision of capital to include **political capital**, which we recognize as paramount to creating the change we want to see. However, our vision of change is not created in silos, in board rooms with people adorned with neckties. No, **our vision of change is rooted in community**. Thus, over the next three years, Sandbox 414 seeks to deepen our relationship with our 53206 community and collaborate with people of all walks of life in order to enact meaningful social change. **Our strategic plan will outline Sandbox 414's frameworks and practices as well as map out our future actions**. These actions include a focus on gaining additional corporate sponsorships to ensure long-term financial sustainability, a programmatic shift from hosting commercial events to hosting community events to deepen our ties with our neighborhood, and the creation of a 501c4 arm of our organization.

**Thank you** for walking alongside us on this journey. We are blessed to share this path.

Harsh J. Gagoomal

Executive Director, **Sandbox 414**

## Mission

*Sandbox 414 connects nonprofits, entrepreneurs, and artists with workspace, resources, and each other. We do this to create a thriving, innovative, and collaborative community of people united to improve social welfare in Milwaukee.*

## Vision

***The end of siloing:*** *Sandbox 414 is where nonprofits, entrepreneurs, artists, community members, and policymakers all collaborate to enact social change.*

## Values

- ***Collaboration:*** *We share resources, we engage in critical dialogue, we work together.*
- ***Flexibility:*** *We adapt, we learn, and we grow to meet new challenges and opportunities in the social sector.*
- ***Innovation:*** *We question the status quo and we experiment with new approaches. We use failure as fuel.*

# Overview

**Founded:** 2019

**Located:** 921 W Keefe Ave,  
Milwaukee, WI 53206

**Home to:**

- 5 nonprofits.
- 10 social entrepreneurs.
- 8 multidisciplinary artists.

**Current Budget:** \$1,280,000

# History

The closure of The Nonprofit Center of Milwaukee in 2018 left a noticeable gap in our city. Suddenly, Milwaukee was without a central hub where nonprofits could receive the training and support they need. Sandbox 414 was founded to fill this gap and to work towards creating a reality where changemakers could all congregate in the same space to improve social welfare in our city. Inspired by nonprofit coworking centers across the country like The Center for Social Change (C4SC) and (c)space, Sandbox 414 has since strived to be **Milwaukee's new and improved hub for social innovation.**



While it is true that Milwaukee has affordable coworking centers, none provide the specialized support and collaborative environment that nonprofits, entrepreneurs, and artists need in order to best tend to their missions. To be clear, **Sandbox 414 is Milwaukee's only coworking center exclusively dedicated to nurturing changemakers.**

**COVID-19 has shifted work preferences and protocols.** Many organizations have now opted for hybrid office models where people have more autonomy over when they work from home and when they show up in-person. The Sandbox 414 team has identified **a trend in the coworking landscape towards offering flexible office space in open layouts.** In these open layouts, dedicated desks and communal desks are more popular than ever, as they afford employees the flexibility to come and go as they please without paying the costs associated with renting larger office spaces. With this knowledge, **Sandbox 414 is committed to building less walls and more desks.** We see the potential of open layouts in encouraging collaboration and providing extra flexibility and capacity when hosting community events.

It's worth noting that **The Ambition Center was launched in September, 2021.** The coworking center is located in Milwaukee's Riverwest neighborhood at 3838 N. Holton St. The Ambition Center aims to provide an inclusive space that empowers diverse, service-based entrepreneurs. We are inspired by their mission and do not view them as a competitor, but as a partner. **We are currently exploring a strategic relationship between Sandbox 414 and The Ambition Center,** where our clients could have access to both spaces as part of our membership agreements.

# SWOT Analysis

## S

- Unique in our mission and in our position in Milwaukee's social entrepreneurial landscape.
- Sustained corporate sponsorships from Quest CE, ManpowerGroup, and Colectivo Coffee.

## W

- Small core team-size leads to questions about our capacity to take on new initiatives.
- High capital costs associated with space management.

## O

- Partnerships with educational institutions, and art organizations have yet to be fully explored. New volunteers, members, donors, grants, contracts, and collaborators can be sourced from these sectors.
- There is genuine intrigue from local press about what we do.

