



ST. LOUIS

Regional Data Alliance

Steering Committee Charter

Adopted on January 29, 2019

Mission Statement

The St. Louis Regional Data Alliance (RDA) builds shared data infrastructure and supports strong data actors that use quality data to improve people's lives.

Overview of the St. Louis Regional Data Alliance

The St. Louis Regional Data Alliance (RDA) is a collaborative membership and governing body comprised of members from existing data anchors and stakeholders across local institutions (governments, funders, universities, nonprofits, etc.) and issues (health, economic development, education, etc.). The RDA is establishing and pursuing an agenda for how the St. Louis region can better use data for community change. The RDA does not intend to replace existing data efforts but will maximize their impact as they align and integrate with each other.

The RDA was formed in mid-2018 and elected an Interim Steering Committee to develop a Startup Strategy for its first 18-months (Exhibit A), largely funded by the Missouri Foundation for Health. In early 2019, the Interim Steering Committee will transition to a permanent Steering Committee structure with roles and responsibilities outlined within this Charter.

RDA Members

The RDA is comprised of a diverse body of Members who work together to represent the variety of essential regional data skillsets and perspectives in the St. Louis region. Membership is free and open to anyone who is interested upon completion of a short form with their contact information, position, and role in the St. Louis data ecology. Members are individuals, not organizations — though organizational membership may be explored at a later date. All attendees of current RDA meetings and trainings will transition to being Members in February 2019. The RDA will distribute a monthly newsletter to all Members highlighting data actors in the region, data events and trainings, and the variety of local and national data tools and trends. Members will also convene at Quarterly Meetings to discuss such work in person and help inform key decisions of the RDA. Members will insure that key St. Louis institutions are represented in the RDA outside of the Steering Committee, as well as put continued focus on including community voice and a racial equity lens in the RDA's development.

Members will approve, by a 51% majority, the slate of the first Steering Committee as nominated by the Interim Steering Committee and will play a more substantial role in nominating and approving Steering Committee members in the future. They are also asked to promote the work of the RDA within their own organization and to the broader community where appropriate, contribute to the RDA newsletter and messaging materials as needed, and advocate for shared data infrastructure across organizations and issues — including a commitment to data sharing and transparency ("open data" whenever possible).

In addition, RDA members also regularly:

- Generate recommendations for regional data priorities that are vetted by the Steering Committee and Backbone Staffing
- Participate in committees to accomplish the RDA's goals and implement RDA strategies
- Listen for data issues that emerge in the broader community on the RDA's behalf, helping the RDA respond emerge in line with its mission and goals
- Recruit stakeholders and broaden community participation in the RDA
- Evaluate and critique Steering Committee recommendations, strategies, and goals to ensure that the RDA meets its goals and has a substantial impact on the community

RDA Backbone Staffing

The Regional Data Alliance is supported by Backbone Staffing housed at the University of Missouri – St. Louis' Community Innovation and Action Center (CIAC). CIAC staffs and supports a designated RDA Lead, a Regional Data Architect, Graduate Research Assistants, and other administrative staff as needed to grow and sustain the RDA's impact. Backbone Staffing is responsible for organizing the RDA Steering Committee and Membership, building relationships with regional institutions, guiding recruitment of new RDA members, leading fundraising efforts with Steering Committee support, and representing the decisions and priorities of the RDA to the public.

Backbone Staffing will also implement key components of the RDA Startup Strategy, including creating regional data portals (a Regional Data Exchange, or RDX), a regional data audit/standardization roadmap, and infrastructure for ongoing regional needs analysis alongside the United Way Needs Assessment. They will track and evaluate the RDA's progress using the Community Check Box evaluation tool and build capacity among Members for the optimal inclusion of community voice and a racial equity lens within St. Louis data work.

Backbone Staffing will be reviewed annually by the Steering Committee (without Backbone Staff present), which will make recommendations of how to improve Backbone work within the coming year. If a situation arises where Backbone Staffing needs to change due to staff turnover, poor performance, or the necessity of a new RDA structure, the Steering Committee can vote (by 3/4 majority) to transition the Backbone to a new form. If the RDA determines that Backbone Staffing is performing poorly, a time-limited improvement plan is recommended before transitioning to a differing Staffing structure. In the case of a new required structure, the Steering Committee must have identified the new Backbone and/or Structure before transitioning in order to maintain the RDA's current work and momentum.

If significant issues with Backbone Staffing arise outside of this annual evaluation, the Steering Committee may call (by 2/3 majority) for immediate Staffing evaluation with similar considerations to the above. During the annual evaluation process, Backbone Staff will also evaluate the performance of the Steering Committee and make recommendations for improving its work over the coming year.

RDA Steering Committee

The Regional Data Alliance is led by its Steering Committee, which guides the implementation of the RDA's Startup Strategy (and its successors), develops the RDA's long-term funding and sustainability model, and is the primary advocate for shared data infrastructure and data sharing/transparency in the St. Louis region. The Steering Committee represents the interests of RDA Members and key St. Louis institutions, as well as evaluates and helps direct RDA Backbone Staffing and ensures the prominence of community voice and racial equity. While Steering Committee seats are for individuals, not organizations, organizational representation will help guide Steering Committee composition and Representatives are expected to both represent their organization to the RDA and advocate for RDA priorities at their organization.

