



Mission or Purpose Statements

A mission or purpose statement is the reason a fund exists. A mission or purpose captures this information and adds a simple, powerful statement of what the fund is doing to meet those needs.

Most of the component funds established with the Northwest Minnesota Foundation already have a mission or purpose statement. It is typically a broad statement that mirrors the statement below:

The Fund shall be used to provide financial support for charitable, educational and public purpose activities, projects, or services that enhance or otherwise improve the quality of life enjoyed by residents and/or visitors of the _____, Minnesota area. The Fund will be a catalyst in stimulating projects that improve the quality of life in the community and help achieve _____'s vision for its future.

If the component fund you volunteer with would like to update the mission or purpose statement of your fund, you should consider questions and the points outlined below. Then, contact the Philanthropy Officer you work with at the Northwest Minnesota Foundation to discuss next steps.

Key questions:

- What does the community need?
- What population does the fund want to serve?
- Why do we want to serve them?
- What needs will the fund address?
- What kinds of programs will be developed to meet those needs?

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Characteristics of a mission statement:

A compelling mission statement tends to have the following characteristics:

- It uses bold, clear, memorable language.
- It conveys the funds' values.
- It has both an emotional and a rational impact.
- It combines a "why" statement with a "what" statement.
- It describes the need being met in positive, not negative, terms.
- It inspires people to act, give, join, serve and learn more.
- It can be adapted for both marketing and development.
- It is succinct.

Once a statement is drafted:

- Is it broad enough to allow flexibility, but avoid mission drift?
- Is it as succinct as possible and short enough for people to remember and repeat?

A great mission statement:

- Describes the purpose for which your fund exists.
- Prevents Mission drift
- Promotes your fund and conveys the essence of what you are all about.
- Answers "Why did we start this fund?" (The answer will be your first try at writing your mission statement.)

To carry out your mission, you will develop goals and actions. All of these will be part of your strategic plan. Focus on writing a clear, succinct, and inspiring mission statement. It will pay off in the end and prevent wasting time and resources on non-essential activities.

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We believe Northwest Minnesota offers boundless opportunities.

