



**CREATING THE FUTURE**  
Change the Questions, Change the World!

# Guiding Document

(By-laws\*)

Adopted \_\_\_\_\_

The purpose of this document is to guide the management, decision-making, and activities of the organization, so that people working with Creating the Future in any capacity know what to expect. Any item not specified in this document will be guided by Creating the Future's Articles of Incorporation, the [Arizona Nonprofit Corporation Act](#) (ARS Title 10, Chapters 24 through 40), and by regulations of the U.S. Internal Revenue Service.

## I - Name of Organization

The official name of this organization is Creating the Future.

## II - Organizational Purpose & Values

- A. Creating the Future's vision is a world that works for everyone. To make that vision a reality, our mission is to help people re-imagine the systems they encounter, to aim those systems at bringing out the best in people via the questions they ask.
- B. In order to accomplish that mission, our work will always adhere to our values. The Pollyanna Principles represent the core of values upon which all actions and decisions at Creating the Future are based.
1. We accomplish what we hold ourselves accountable for.
  2. Each and every one of us is creating the future, every day, whether we do so consciously or not.
  3. Everyone and everything is interconnected and interdependent, whether we acknowledge that or not.
  4. "Being the change we want to see" means walking the talk of our values.
  5. Strength builds upon our strengths, not our weaknesses.
  6. Individuals will go where systems lead them.
  7. Unless something is physically impossible, it is possible.
- C. Rooted in those principles, the following summarizes our values in action. (See Section VII for the full statement).

1. Our work will contribute to, and model the humane, healthy, equitable future we want to see, walking the talk of our values and vision in everything we do.
2. Our work will create and actively maintain conditions for learning and sharing what we learn.
3. Our work will create and actively maintain conditions for bringing out the best in people, actively seeking to accomplish together what none of us can accomplish on our own.
4. Our work will model openness, participation, engagement and relationship.

### **III - Organizational Structure**

The purpose of the organization's structure is to ensure that the people working to accomplish our mission have what they need to succeed. The structure itself will model our Values in Action: openness and inclusion, the importance of relationships, the value of learning and sharing what we learn, and the importance of Collective Enoughness – that together we have everything we need. In this way, the structure of the organization will mimic a healthy ecosystem in nature: interdependent and interconnected; open and fluid; learning and evolving; mutually supportive.

### **IV - How Decisions are Made and By Whom**

- A. To ensure our decisions are aligned with our vision and values, all decisions will be made by the people closest to and affected by that decision, as they are the ones with the most context and knowledge required for making those decisions. In accordance with Arizona statute 10-3801c, this authority will be granted per Creating the Future's Articles of Incorporation.
- B. All major strategy discussions and decisions, including all board meetings, will be public, inviting anyone affected and/or interested to participate in both the discussion and the decision. In weighing the balance between protecting the legal obligations of the organization, honoring the privacy of individuals, and instilling trust by engaging openly, the parties involved may choose to keep a meeting closed only if it meets the following criteria:
  1. When there are legal requirements for privacy
  2. When public conversation would compromise our ability to accomplish our mission in accordance with our values
  3. When public conversation would compromise the ability to productively engage in Catalytic Thinking
  4. When public conversation would compromise the ability to establish and test new relationships
  5. When an individual has a desire for privacy (including but not limited to employment issues)

In all other circumstances, strategy discussions will be public.

C. All decisions at Creating the Future will be made using the Catalytic Thinking framework, asking the following questions in the following order:

1. Who will be affected by this decision? No matter what the decision is, who will be impacted?
2. Listening to those individuals: What positive outcome do they want? What strengths do they bring to the issue? What are the values at the heart of the issue? What would those individuals need in order to participate?
3. Grounded in what we learn from listening, what is the highest potential outcome for each of those parties - and for Creating the Future's mission? What would "good" look like? If the decision is about a problem, what would "good" look like if the problem were no longer there?
4. In order for that high potential outcome to be reality, what conditions would need to be in place? What would people need to feel, have, know, understand, be assured of?
5. What actions will create those conditions for success? Who else cares about what we care about, and what actions could we take together, that none of us could accomplish on our own?
6. What do we need internally, in order to take those actions? What do WE need to feel, have, know, understand, be assured of?
7. To create those internal conditions for success, who can we collaborate with? Who can we share resources with?

D. All decisions and activities taken within and on behalf of Creating the Future will comply with Arizona law.

## **V - Role of the Board**

The role of Creating the Future's board is to safeguard the organization's integrity, to ensure...

- that the organization is meeting all its legal obligations, in compliance with Arizona law and the U.S. Internal Revenue Service
- that we are meeting the expectations of our stakeholders and community members
- that we are doing what we have committed to do
- that we are doing so by walking the talk of our values

Per Section IV(B) above, the board's work will be done publicly, with as much participation by community members as possible.

Per Section IV, the board's role in any decision will be limited to establishing guidelines for ensuring those decisions are made with integrity and in compliance with the law.

## VI – Legal Specifics

According to Arizona law, any item not explicitly addressed in an organization’s bylaws default to Arizona law in general, and specifically to the Arizona Nonprofit Corporation Act, Chapters 24-40 of the Arizona Revised Statutes. The following are explicit additions to our statutory requirements:

- A. The board will have no fewer than 3 directors.
- B. Board members will sign conflict of interest statements annually. Those statements will be available for review by any interested party upon written request.
- C. The organization’s fiscal year shall end on December 31 of every year.

## VII – Supporting Documents

Arizona Revised Statutes Title 10: Corporations and Associations:

<https://www.azleg.gov/arsDetail/?title=10>

Arizona Revised Statute 10-3801c regarding delegating authority for decision-making:

<https://www.azleg.gov/viewdocument/?docName=https://www.azleg.gov/ars/10/03801.htm>

Statement of Our Values in Action: <https://creatingthefuture.org/statement-of-our-values-in-action/>

\* Per [the board’s July 2016 meeting](#), the word “bylaws” often elicits confusion, suggesting that the document is “law” rather than a document to guide self-governance. This document includes the word *bylaws* only to assist people seeking our guiding documents without knowing what we have titled them.