RDA Steering Committee Selection

The RDA's first Steering Committee will transition out of the Interim Steering Committee, active from July 2018 to February 2019. In January 2019, the Interim Steering Committee will recommend a slate of Steering Committee Representatives to begin their service in March 2019. Some of these Representatives will currently serve on the Interim Steering Committee, while others will be added from missing regional stakeholders. The full slate of Steering Committee members will be voted in by RDA Membership (by 51% majority) during its Quarterly Meeting in February 2019. RDA Membership will be more actively involved in Steering Committee selection in 2020 and beyond.

The Steering Committee is comprised of 20 Representatives, including 19 voting members and one non-voting seat reserved for the RDA Lead. Steering Committee Representatives are elected for a year-long term, with renewal without re-nomination or application for a term of up to three years. Organizations may have no more than two Representatives on the Steering Committee, though the RDA prefers one Representative per organization. The Steering Committee seeks a balance of representation from across central regional data actors, which may include:

- Government: St. Louis City, St. Louis County, St. Charles County, Madison County, East-West Gateway, Metro Transit/Bi-State
- Funders: Missouri Foundation for Health, United Way of Greater St. Louis, Mental Health Board/Children's Service Funds, Clark-Fox Family Foundation
- Universities: St. Louis University, SIUE, Washington University in St. Louis, UMSL
- Strategic Initiatives: FLOURISH, Forward Through Ferguson, Ready by 21
- Community Anchors: BJC Healthcare, Rise, IFF
- Technology/Industry: 1904 Labs, Daugherty Business Solutions, GlobalHack, Ameren
- Community Members: At least one seat for non-institutional member

The Steering Committee will meet once a month at a regular time determined by Representatives. Unless otherwise specified, all meetings will be in-person with call-ins allowed only in emergencies. Representatives will sign a commitment form that outlines their promise to attend monthly Steering Committee meetings (they can miss up to 2 meetings a year),

respond to RDA requests as needed, pursue the RDA's mission individually and within their organization, participate in RDA financial and sustainability planning (including internal asks), avoid conflicts of interests, and ensure their organization's commitment to provide Representative staff time for the RDA.

Representatives can designate 1 Proxy to attend meetings on their behalf in case of an absence, preferably another RDA Member who is familiar with the RDA's goals. A quorum for a Steering Committee meeting is 13, or 2/3 of the full Committee of 20 Representatives. If a Steering Committee Representative leaves during the term, the Steering Committee will examine replacement on a case-by-case basis — including if a Steering Committee Representative changes organizations but wishes to stay on the Steering Committee. When possible, the Proxy should have priority to fill the Representative seat. Approving a new Representative (or Representative organization) will require a 2/3 vote of Steering Committee Representatives. A Representative can also be removed from the Committee upon a 3/4 vote by Representatives.

The Steering Committee will select two Co-Chairs to work more closely with Backbone Staff on setting and pursuing the RDA's agenda throughout their term. In the Steering Committee's first year, one Co-Chair will commit to a one-year term while the other will commit to a two-year term. After its first year, each Steering Committee will select one Co-Chair for a two-year term, ensuring that there is always continuity in Steering Committee leadership. Co-Chairs will meet with the RDA Lead one additional time per month to plan for upcoming Steering Committee meetings and other RDA activities.

Other Sub-Committees — either within the Steering Committee (communications, fundraising, data, etc.) or among RDA Members (i.e. issue-specific Sub-Committees around health or education or institution-specific Sub-Committees around governments or universities) — may be formed to help guide the RDA's work as needed. Goals and guidelines for these Sub-Committees should be outlined in separate documents upon their formation.

RDA Decision-Making Process

The RDA will follow a light version of the Robert's Rules of Order. Minutes from the previous Steering Committee or Quarterly Meeting will be reviewed and approved at the beginning of each meeting. Votes are taken after both an initial Motion and a Second, followed by Discussion by the body in question before a final Vote.

- Unless otherwise specified, the Steering Committee requires a 2/3 majority to approve any item that is voted upon within their meetings.
- Unless otherwise specified, RDA Membership requires a 51% majority to approve any item that is voted upon within their meetings.
- In a situation where the RDA Membership and the Steering Committee disagree about an issue, through a documented vote, the Steering Committee's decision will govern.
- In a situation where the Steering Committee and Backbone Staffing disagree about an issue, through a documented vote, the Steering Committee's decision will govern.

Meeting minutes, discussions, and votes will be stored and accessible through a shared Google Drive open to Steering Committee and RDA Members depending on their involvement in either or both of these bodies.

