

# CommonWealth Kitchen

## 2020-2023 Strategic Plan

November 2019



### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

CommonWealth Kitchen has been in the midst of exponential growth over the past 5+ years, increasing from a team of 3.5 and a budget of \$350,000 in 2013 to a staff of 25+ and a budget over \$2.65m in 2019 (650% growth). For 2019, nearly \$1m of CWK's budget will come from earned revenue from operations, 35% of the budget.

This growth began with CWK's relocation into the former Pearl Meats Factory in Dorchester in mid-2014, which also coincided with a challenging leadership change.

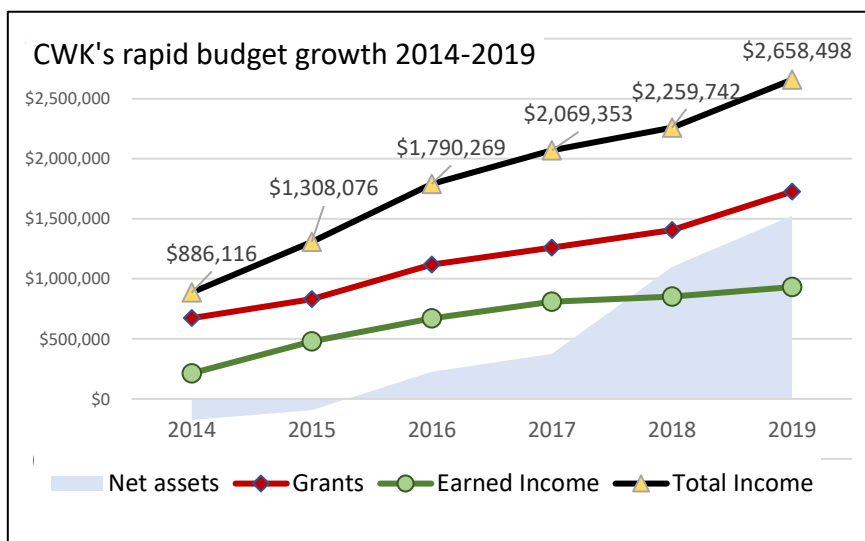
Since then, CWK has added numerous programs, including a 14-week Food Biz 101

class, multiple custom workshops, formalization of the incubation program stages, a deep bench of mentors and coaches, a dedicated retail kiosk, an annual vendor showcase, annual community celebration, and CWK's manufacturing operation.

With so many substantive changes, the CWK Board and Staff recognized the need to evaluate current operations and develop a clear plan for continuing to build on this work as CWK moves into its next chapter.

Commonwealth Kitchen's three year strategic plan is designed to create a shared vision across the organization, develop a clear and consistent framework to guide decision-making, and formalize goals, objectives and key performance metrics.

As part of this strategy, **CWK is moving *from a place-based model*** focused on the operations of its shared kitchens and manufacturing work, ***to a people-based model***, focused on building a values-aligned ecosystem of businesses, community partners and industry networks working together to build an equitable food economy grounded in racial, social, and economic justice.



**Over the next three years, CWK will *look inward*,**

- investing in staff capacity-building to ensure a healthy, happy, high impact organization and culture;
- investing in systems required to become a more data-driven, outcomes-focused operation;
- and developing a clear path forward to ensure long-term sustainability, including securing a permanent home and investing in strategies to maximize impact while continuing to reduce our reliance on grant funding.

**CWK will also *look outward*,**

- building the values-aligned partnerships, networks, and resources necessary to advance CWK's work;
- and developing a clear plan of action for sharing CWK's unique, systems-based approach to catalyze change across the food industry.