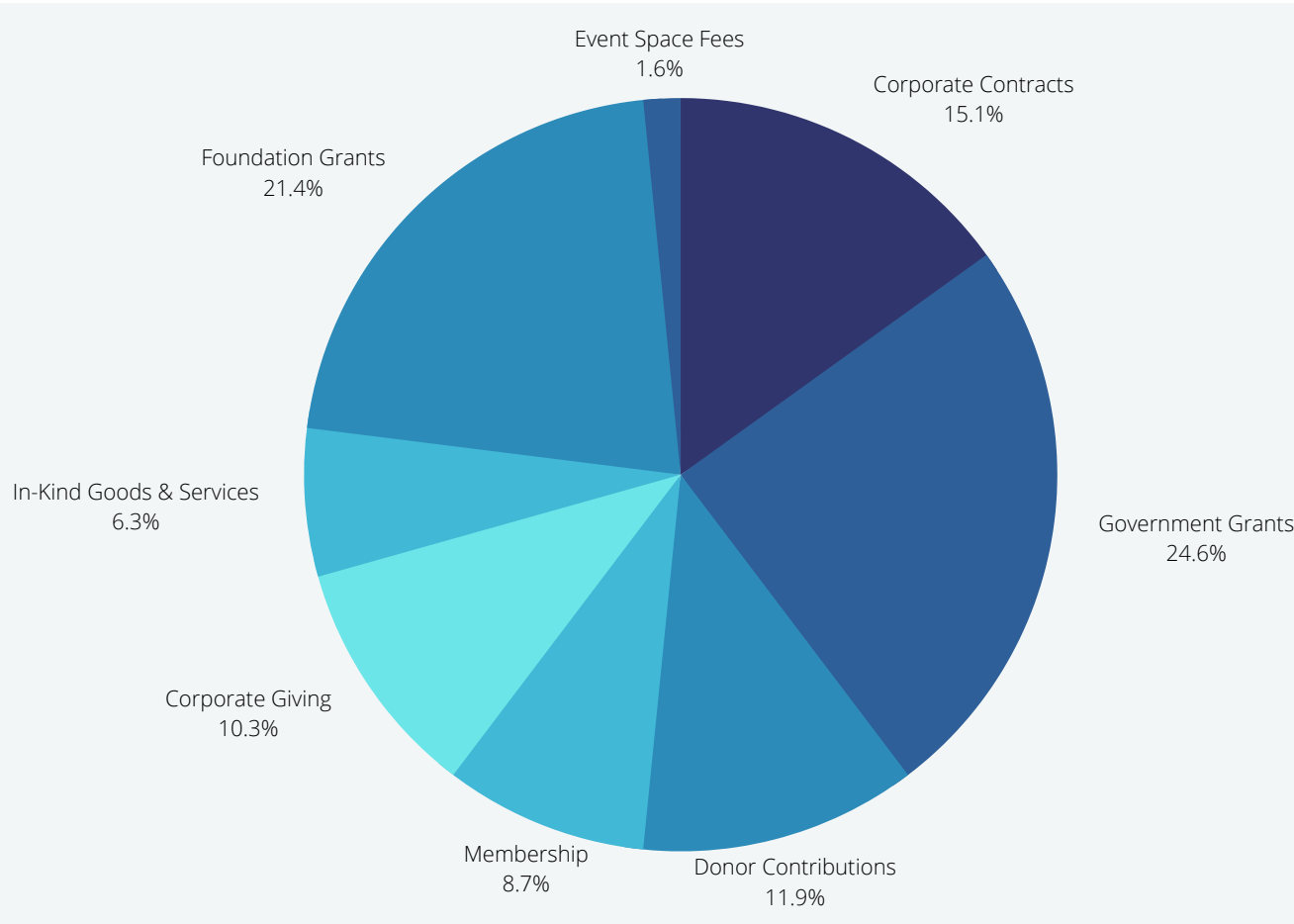
## T

- Adding on a 501c4 arm may challenge the perception and financial support of our organization.
- New COVID-19 variants may limit our ability to expand membership and fill our spaces.



Sandbox 414's income portfolio is largely comprised of **foundation grants and government grants**, which combine to 46% of our total income. **A key takeaway** is for us to continue to **invest in our training and education programs** for Sandbox 414 members and 53206 community members, as they help us requalify for the federal Workforce Innovation Grant as well as notable grants from the Citi Foundation and Greater Milwaukee Foundation.

Our **fee income** (via corporate contracts, space rental fees, and membership fees) totals 25.4%. **We project this number to drop over the next three years**, especially as we deviate from corporate contracts and place greater emphasis on increasing corporate giving. We also plan to eliminate the event space fees that we've charged for commercial events in favor of soliciting donations for the community events we plan to host.