As a general rule, the Regional Data Alliance operates in the following way:

- The Steering Committee sets the RDA's direction and priorities
- Backbone Staffing implements what the Steering Committee recommends
- RDA Members provide feedback about and gives their blessing for the RDA's work

Additions or changes to the Steering Committee Charter can be made upon 2/3 vote of the Steering Committee. The Interim Steering Committee will vote to approve the initial charter.

Glossary of Terms

Backbone Staffing (“Backbone”): The entity responsible for organizing the RDA Steering Committee and Membership, building relationships with regional institutions, guiding recruitment of new RDA members, leading fundraising efforts with Steering Committee support, and representing the decisions and priorities of the RDA to the public.

Community Innovation and Action Center: A research center at the University of Missouri – St. Louis (UMSL) that is currently designated as the RDA Backbone.

Data Infrastructure: Data tools and practices that are shared across Data Actors to strengthen their collective capacity to use data to improve people’s lives. These include data standards, data dictionaries, common taxonomies, data integration (like APIs), data visualization and analysis, data cataloguing and warehousing (including the Regional Data Exchange [RDX]), and related tools and practices that are or can be shared across many data actors.

Data Actors: Individuals or organizations that produce, transform, analyze, and use data about issues and people in the St. Louis region. This term is used as a catch-all to include data professionals, community members, and community organizations that use data to improve the region, whether or not it is a designated part of their job or mission.

Interim Steering Committee: The initial leadership body of the RDA from June 2018 to February 2019, which composed the RDA Startup Strategy and helped transition the RDA to the full Steering Committee & structure.

Quality Data: Data that is accurate, as timely as possible, properly anchored in its community context, and open to use in a multitude of possible applications (“Open Data”).

Regional Data Alliance (RDA): A collaborative membership and governing body whose mission is to build shared data infrastructure and support strong data actors that use quality data to improve people’s lives.

RDA Members: A diverse body of RDA Members work together to represent the variety of essential regional data skillsets and perspectives in the St. Louis region. Membership is free and open to any individual who is interested. Membership is currently only open to individuals, not organizations — though organizational membership may be explored at a later date.

RDA Steering Committee: The Regional Data Alliance is led by its Steering Committee, which guides the implementation of the RDA’s Startup Strategy (and its successors), develops the RDA’s long-term funding and sustainability model, and is the primary advocate for shared data infrastructure and data sharing/transparency in the St. Louis region. Steering Committee Representatives are individuals, not organizations. The Steering Committee is comprised of 20 Representatives, including 19 voting members and one non-voting seat reserved for the RDA Lead. The Steering Committee will also select two Co-Chairs to work more closely with Backbone Staff on setting and pursuing the RDA’s agenda throughout their term.

RDA Startup Strategy: Interim Steering Committee to develop a Startup Strategy for its first 18-months until the first half of 2020 (see Exhibit A). This Startup Strategy outlines early tasks for the RDA across five key domains, including: Planning and Governance; Community and Skills Building; Cataloguing, Prioritizing, and Aligning Data; Standardizing Data; and Regional Needs Analysis. The work of the Regional Data Alliance will continue after the Startup Strategy is executed, which will be documented through subsequent strategy documents composed by the Steering Committee and Backbone — and approved by RDA Members.



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Steering Committee Commitment Form

As a Steering Committee Member of the St. Louis Regional Data Alliance (RDA), I agree to:

Support the RDA's Mission to build shared data infrastructure and supports strong data actors that use quality data to improve people's lives.

Adopt the RDA policies, practices, and processes that are outlined throughout the Steering Committee Charter.

Provide strategic guidance, vision, and oversight for the RDA by:

- Developing and refining the RDA's strategies, goals, and guiding principles
- Using data to guide planning within the RDA and in the community
- Tracking progress of the work using the Community Check Box (CCB) and other tools
- Working closely with the Backbone on implementing the RDA Startup Strategy and composing its successor(s)

Display **leadership** by:

- Serving as a vocal advocate for building shared data infrastructure and promoting data sharing and transparency within the St. Louis Region
- Connecting the RDA and its members to organizations that could benefit from a collaborative approach to community data

Play an **active role** by:

- Participating in-person at regularly scheduled monthly meetings, missing no more than two meetings a year
- Reviewing materials prior to meetings and coming prepared for engaged discussion, active listening, respectful dialogue, and strategic decision-making
- Respond to RDA requests as needed and able
- Participate in RDA financial and sustainability planning, including internal asks when appropriate
- Avoid conflicts of interests by sharing any suspected conflicts with the Steering Committee and abstaining from votes when appropriate
- Committing to complete the elected term

The St. Louis Regional Data Alliance's Committee is comprised of individuals, not organizations. However, Representatives are expected to both represent their organization to the RDA and advocate for RDA priorities within their organization. The RDA does not speak for these organizations and these organizations do not represent the RDA unless otherwise specified. While participating individuals and their home organizations are not required to acquire and/or allocate resources for the RDA, Steering Committee members will participate in the RDA's financial and sustainability planning to ensure the long-term success of the St. Louis Regional Data Alliance.

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Printed Name: _____

Designated Proxy: _____