



# STRATEGIC PLAN 2021

**NEW!**

## MISSION

Rural Vermont organizes, educates and advocates in collaboration with local and global movements to strengthen the social, ecological and economic health of the agrarian communities that connect us all.

**NEW!**

## VISION

Rural Vermont envisions a just and equitable world rooted in reverence for the earth and dignity for all. This abundant and generous way of life celebrates our diversity and interdependence, in which communities of microorganisms, animals, plants, and humans tend one another and nurture generations to come.

## SUMMARY

In 2018, Rural Vermont transitioned to Sociocracy, a horizontal governance structure characterized by shared leadership, equivalence, effectiveness, and transparency that offers an alternative approach to organizational structure and decision-making, and emphasizes continued improvement. As we had suspected, Sociocracy has been a great fit for Rural Vermont. In many ways, it formalizes the way we've always been naturally inclined to operate, while providing guidance on how to do it well. Further, Sociocracy mirrors the inclusive structures we would like to see in the world around us.

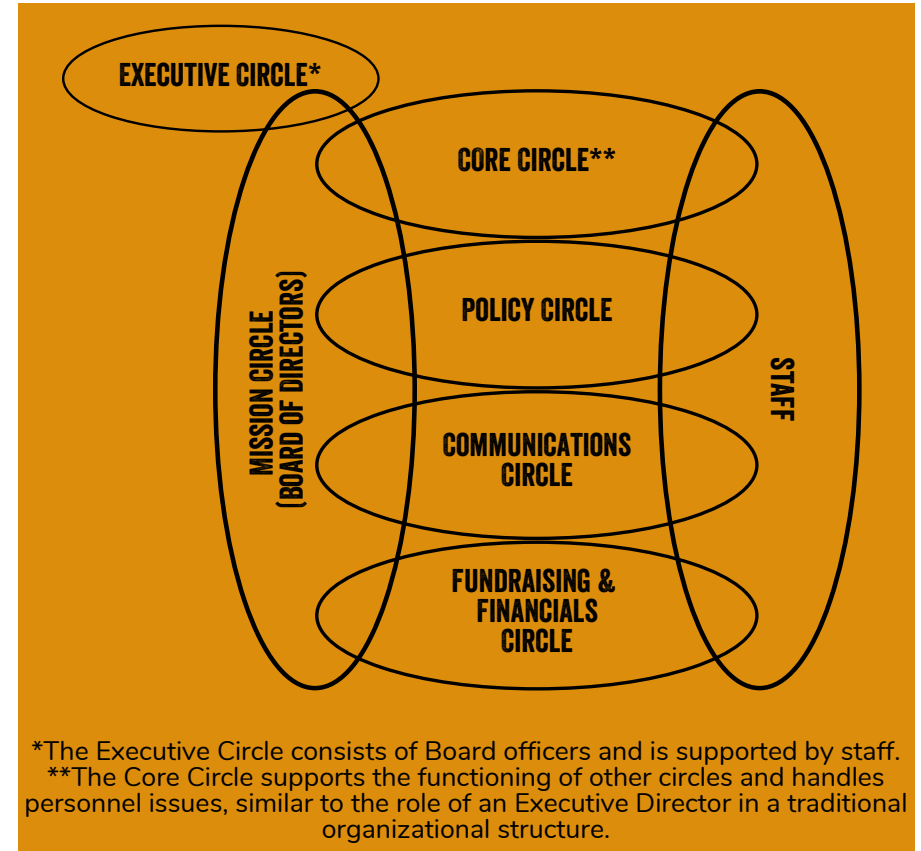
Today, our work is structured by interconnected small committees we call "Circles". Most are composed of both staff and Board with relevant expertise, and each maintains agency and accountability over a distinct realm of operations. (See "Organizational Structure" diagram to right.)

In late summer 2020, utilizing our Sociocratic governance structure, staff & Board began developing a strategic plan to guide our work over the next 5 years, and reworking our messaging to better align with Rural Vermont's values and priorities. We approached the project in an efficient and streamlined manner, while ensuring that the process was inclusive with opportunities for everyone to provide input. The resulting mission, vision, goals and objectives are the product of many hours of discussion, contemplation and wordsmithing as we came to realize the challenge of articulating and defining our work that is so collaborative and intersectional.

We are excited to share Rural Vermont's Strategic Plan with you. We believe this will enable our community to feel engaged and informed, provide us with the necessary foundation to define the more granular next steps, and hold us accountable to moving this work forward.

As always, we welcome your feedback and questions!

## ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE



# STRATEGIC PLAN: GOALS & OBJECTIVES

## GOALS

## OBJECTIVES

<p>In pursuit of our mission, our organizational culture and structure – internal and out – will embody inclusion, shared power, collaboration, and grassroots leadership.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Strengthen our sociocratic structure to more fully realize a culture of shared power, inside our organization and throughout our external work.</li><li>• Prioritize grassroots engagement and leadership development.</li><li>• Be a trusted ally and accomplice to marginalized, at-risk, youth, and other frontline communities.</li><li>• Continue to deepen and diversify our collaborations, partnerships, and relationships with local, regional, national and international organizations.</li></ul>
<p>Our grassroots organizing and policy work will result in tangible changes that improve the social, ecological and economic health of agrarian communities, and by extension, us all.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Facilitate and support active farmer/farmworker leadership groups on our most active issues.</li><li>• Commit to regular interaction and exchange with our grassroots community in order to both better understand what the needs are and how effective our work has been.</li><li>• Use an intersectional and equity lens with all of our policy and organizing work.</li><li>• Develop clear policy and organizing goals when we take on issues and clearly communicate those goals and outcomes to our community, including how they relate to social, environmental and economic health.</li></ul>
<p>Our organizational work, partnerships, and collaborations, will focus on and prioritize agrarian movement building and will be infused with values of justice, equity, and intersectionality.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Position and communicate Rural Vermont’s broader worldview within the context of justice and liberation.</li><li>• Prioritize solidarity efforts and long-term intersectional coalition and partnership work.</li><li>• Communicate and educate about our relationships and collaborations locally, nationally and globally.</li><li>• Grow relationships with communities and organizations led by Black, Indigenous, immigrant, youth, LGBTQ+ and other historically marginalized folx.</li></ul>
<p>Our membership, stakeholder base, and broader community will grow and diversify to better represent our grassroots and strengthen our collective power.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Develop a communications plan.</li><li>• Identify and engage with populations/communities/regions where we lack connections.</li><li>• Develop and/or improve systems designed to identify and cultivate prospective activists, members, organizational partners, and general supporters.</li><li>• Show up in solidarity when members from the agrarian community experience injustices.</li></ul>
<p>Our budget will grow as necessary to realize the strategic plan and increase staff and organizational capacity in pursuit of our vision and goals.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Improve retention and staff satisfaction by offering more benefits.</li><li>• Raise more funds to support grassroots leadership development and movement building.</li><li>• To actualize our commitment to being an anti-racist organization, raise more funds for internal training and prioritize support for BIPOC organizations.</li><li>• Increase organizational capacity by raising more funds to grow staff and/or hire consultants.</li></ul>