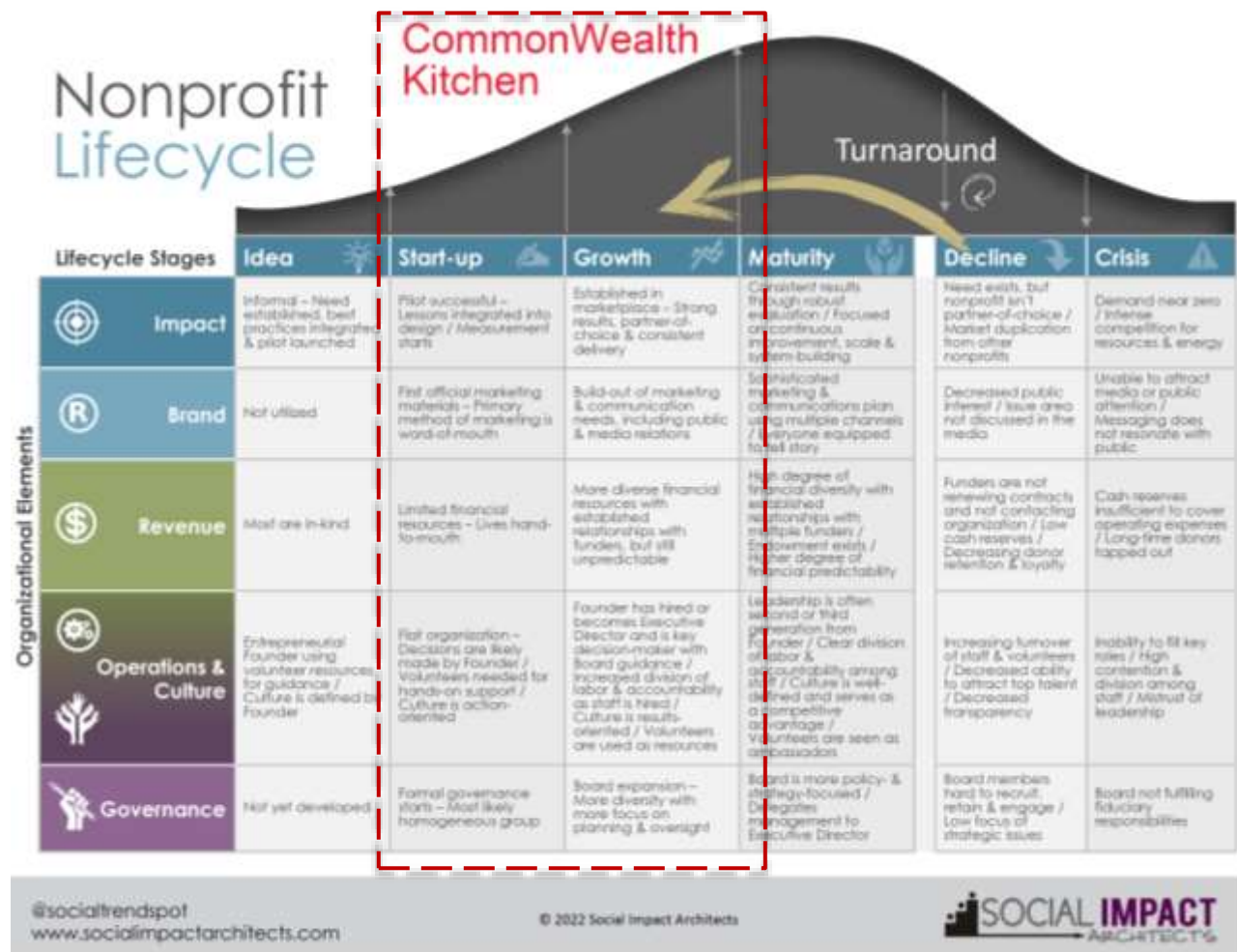
What follows is a high level summary of the outcomes of this strategic planning process:

<b>CommonWealth Kitchen 2020</b>	
<b>VISION</b>	We envision a just, equitable, sustainable food economy in which <i>everyone</i> can participate and prosper.
<b>MISSION</b>	We're on a mission to build a new food economy grounded in racial, social and economic justice by strengthening the capacity, connections, and collective power of diverse entrepreneurs to start and grow successful food businesses.
<b>THEORY of CHANGE</b>	<p>We believe food is the universal equalizer. It connects us. It sustains us. It's our history and our future. And yet access to healthy options, quality jobs, business opportunities, and culturally relevant choices, is out of reach for too many. It is time for a radical re-imagining of a food system centered on equity, opportunity, and economic, racial and environmental justice.</p> <p>CWK believes the path forward requires democratizing the food economy, and creating a values-aligned ecosystem that builds trust and respect, promotes collaboration, encourages understanding, ensures transparency and that every voice is heard, and celebrates both our interdependence and our diversity. It means working with diverse food companies and connecting them to the tools, resources, and networks needed to build successful food companies. By building strong, resilient, values-aligned networks, we can create a regional food economy where everyone can participate and prosper.</p>

