



# **Building Capacity to Advancing Social Work Science that Informs Solutions to Complex Societal Challenges**

## **Strategic Directions**

Effective January 1, 2024 through December 31, 2028  
(Board approved April 2, 2023)



# Introduction

In April of 2022, a Strategic Objectives & Key Results (OKR) Planning Process was launched to identify the most critical and immediate next steps the SSWR Board can take to enhance SSWR operations and member benefits.

The intent was to build a strategic directions framework that could serve to guide daily operations as well as the SSWR board's monthly meetings and committees to ensure we achieve our new priorities.



# Introduction

OKRs, objectives and key results, are a great way to attain an organization's most audacious goals. This is because setting OKRs force individuals, teams, and organizations to articulate their goal in a timebound and measurable fashion and while crafting OKRs are only a part of the process, writing them well plays a huge part in anyone's ability to succeed at them.

The 2024-2028 SSWR Strategic Directions Framework has been built utilizing the direct input and expertise of the SSWR board, staff, and relevant committees.

All in all, the OKRs are litmus tests to decide: Are you really measuring what matters? They are not all that we can do, rather it's priority was to identify what we must do given our audacious goals to enhance SSWR member benefits.

The board will revise OKRs as needed.



# Strategic OKR Workgroups

## **Administrative Capacity, Nominations, & Finance**

Ethan Park, Chair

Jennifer Lewis, Executive Director

DeeJay Hastings

Ramona Denby-Brinson

## **Research Capacity Building, (SIGs) & Social Policy**

Linda Sprague Martinez, Co-Chair

Autumn Asher BlackDeer, Co-Chair

David Pate

Hee Yun Lee

## **Facilitator**

Sean Joe, SSWR President

## **Conference (Cluster Chairs), Memberships, Awards & Fellows**

Mary Collins, Chair

Kirk Foster

Mary L. Ohmer

Gina Samuels

Durrell Washington

Shuang Lu

Kelli Canada

## **Communications, Publications, & Website**

Tamara Cadet, Chair

David Becerra



# Commitments

## Mission

The Society for Social Work and Research was incorporated in 1994 as a freestanding organization dedicated to the advancement of social work research. SSWR works collaboratively with a number of other organizations that are committed to improving support for research among social workers. Our members include faculty in schools of social work and other professional schools, research staff in public and private agencies, and masters/doctoral students.

## Vision

The Society for Social Work and Research advances, disseminates, and translates research that addresses issues of social work practice and policy and promotes a diverse, just, and equitable society.



# Workgroups Timeline & Process

## 01

**April – July 2022**

OKR Introduction

Big questions from the Board and staff

- What will we address?
- What will we do?

## 02

**August - November**

Develop objectives

Prioritization to develop Strategic Directions Framework

## 03

**December 2022**

Finalization of 4 Goals and cascading

Workgroups Objectives to form Strategic Directions Framework for 2024-2028

## 04

**January 11, 2023**

Board presentation and Approval of goals.



# Workgroups Timeline & Process

## 05

**Feb - March 2023**

2023-28 Strategic  
Direction introduced to  
New Members

- Revised Objectives
- Draft Key Results

## 06

**April - May**

Finalize and approve  
2023-2028 Strategic  
Directions Framework

- This is not a static framework. KRs can be revised to respond to new priorities

