



# FIND THE CAUSE

Breast Cancer Foundation

Strategic Plan  
2020-2022

Prepared by:



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## Overview

The strategic plan for Find The Cause (FTC) is intended to provide the organization’s internal and external stakeholders a compass for the organization’s strategic direction for the years 2020-2022. The strategic plan is focused on both shorter-term and longer-term objectives, while contemplating organizational priorities and actions in the next three years.

The strategic plan was completed by the strategic planning committee of the board of directors with the support of Common Impact, a nonprofit consulting firm. It is meant to be a collaborative planning document that will continue to evolve with direction from the full board and the professional management of the organization.

### *Common Impact Engagement Overview*

In August – September 2019, Common Impact brought FTC stakeholders through an accelerated strategic planning process to solidify the core strategies identified by the FTC Board of Directors. As part of that process, Common Impact conducted a landscape analysis, reviewing peer organizations and interviewing current and former stakeholders to better understand the organization’s competitive positioning.

Strategic Pillar	Key Activities	Intended Outcomes
<b>Solidify organizational brand and identity</b>	Refresh brand and identity to represent expanded organizational focus and reach  Strengthen understanding of key market dynamics through expansion planning  Hire an Executive Director who can shepherd the new brand identity forward	Increased brand alignment and visibility
<b>Define operational expansion strategy</b>	Strengthen financial management and scenario planning in order to anticipate aggressive but realistic growth plan  Prioritize geographic and programmatic areas of expansion	\$1.25M organizational revenue by 2022
<b>Develop a sustainable partnerships approach</b>	Strengthen partnerships with institutional and individual funders  Explore peer collaborations to bolster the work of FTC and similar organizations, and ensure connectivity amongst solutions to finding the cure for certain cancers	An integrated, collaborative approach to FTC fulfilling its mission via funding and programmatic partnerships

## Statement of Purpose, Mission and Vision

### Vision Statement

FTC envisions a world where we know the root causes of cancer and take systemic action to eradicate those causes.

### Mission Statement

The mission of FTC is to fund scientific research on the environmental causes of breast cancer and educate the public on prevention.

### Organizational Purpose and History

Despite the billions of dollars that have been put towards researching treatments and cures, breast cancer is still progressing. Each year, over-330,000 women are diagnosed and over 40,000 continue to die. An estimated 3.1 million women are living with and/or have had breast cancer in the US today, representing 1 out of every 8 women. Forty years ago, only 1 in every 24 women suffered from the disease. Breast cancer kills more women between the ages of 15 and 54 than any other type of cancer.

FTC was founded in 2000 by Ellie Anbinder who, after learning that she was one of the 90% diagnosed with breast cancer who have no family history, became determined to find out why she got it.-FTC is one of the only organizations solely dedicated to funding research that investigates-the root causes of breast cancer. We fund a consortium of world-renowned scientific laboratories, who work in collaboration,-and are achieving results more quickly and effectively than individual research efforts and epidemiological studies.

The purpose of the scientific consortium is to:

- Provide compelling evidence that man-made chemicals cause breast cancer and trigger cancer stem cells that may be responsible for the disease's recurrence (metastasis)
- Further develop a high-tech, high-throughput, genomic platform able to predict the carcinogenicity of thousands of untested chemicals
- Expand public awareness of these cancer-causing chemicals through published manuscripts in high profile scientific journals and presentations to international scientific association
- Develop arguments for reducing exposure to carcinogenic chemicals
- Potentially identify novel, non-toxic breast cancer therapeutics and preventatives
- Leverage the seed funding provided by FTC to generate research grants through larger federal and foundation grants.

### *Programs*

Our current capital campaign funds a consortium of four scientific laboratories at Boston University and Tufts University. This is the first initiative of its kind, focusing on the environmental causes of breast cancer and capitalizing on the synergies of these teams of world renowned scientists who are working in collaboration to discover which chemicals cause breast cancer, how they cause it and how to prevent them from causing it.

Through our "Investing in Prevention" campaign, our goal is to raise \$1.25M per year so that we can donate \$1M to the Consortium. Each lab will receive \$250,000 to hire post-doctoral candidates and research technicians and purchase laboratory equipment, supplies and samples to accelerate the research and progress to discover how to prevent cancer.

## Landscape Analysis

In August 2019, Common Impact conducted a landscape analysis to better understand FTC's value proposition. This analysis included reviewing the publicly available collateral of peer organizations and FTC-identified stakeholders.