<b>Donor Contributions</b>	<b>\$152,320</b>
<b>Corporate Giving</b>	<b>\$131,840</b>
<b>In-Kind Goods &amp; Services</b>	<b>\$80,640</b>
<b>Foundation Grants</b>	<b>\$273,920</b>
Citi Foundation	
"Community Solutions"	\$200,000
Greater Milwaukee Foundation	\$50,000
<b>Government Grants</b>	<b>\$314,880</b>
Workforce Innovation Grant	\$200,000
<b>Membership</b>	<b>\$111,460</b>
<b>Corporate Contracts</b>	<b>\$193,280</b>
<b>Event Space Fees</b>	<b>\$20,480</b>
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>\$1,280,000.00</b>



# Expenses

After calculating our total income and expenses, we're entering 2022 with a **\$60,400 surplus**. As part of our strategic plan, we will use this surplus to fund a new Director of Advocacy position in our organization.

Cost-saving efforts that have led to this surplus have included **leveraging the in-kind goods and services provided by our board members** to offset the legal and financial consulting fees that Sandbox 414 incurs from other partnerships. We are extremely grateful for the ability of our board members to harness their expertise to help us achieve financial solvency.

Our membership prices reflect a desire to reduce the barriers to access for nonprofits, artists, and entrepreneurs. Furthermore, our **profit-sharing model** shows that not only do we care about providing affordable space to changemakers, we are also willing to invest in the people who share our vision. **In 2021, \$62,000 was distributed across the 5 nonprofits and 18 individuals that call Sandbox 414 their home.** This amounts to 40.7% of the total donations we received in 2021.

Wages & Salaries	368,000
Employee Benefits	47,520
Occupancy	150,000
Legal	7,600
IT	60,000
Office Furniture	30,200
Printing	2,500
Goods and Supplies	6,000
Utilities	100,244
Janitorial Services	20,861
Building Maintenance	36,000
Community Events	10,500
Subscriptions	1,400
Marketing	8,000
Program Supplies	120,490
Travel	45,200
Professional Development	6,000
Profit-sharing	62,000
Miscellaneous	137,085
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$1,219,600</b>

# Capacity and Leadership

Board	<b>Board Member</b> <i>Specialty: Finance</i>	<b>Board Member</b> <i>Specialty: Community</i>	<b>Board Member</b> <i>Specialty: Education</i>	
	<b>Board Member</b> <i>Specialty: Legal</i>	<b>Board Member</b> <i>Specialty: Operations</i>	<b>Board Member</b> <i>Specialty: Arts</i>	<b>Board Member</b> <i>Specialty: Fundraising</i>
Staff	<b>Executive Director</b>	<b>General Manager</b>	<b>Head of Education</b>	<b>Director of Development</b>
	<b>Director of Advocacy</b>		<b>Director of Communication</b>	
Volunteers	<b>Educators/Workshop Leaders</b> <i>(Current: 5; Desired: 8)</i>	<b>Event Team Members</b> <i>(Current: 2; Desired: 6)</i>	<b>Community Organizers</b> <i>(Current: 0; Desired: 2)</i>	
	<b>Coffee Shop Attendants</b> <i>(Current: 2; Desired: 5)</i>	<b>Graphic Designers</b> <i>(Current: 1; Desired: 2)</i>	<b>Writers/Content Creators</b> <i>(Current: 1; Desired: 4)</i>	

In the next three years, we aim to build up our organizational capacity by expanding our human resources among our board, staff, and volunteer base. Simply put, **we are going to acquire more people and grow the Sandbox 414 team:**

## Board

We aim to expand our board with three additional members, each with a specialty focus in community engagement, arts, or fundraising. These new board roles will work closely with the Director of Advocacy, the General Manager, and the Director of Development, respectively.






## Staff

In the upcoming year, the Sandbox 414 team will hire and welcome a new staff member, the Director of Advocacy. This new position will work closely with our community-focused board member and will be responsible for recruiting and managing the community organizer volunteers. As we operate from a stance of equal pay regardless of position or experience, the Director of Advocacy will receive a salary of \$61,333.

## Volunteers

A priority for the Sandbox 414 will be to recruit 16 additional volunteers to support the execution of our core strategies. Each volunteer position will be managed by a staff member and a board member with relevant expertise.

Furthermore, our **leadership development plan** will involve staff cross-training and mentorship opportunities amongst all groups. Staff members will assume the responsibilities of a different staff position for a minimum of one month a year while board members will work closely with volunteers to serve as mentors, collaborate on projects, and gain a better sense of day-to-day operations at Sandbox 414.