## 07

**June - December**

Implementation:  
Setting Board and  
committee meeting  
agendas for 2023-2028

## 08

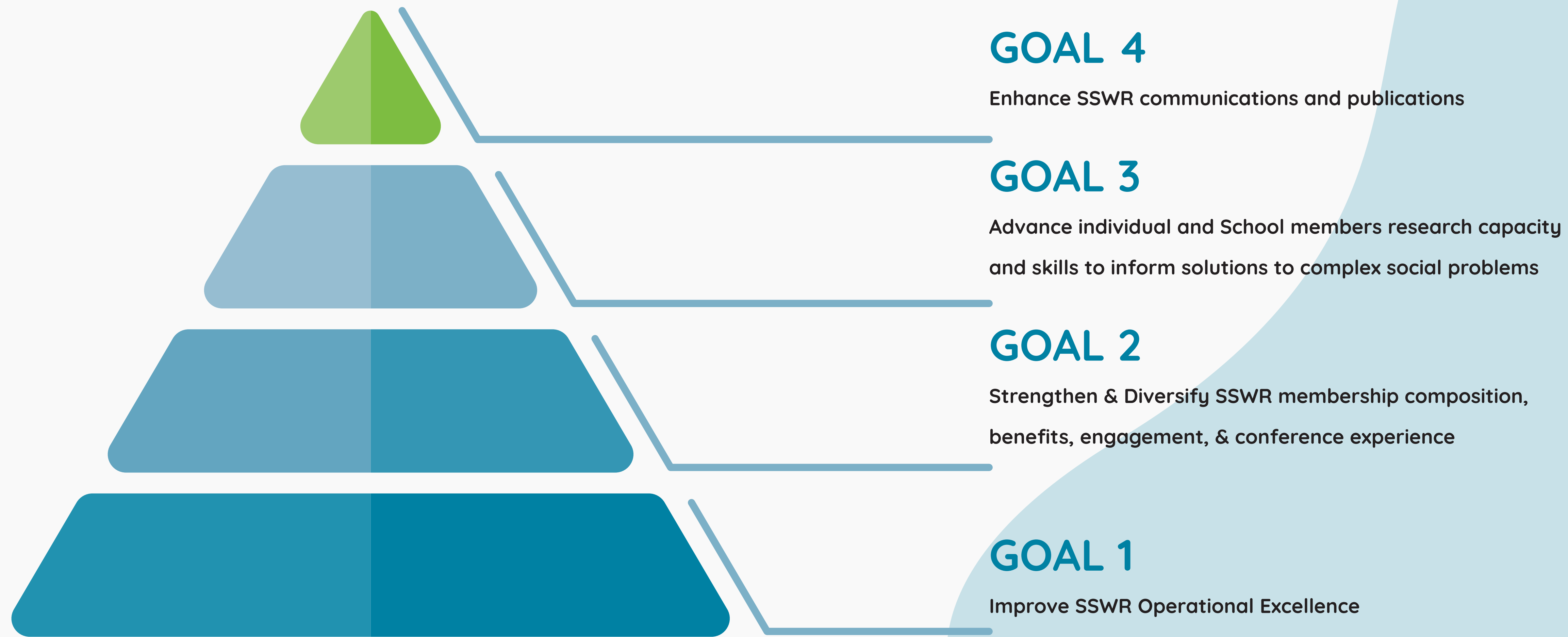
**Jan-April 2024**

Review progress on  
Objectives and Key  
Results

- Revise OKRs as needed based on progress and new priorities.



# Strategic Directions for 2024-2028





# Goal 1: Improve SSWR Operational Excellence

SSWR has the administrative capacity to ensure improvements in its administrative functions, governance processes, and finances.

## **Objective 1:** Improve administrative structure and capacity of SSWR

- KR1: Determine staffing structure to achieve strategic goals by 2025
- KR2: Launch data management system and data dashboard reports by 2025
- KR3: Hire and onboard staff required to achieve strategic goals by 2028

## **Objective 2:** Offer additional leadership and engagement opportunities for doctoral students, early career scholars, and international scholars by 2025

- KR1: Increase the number of early career scholars (faculty & doctoral students) on board committees (i.e., conference, RCDC) or the board by 2025
- KR2: Begin the board of director nomination process to identify potential nominees 12 months prior to the election
- KR3: Increased number of international members who are on the ballots for board positions



# Goal 1: Improve SSWR Operational Excellence

SSWR has the administrative capacity to ensure improvements in its administrative functions, governance processes, and finances.

