

American Association for Agricultural Education (AAAE) 2017-2023 Strategic Plan¹

Vision

The vision of AAAE is to be the premier national society for social science scholarship in food, agriculture and natural resources.

Mission

The mission of AAAE is to foster excellence in the discovery and exchange of evidence-based solutions for social science challenges in agriculture and related sciences.

Core Values

AAAE embraces inclusivity, collaboration, professionalism, impact, and innovation.

Strategic Goals

Goal 1: Build a more inclusive culture within the society.

Key Outcome: AAAE membership and activities will reflect the broader discipline and provide a coordinated response to social science issues affecting agriculture and related sciences.

Action Steps:

1. Appoint a steering committee with representation from all areas of our discipline that is charged with creating an enhanced organization as outlined in the new vision and mission statements.
2. Identify an outside person to facilitate the transition of AAAE to a more inclusive society.
3. Examine the professional society's immunity to change and intentionally use this insight to build a more inclusive organization.
4. Rename and rebrand the society.
5. Examine and address the utility/functionality of existing regional conferences.
6. Restructure the SIGs and awards program to reflect a more inclusive society.
7. Design and deliver professional development programs at conferences that focus on faculty needs common to social science scholarship in food, agriculture and natural resources, in addition to specialized offerings.
8. Examine manuscript, paper, and poster guidelines to ensure that they invite research and ideas from across areas of social science scholarship in agriculture and related sciences.
9. Develop and issue guidelines that clearly instruct reviewers to consider without bias a full range of submissions across areas of social science scholarship in agriculture and related sciences by topic and approach.
10. Conduct an annual review of the disciplinary focus of all submitted and published/presented works to monitor the diversity of works shared.
11. Plan and conduct an annual forum for discussing issues, ideas, and concerns for advancing programs and our broader discipline of social science scholarship in agriculture and related sciences.

12. Ensure that conference programs, the website, and all releases address the needs and interests of faculty across institution types (all land-grant and regional) and programs (teaching, research, and extension/outreach).
13. Initiate an electronic “Viewpoints” series that contains invited or contributed articles designed to share perspectives and ideas for advancing our collective work.

Measures of Success:

- An ongoing commitment to change and adaptation
- A renewed organization with a new, more inclusive identity
- Diverse membership representing all disciplinary areas
- A membership that is highly engaged in AAAE conferences, programs, and initiatives
- Broad representation of our discipline in research presented and published in AAAE

Leadership Team:

Lead: Mark Balschweid; Members: Shannon Arnold, Matt Baker, Bob Birkenholz, Boot Chumley, David Doerfert, Leslie Edgar, Daniel Foster, Jamie Loizzo, Joy Rumble, Kate Shoulders, Ricky Telg, Bobby Torres, Stacy Vincent, Hui-Hui Wang, Beth Wilson.

Feedback Loop:

The strategic goal leadership team will provide a written implementation progress report to be shared with the membership at the annual conference and in December each year. Implementation concerns, needs, and challenges will be included in these reports.

Budget Needed:

TBD

Goal 2: Increase membership.

Key Outcome: AAAE will become a larger society that proactively fosters collaboration across areas of social science scholarship in agriculture and related sciences, achieving greater impact on policy and practice.

Action Steps:

1. Clearly and frequently communicate the value and benefits of AAAE membership to current and prospective members.
2. Extend invitations to all faculty members and graduate students from all areas of social science scholarship in agriculture and related sciences to become active members or continue their membership. Include an explanation of member benefits.
3. Track the contacts with and success in recruiting new members.
4. Redesign the website so that it presents a current, inclusive, and professional platform for current and potential member information and exchange.
5. Establish a mentoring program that pairs members across disciplinary areas, faculty rank, and primary responsibilities (teaching, research, extension).
6. Examine the SIGs and committees to ensure that they represent the needs of members and provide the organizational structure needed for future advancement.

7. Ensure that all aspects of the society present a welcoming, inclusive, and inviting atmosphere for all current and potential members.

Measures of Success:

- Dues-paying membership increased by 20%
- Membership value campaign designed and directed to current and potential members
- Conference participation increased by 20%
- New member survey conducted and used to enhance membership
- Potential new members identified and contacted on an ongoing basis
- Percent of faculty in the discipline who are active AAE members (90%)
- Percent of active members who annually renew their membership (95%)
- Percent of all new faculty who become AAE members (100%)
- Percent of members who attend AAE conferences (80%)
- Percent of conference participants who are highly engaged in conference programs and activities (100%)
- Diversity of thought and perspectives in the membership

Leadership Team:

Lead: Becki Lawver; Members: Todd Brashears, Graham Cochran, Misty Lambert, Courtney Meyers, Theresa Murphrey, Ed Osborne, Mark Russell, Jon Simonsen, Amy Smith, Annie Specht, Christopher Stripling, John Tummons.