	<p><b>Sandbox 414 Membership</b> Nonprofits, entrepreneurs, and artists are provided with flexible/private work space along with access to communal resources (conference rooms, kitchen space, a media room, a training room, printers), events, support from the Sandbox 414 staff, and ongoing education opportunities.</p>	<p><b><u>Strategic Goal</u></b> Maintain the current membership group while simultaneously increase membership revenue by 1-2%</p> <p><b><u>Strategy</u></b> Acquire new members by capitalizing on the intrigue from local press. Lead: Director of Communication.</p>
	<p><b>Free Community Coffee Shop</b> Through the coffee shop, we provide 53206 community members with free coffee, tea, water, donated snacks, public restrooms, and a place for respite and conversation. The community coffee shop is managed by Sandbox 414 staff members (on rotation) and volunteers. It is sponsored by Colectivo Coffee.</p>	<p><b><u>Strategic Goal</u></b> Have the community coffee shop serve as a voter registration location.</p> <p><b><u>Strategy</u></b> Hire the Director of Advocacy (lead) and recruit 3 more coffee shop attendants and 2 community organizers.</p>
	<p><b>Corporate Consulting</b> Sandbox 414 staff members work with corporations on a contract-basis in areas concerning program evaluation, developmental evaluation, diversity, equity, and inclusion trainings, and communications consulting.</p>	<p><b><u>Strategic Goal</u></b> Decrease our focus on corporate consulting work and opt for more corporate giving sponsorships.</p> <p><b><u>Strategy</u></b> Leverage the strengths of our mission and pre-existing sponsorships to convince others to join. Lead: All staff.</p>
	<p><b>Commercial Event Bookings</b> Sandbox 414's larger event space and conference rooms are rented out for commercial purposes (trainings, conferences, celebrations).</p>	<p><b><u>Strategic Goal</u></b> No more commercial event bookings. Instead, we will focus on hosting community art events.</p> <p><b><u>Strategy</u></b> Recruit 4 more event volunteers and work with local artists to showcase their work. Lead: General Manager.</p>
	<p><b>Advocacy and Lobbying</b> Sandbox 414 has been involved in limited advocacy and lobbying activities due to our 501c3 status. Causes that we have rallied behind have included: decarceration, housing first, and improved access to public transportation in 53206.</p>	<p><b><u>Strategic Goal</u></b> Expand to include a 501c4 arm of our organization - The Sandbox Action Group.</p> <p><b><u>Strategy</u></b> File for 501c4 status. Recruit 2 community organizers. Mobilize voters. Lead: Director of Advocacy.</p>

WHO (Stakeholders)	WHY (Beliefs, knowledge)	HOW (Process)	WHAT (Outputs)	WHAT (Outcomes)
Evaluation and Training Team, Corporations/Organizations.	We will eventually exhaust the evaluation and training opportunities in the landscape.	Convince previous beneficiaries to become partners.	Increase corporate giving by 4.5%	Sustainable funding relationships are made. Our evaluators have more time to develop new relationships, focus on their own professional development, and work on new programs.
Events and Operations Team, Space renters.	Commercial events take too much time and yield too little reward.	Curate art shows (visual, music, film, theatre, in our sandbox space). Work with our artists and with community members. Open the shows to the community. Apply for new arts funding opportunities.	Curate 1 show a month for the first 6 months, and then 1-2 shows per month afterward.	Relationships with community members and artists are created and deepened. A new pool of donors and grants is tapped into. Our realities are more vibrant.
Future Director of Advocacy, City Officials, Donors.	It is time for us to expand the scope of our work and advocate for the change we want to see. We also want to develop greater relationships with decision-makers, and this is a means to do that.	File for 501c4 status. Hire a Director of Advocacy. Identify the most salient topics to begin advocacy/lobbying work for through community member coffee shop conversations, conversations with Sandbox 414 clients, and with our corporate sponsors/donors.	Map out a strategic plan for advocacy, to be presented in approximately 1 year. Increase voter registration in 53206 by 3%. Host 4 town-halls and information sessions on candidates.	Sandbox 414 becomes a registered voting location. We are in constant dialogue with political figures, who attend our town halls and community events. We have created an ongoing voting guide, which is disseminated across our channels.

# Financial Plan

**In three years, we project our income portfolio to reflect the chart below.** We anticipate a 2.2 percent increase in donor contributions, partially due to our emphasis on pay-what-you-can funding for the community arts events we will host. We also predict a slight increase in government and foundation grants to account for the new "community needs," "quality of life," arts, and education grants we will apply for. Most notably, we aim to decrease corporate contracts by 7.3% and increase corporate giving by 4.5%.

**Current corporate sponsors** of Sandbox 414 are ManpowerGroup, Quest CE, and Colectivo Coffee.

**Future partnerships** that we aim to explore are with:

- The Ambition Center
- Trek Bikes
- Rockwell Automation
- WEC Energy Group
- LaFollette Public School
- University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee
- Marquette University

These partnerships can help us secure new volunteers and board members, source additional funding, and explore new program opportunities. Above all, we aim to collaborate with organizations and people who value innovation and have a desire to improve the social welfare of our city. **#MKEabettercity**