**Objective 3:** Grow SSWR business model and financial health by 2028 by increasing SSWR's net assets

- KR1: Update SSWR accounting practice (e.g., budgeting process, to capture true cost of conference) by June 2024
- KR2: Establish an endowment with identified principles and policy with payouts \$50K annually by 2028
- KR3: Identify 2 new revenues streams to reduce reliance on membership dues and conference registration by 20% by 2028.
- KR4: Establish baseline unrestricted funding goals (e.g., grants, philanthropy) by 2028



# Goal 2: Strengthen & Diversify SSWR membership composition, benefits, engagement, & conference experience.

Strengthen & Diversity SSWR membership composition, benefits, engagement, & conference experience to engage with and through the SSWR.

## Objective 1: Modernize Annual Conference

- KR1: Develop SSWR's hybrid-conference plan by 2026
- KR2: Complete full review and revision of clusters and topics descriptions aligned with members research areas to enhance conference session cohesion by the 2025 Call for Abstracts
- KR3: Launch the Research in Progress program (emerging scholar applicants send materials for mentored feedback during the conference).\*
- KR4: Increase the number of conference Flash Talks of emergent topics sessions on solutions to complex social problems.\*
- KR5: Implement new Early Career, International, Schools, & Community Partners membership or conference registration rates by 2025

\*Timeline pending additional committee or board discussions.



# Goal 2: Strengthen & Diversify SSWR membership composition, benefits, engagement, & conference experience.

Strengthen & Diversity SSWR membership composition, benefits, engagement, & conference experience to engage with and through the SSWR.

**Objective 2:** Maximize opportunities for membership professional development and increase member engagement

- KR1: Use new data systems to monitor progress on strategic OKRS and revise the OKRs based on the results.\*
- KR2: Increase SSWR membership representation across all US regions and internationally by 30% by 2027
- KR3: Membership benefit will include 1 free webinar by 2025
- KR4: Communications staff will revise member benefits marketing materials\*
- KR5: Increase HBCU & minoritized serving institution engagement (individual or school level) by X% by 2027

\*Timeline pending additional committee or board discussions.



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Strengthen & Diversity SSWR membership composition, benefits, engagement, & conference experience to engage with and through the SSWR.

## Objective 3: Explore possibilities of increasing SSWR Global presence

- KR1: Launch an international scholars TaskForce to increase SSWR international reputation, membership, presenters at conference by 2026
- KR2: Partners with international research organizations to host two webinars or symposia by 2026
- KR3: Increase number of international members submitting JSSWR manuscript's by 2027
- KR4: Host Annual Conference at an international location by 2029

## Objective 4: Re-imagine Fellows & Awards

- KR1: Hold annual SSWR Fellows meeting by 2024
- KR2: Leverage Fellows to engage 30% in SSWR mentoring programs. Timeline: pending additional committee or board discussions.
- KR3: Leverage Fellows to advance SSWR fund development plan by 2028
- KR4: Review current Awards to identify and create new SSWR awards by 2027



# Goal 3: Advance individual and School members research capacity and skills to inform solutions to complex social problems

Advance individual and School members research capacity, antiracist methodological skills, and the increase use of social work science in policy and others solutions to complex social problems.

**Objective 1:** Support professional development of social work researchers throughout career levels

- KR1: Annually produced 12 webinar series (i.e., methods, to navigating promotion, NIH grants) designed to support members across career levels by 2028
- KR2: Launch Associate to Full Professor mentoring consultation service\*
- KR3: Create Awards for school/program that are exemplars in support and promotions of associates to full professor, particularly women and scholars of color\*

\*Timeline pending additional committee or board discussions.



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Advance individual and School members research capacity, antiracist methodological skills, and the increase use of social work science in policy and others solutions to complex social problems.