### Methodology

#### *Peer Analysis*

- Broadly examined 12 organizations, rated on similarity, notably:
  - Focused on breast cancer research
  - Primarily offered research grants to scientists, doctors and others working in cancer cure and prevention
  - Sought to engage and educate the public in this work

- Found two additional peers through our own research – Stand Up 2 Cancer and Prevent Cancer Foundation
- Conducted in-depth analysis on 8 organizations

### *Stakeholder Interviews*

- Stakeholders were grouped into four categories:
  - Board, Donor/Events, Advisor, Scientist
- Sample size:
  - 11 stakeholders were contacted
  - 6 provided their input via phone and email responses
- Interview questions were asked to assess three general areas of FTC's stakeholder base, work, and strategy, including (1) stakeholder involvement and background, (2) organizational strength and weakness and (3) organizational strategy and goals

### *Key Findings* (Full set of findings available [here](#))

- Fundraising: Overall, fundraising is a key area identified as a weakness in both the peer analysis and stakeholder interviews.
- Advocacy: Significant tension with the concept of advocacy was uncovered. Most stakeholders negatively viewed the concept, while the peer analysis demonstrated that most key competitors are engaging with advocacy.
- Expanding Mission: The peer analysis and stakeholders interviews reinforced that expanding beyond breast cancer was a good idea, but stakeholders most personally tied to breast cancer agreed that FTC would likely lose some support from that community.
- Engagement and Communication: Most stakeholders agreed that FTC could better and more consistently engage its stakeholders.
- Partnerships: Given the brand presence and complementary services of peers, there is opportunity to partner to strengthen FTC's mission and fundraising mandate.

## SWOT Analysis

Leveraging the FTC Board’s initial SWOT analysis, Common Impact integrated the findings of the 2019 landscape analysis.

Internal		External	
Relating to FTC’s internal strategy and operations		Relating to the context of FTC’s external market environment	
<i>High control</i>		<i>Low control</i>	
Strengths	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Dedicated staff and board</li> <li>✓ Strong research relationships including an effective consortium model</li> <li>✓ Industry expertise and relationships related to root causes</li> <li>✓ Historical corporate and celebrity support to leverage for storytelling</li> </ul>	Opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Differentiated focus on finding the cause, not the cure</li> <li>✓ Boston as HQ city provides proximity to talent and biotech industry</li> <li>✓ Strong potential for partnership among regional and national brand name cancer organizations</li> <li>✓ Open environment for mission expansion to a broader range of cancers</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Low brand visibility</li> <li>✓ Sustained, strategic stakeholder engagement and communication</li> <li>✓ Lack of professional and development staff</li> <li>✓ Relatively weak financial position (cash flows, potential for revenue growth)</li> <li>✓ Lack of clarity on advocacy positioning</li> </ul>		Threats

## Strategic Priorities



### Solidify Organizational Brand and Identity

FTC is at a pivotal moment in its organizational lifecycle, transitioning from a founding Executive Director and board. FTC's Board of Directors is considering two primary identity shifts, including the mission expansion beyond breast cancer and the continued inclusion of our current educational platform in its programming. The current Board of Directors has largely come to consensus that expanding beyond breast cancer is a preferred identity shift. It's much more ambivalent, as a group, regarding education, its scope and fit with programming. Confirming position on these two identity dimensions is a critical foundation for any larger strategy, funding, or partnership conversations. The operational initiatives related to this strategy are:

- Clarify vision for organizational vision and brand, including clarification on organizational focus (2019)
  - Confirm expansion to a broader set of cancers
  - Lead discussions on the value of our educational platform to the organization, including a clear definition of curriculum content, tangible description of how it integrates into programming, and the real and perceived tradeoffs
- Hire Executive Director whose competencies, experiences and network align with the goals for mission and organizational expansion (by December 31, 2019)
- Establish brand attributes for chosen focus (name, logo, tagline, mission and vision statements, key messages) (early 2020)
- Conduct expansion planning for chosen focus, including identifying new sector dynamics, funders and competitors (January - June 2020)
  - Conduct research on new market dynamics associated with expanded focus area, if applicable, including:
    - New potential researchers or research institutions to collaborate with
    - New corporate strategic alignments, including companies that are pivoting from traditional to healthy, green and sustainable
    - Individual donors, family offices and green initiative funds that target prevention as the primary way to reduce cancer

*Indicators:*

- √ Staff and board agreement on core identity, brand and program focus areas
- √ A detailed operational plan developed by FTC's new Executive Director that outlines how FTC will achieve the 2020-22 Strategic Plan priorities
- √ A refreshed messaging strategy for the broadened mission focus, including audience / stakeholder definition, targeted written and oral messages for each stakeholder group
- √ An understanding of top funders, partners and researchers within areas of mission expansion

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## Define Operational Expansion Strategy

Once FTC has answered its core identity questions, it will need to craft an operational and financial plan for staged growth. The organization has a goal of reaching \$1.25M in revenue over the next three years, representing 275% revenue growth from FY18's annual revenues of \$452K. By year 5 (2025), FTC aspires to have \$1M net to donate. FTC will need to test the feasibility of this strategy by defining a financial plan for investment in staff and a reasonable expectation for increased fundraising dollars.