Feedback Loop:

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Budget Needed:

TBD

Goal 3: Increase collaboration among members and with faculty in other social science and agriculture and related sciences disciplines.

Key Outcome: Member networking and idea exchange will be high, leading to more impactful projects that draw from multidisciplinary perspectives.

Action Steps:

1. Work with the webmaster to make scholarly interests searchable in the directory.
2. Identify and promote opportunities to collaborate with existing multidisciplinary teams within AAE.
3. Examine conference agendas to identify opportunities for formal and informal collaboration.
4. Investigate restructuring the SIGs to stimulate greater innovation and ideation.
5. Promote membership to faculty in other social science disciplines.

6. Highlight collaborative grant opportunities using the listserv, website, and other means.
7. Include one or more thematic sessions at annual conferences that cut across our disciplinary areas (e.g., youth development, program evaluation, community engagement, leading and managing change, motivation, etc.).
8. Use the National Research Agenda to stimulate the formation of teams to address major challenges.
9. Share strategies with members on collaboration and on developing and sustaining effective teams.
10. Hold one or more conference sessions that highlight the intersection of teaching, research, and outreach across our disciplinary areas.
11. Invite conference speakers from other disciplines as a way to broaden perspectives, stimulate ideas and innovations, and increase our knowledge.
12. Allocate time for collaboration and open idea exchange at conferences, including institutional idea sharing and modeling.
13. Encourage the formation of multistate teams to conduct specific research studies.
14. Develop a leader's forum for the purpose of supporting, mentoring, and sharing ideas and strategies for effective unit and program leadership.

Measures of Success:

- All members engaged with AAAE colleagues on one or more collaborative projects
- Cross-disciplinary events held at every conference
- Increased member collaboration with faculty in other disciplines
- Searchable database of members by areas of expertise
- Number of specific opportunities in conferences provided for idea exchange, collaboration, and interdisciplinary discussion
- Number and diversity of active multistate research and project teams
- SIGs that attract and engage all members
- Committee structure that meets the needs of the society and reflects the diversity of members
- Activation of a leader development and exchange forum

Leadership Team:

Lead: Emily Buck; Members: Dwayne Cartmell, Neil Knobloch, Alexa Lamm, Brian Myers, Travis Park, John Ricketts, Brenda Seevers, Scott Smalley, Rob Terry, Jonathan Velez, Holli Leggette.

Feedback Loop:

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Implementation concerns, needs, and challenges will be included in these reports.

Budget Needed:

TBD

Goal 4: Increase the impact of our scholarship.

Key Outcome: AAAE members will design, conduct, report, and disseminate research with an intentional focus on informing practice among our diverse stakeholder groups.

Action Steps:

1. Define key stakeholders for social science scholarship in agriculture and related sciences.
2. Disseminate in appropriate formats for various stakeholders.
3. Encourage researchers to engage in Extension program development planning.
4. Seek stakeholder input for research priorities.
5. Encourage members to publish in a variety of outlets.
6. Provide professional development programs on research methods.
7. Provide professional development programs on reviewing scholarly works.
8. Create partnerships with practitioner organizations to disseminate research.
9. Commission one or more research summaries on an annual basis that include implications for practice.
10. Periodically publish a special issue of the journal that addresses one of the priorities of the National Research Agenda. Solicit and invite contributions from across social science scholarship in agriculture and related sciences, while also considering contributions from others disciplines.
11. Refocus the regional conferences on effective practices in teaching, research, and extension/outreach in colleges, universities, schools, communities, and industry settings, with an emphasis on research-based practices. As an alternative, replace the regional conferences with a single national research-to-practice conference with the above focus.
12. Develop and offer a training session for manuscript reviewers. Explore the feasibility of forming reviewer teams each year from those who have completed the training.
13. Explore the possibility, merits, and drawbacks of establishing an impact factor for the journal.

Measures of Success:

- List of key stakeholders developed
- New Research-to-Practice series designed and activated
- New multistate extension program approved and implemented
- Stakeholders included in the development of the next National Research Agenda
- Listing of the current journal publication outlets of members
- Number of professional development programs delivered
- Number of new dissemination partnerships developed
- Influence of our research on policy and practice
- Recognition of our research in the academic community and among external groups
- Citations of research published in the journal by others outside of our discipline

Leadership Team:

Lead: Currently vacant; Members: Marshall Baker, Gary Briers, Levon Esters, Laura (Lemmons) Greenshaw, Eric Kaufman, Aaron McKim, Greg Miller, Michael Newman, John Rayfield, Nicole Stedman, Wendy Warner, Kattlyn Wolf, Matt Baker.

Feedback Loop:

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Budget Needed:

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¹⁰Original strategic plan for 2017-2020 approved on May 19, 2017 during the 2017 annual conference. On July 21, 2021, the AAAE Board approved to extend until the 2023 annual conference.