**Objective 2:** Strengthen institutional research infrastructure to promote social work research and impact

- KR1: Partner with NADD to develop SSWR programming to improve school-level polices to promote applied and engaged research to solve complex social problems (supports, rewards, and evaluation) by 2028
- KR2: Launch school membership rates with clear benefits by 2025
- KR3: Establish a Community Advisory Council to advise SSWR board on how to increase the co-creations of the research agenda with community organizations by 2025



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**Objective 3:** SSWR is contacted as a scientific solutions resource by policy and service decision makers use of scholarship

- KR1: Create a community-driven research process for SSWR by partnership with schools and programs as thought partners to identify research topics and capacity building priorities (e.g., methods).\*
- KR2: Partner with leading social work organizations to promote the use of social work science among policy makers by 2028
- KR3: Partner with “Research to Policy Collaboration” to increase SSWR members participating in providing priority policy challenges for complex social policies.
- KR4: Communications staff will revise member benefits marketing materials\*
- KR5: Increase HBCU & minoritized serving institution engagement (individual or school level) by X% by 2027

Timeline: pending additional committee or board discussions.\*





# Goal 3: Advance individual and School members research capacity and skills to inform solutions to complex social problems

Advance individual and School members research capacity, antiracist methodological skills, and the increase use of social work science in policy and others solutions to complex social problems.

## Objective 4: Build Antiracist & Anti-oppressive (ARAO) research capacity in social work

- KR1: Securing a funding partnership to support to advance anti-racism & oppression science. Timeline: pending additional committee or board discussions.\*
- KR2: Special Issues of JSSWR focused on anti-racist epistemology, methods, & dissemination.\*
- KR3: Publish JSSWR & Conference submission/workshops Antiracist & Antioppressive (ARAO) research standards.\*
- KR4: Recognize excellence in Anti-Racist & Anti-Oppressive research\*

\*Timeline pending additional committee or board discussions.



# Goal 3: Advance individual and School members research capacity and skills to inform solutions to complex social problems

Advance individual and School members research capacity, antiracist methodological skills, and the increase use of social work science in policy and others solutions to complex social problems.

**Objective 5:** Formulate & Implement SSWR action plan to advance Grand Solutions to Complex Problems

- KR1: Establish a formal partnership with the Grand Challenges organization by 2024
- KR2: Launch placed-based partnership in response to one complex social problem by 2028



# Goal 4: Enhance SSWR communications and publications



Improve SSWR's publications, communications, & social media infrastructure.

**Objective 1:** Increase the media presence of SSWR and JSSWR by 100% by 2028

- KR1: Hire communication staff to manage SSWR & JSSWR media (print, digital & social) presence by 2025
- KR2: Require accepted JSSWR authors to write media blurb for media distribution\*
- KR3: Partner with school/program of social work to elevate research content from their newsletters\*
- KR4: Elevate papers by SIG members on our media\*

\*Timeline pending additional committee or board discussions.



# Goal 4: Enhance SSWR communications and publications



Improve SSWR's publications, communications, & social media infrastructure.

**Objective 2:** Transform SSWR's website into a more interactive visitor and member platform by 2024

- KR1: Hire a consultant to revise and build the SSWR website\*
- KR2: Producing policy briefing pages of JSSWR articles developed and distributed to a curated list of legislative staffer\*
- KR3: Ensure that across all strategic goals that the appropriate website content is developed\*

\*Timeline pending additional committee or board discussions.



# Goal 4: Enhance SSWR communications and publications



Improve SSWR's publications, communications, & social media infrastructure.

**Objective 3:** JSSWR is the premier scholarly publication for social work research nationally and internationally by 2028

- KR1: JSSWR is index with the Social Science Citation Index by 2028
- KR2: Increase percentage of members and faculty at schools of social work publishing in JSSWR\*
- KR3: Increase numbers of international members who are submitting and publishing in JSSWR\*

\*Timeline pending additional committee or board discussions.



# Next Steps for the SSWR Board

## A

**Q2 2023**

Approval of 2023-2024 Strategic

Directions Framework Goals

- Assign Committees responsibility

for specific OKRs

- Calendar & Track Progress

## B

**Q3 2023**

Committees can update/revise

KRs Committee Use OKRs to

develop Actions

Items/Agendas/Prepare

Budgets

## C

**Q4 2023**

Committees update agendas

and tactics; Board vote is

required for any proposed

Goals and Objectives changes

## D

**Q1 2024/Ongoing**

Continuous learning through

evaluation on OKRS; make

improvements based on

evaluation results