- Immediately securing organizational capacity by professionalizing the staff, operations and financial management capabilities including: (October 2019)
  - An Executive Director that has fundraising and financial management capability. Key to this role will not only be an ability to engage and fundraise for the mission, but an ability to quantify an ambiguous donor and funder pipeline in order to set realistic targets for investment, the ED's own capacity and additional staff
  - An exploration of outsourcing some basic financial accounting and technical functions to enable professional staff to focus on strategy and relationship development
- Determining intended organizational scale, including geographic, programmatic and facilities growth for 2020-2022 by: (March 2020)
  - Finalizing the 2020 operational budget by December 2019
  - Forecasting the revenue trajectory to reach \$1.25M in revenue by 2022, estimating 20% of overall growth for 2020, and 40% each year for 2021 and 2022 in order to give the new management team runway for growth
  - Conducting a cost benefit analysis of entering a new market in order to understand the investment and potential revenues associated with supporting new regions

### *Indicators:*

- ✓ Active use of a financial scenarios document that estimates revenues through 2022, with ability to model up or down depending on 2020 actuals
- ✓ Clarity of messaging related to operational expansion plans, specifically the prioritized list of new markets and entry plans, as well as operational plans that anchor in the partnership and fundraising strategies defined below



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## Develop a Sustainable Partnerships Approach

One of the strongest opportunities FTC has is to develop more sustained, intentional partnerships to fuel its growth. FTC seems to have effectively invested in relationships with research scientists and members of the consortium, and will now need to direct that level of investment towards its partnership with funders and industry partners. While there are many potential possibilities for partnership, FTC needs to take a structured approach to developing and cultivating those partners, as well as exploring new partnerships such as those with peer organizations. The operational initiatives related to this priority are:

- Develop a fundraising and donor cultivation plan that: (December 2019)
  - Identifies key value proposition to different types of donors, including science, cause, prevention and education
  - Solidifies current stakeholder cultivation, with an understanding of capacity to give and needed regular touch points
  - Identifies a network of new funders through FTC’s current networks and primary research in the mission expansion scan mentioned above
  - Identifies the ideal revenue mix from each type of funding / partner source below, and annual revenue targets for each
- Establish a partnership development plan anchored in overall expansion strategy, that crisply communicates the partner role, goals and associated revenues (June 2020)
- Define a strategy to potential partnership with peer organizations by: (September 2020)
  - Reviewing and prioritizing the peers assessed in the landscape analysis with a lens towards partnership
  - Developing a potential partnership framework, including the core benefits for FTC in partnership (brand, funding, capacity, programming), the general model for partnership, and a “pitch” to approach the potential partner organization
  - Identifying warm contacts at potential partner organizations to approach

#### *Indicators:*

- ✓ A defined strategy that FTC’s Board of Directors and management team have approved and against which they can assess progress in quarterly board meetings
- ✓ An increasing, reliable revenue base from individual donors
- ✓ A piloted partnership model with prioritized peers in the field

## APPENDIX

### ***History***

Find the Cause Breast Cancer Foundation (formerly Art because Breast Cancer Foundation) was founded in 2000 by Ellie Anbinder and her friend Joyce Creiger. Ellie, a breast cancer survivor with no family history of the disease, was determined to find the root cause of her disease. Early efforts to raise funds to support this nascent effort centered on selling art at Joyce's art gallery. Over the next 19 years, Ellie, who remained in her role as Executive Director until 2019, built a Board of Directors and together they launched two subsequent campaigns. The first was the Seed the Scientist campaign which awarded grants to young scientists showing promise in the field of research on prevention. The second and current capital campaign, called Investing in Prevention, funds a consortium of world-renowned scientists who work in collaboration and are achieving results more quickly and effectively than individual and epidemiological studies. Since 2014, FTC has donated over \$1M to the consortium, who have successfully leveraged this seed money to grant awards of up to 15 times that amount.

### ***Professional Management and Board of Directors***

TBD, Executive Director

Dru Lindgren, Assistant Executive Director, Board of Directors

Edward Westerman, Board Co-Chair

Marsha Cannon, Board Co-Chair

Susan Harrington, Board of Directors, Treasurer

Terri Partridge, Board of Directors, Clerk

Michael Lindgren, Board of Directors, Development Committee Chair

Ariel Cudkowicz, Board of Directors, Strategic Planning Committee Chair