<b>CWK ECOSYSTEM</b>	Includes member businesses, graduates, mission aligned partners, farmers, volunteers, funders, lenders, government, and food systems advocates.
<b>VALUE PROPOSITION</b>	CWK offers a unique combination of custom classes and workshops, 1-on-1 consulting and technical assistance, outsourced manufacturing, and a robust network of value aligned partners that provide access to markets, capital and other core resources.
<b>3-YEAR GOALS AND STRATEGIC PRIORITIES</b>	<p><b>Goal 1: Ensure CWK's long term sustainability</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Secure a long-term home for the organization.</li> <li>● Build fundraising capacity</li> <li>● Increase earned income</li> </ul> <p><b>Goal 2: Run a healthy, happy, high impact organization.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Support, invest in and sustain the CWK team</li> <li>● Foster Joyful Collaboration</li> <li>● Design and implement systems and protocols to best support CWK's operational needs</li> </ul> <p><b>Goal 3: Offer high values to member businesses</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Clearly define and communicate program structure and membership requirements</li> <li>● Identify and recruit entrepreneurs aligned with CWK values &amp; mission</li> <li>● Provide robust operational, curricular, and community support</li> <li>● Expand and deepen network of values-aligned partners</li> <li>● Support member business access to markets</li> <li>● Support member business access to capital</li> <li>● Evaluate, refine, and cut or add programs/services annually based on systematic data analysis</li> </ul> <p><b>Goal 4: Refine and implement a long term strategy to increase CWK's impact.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Refine and implement a long-term growth strategy</li> <li>● Advocate for policy changes that will support member businesses</li> </ul>
<b>By 2023:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● CWK will maintain, on average, 75% of all member businesses owned by women, immigrants and/or people of color- with not less than 70% owned by women, not less than 70% owned by people of color, and not less than 30% owned by immigrants;</li> <li>● At least 5 member/graduate businesses owned by women and/or people of color with annual revenue of at least \$1m per company;</li> <li>● CWK will help 5 additional businesses owned by women, immigrants and/or people of color open and/or start operations in their own retail or production space;</li> <li>● CWK will have ongoing, reliable sales relationships in place with at least 4 anchor institutions;</li> </ul>

- An active community of 100+ member companies/grads/values-aligned partners engaged in CWK's network;
- CWK's earned income will exceed 51% of its annual operating budget;
- All CWK staff will be engaged in annual work planning and budgeting, have clear plan for professional development, and share a clear understanding and commitment to the organizational mission;
- CWK will have secured a permanent home.
- CWK will have developed a clear, measurable, long-term strategy to continue growing impact and building the world we want to see.

It's an exciting time for CWK and a critical moment. This strategic plan is intended to help frame the roadmap for the next 3 years and beyond- and continue our work of building a just, equitable food economy in which everyone can participate and prosper.



CWK Values	How we live it: (CWK staff & Board)	What we expect: (CWK member businesses)	What we look for: (CWK industry partners)
<b>Joyful Collaboration</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ We create a welcoming, supportive space for all</li> <li>▪ We seek to hear all voices in the room</li> <li>▪ We are transparent in our decision-making; if in doubt, we over-communicate</li> <li>▪ Meet people where they are</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Participation in CWK gatherings, forums, and other events</li> <li>▪ Mutual support</li> <li>▪ Constructive criticism <u>and</u> kindness &amp; appreciation</li> <li>▪ Patient and understanding</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Sourcing, mentoring, and partnering with CWK ecosystem</li> <li>▪ Giving back to emerging businesses</li> <li>▪ Mutual support</li> </ul>
<b>Equitable Community</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ We focus on POC, women, &amp; immigrant-led businesses</li> <li>▪ We design from the margins, considering accessibility and relevance for POC, women, and immigrant biz in all decisions</li> <li>▪ We respect individuals and all they uniquely contribute</li> <li>▪ We celebrate culture, acknowledge and appreciate diversity</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ “Give back” from members with more access</li> <li>▪ Local hiring, hiring those with barriers to workforce entry</li> <li>▪ Fair Labor Practices</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Prioritize purchasing from POC, women, and immigrant-led businesses</li> <li>▪ Operate in ways that benefit emerging businesses: decrease margins, issue POs in advance, pay on time, etc.</li> <li>▪ Fair Labor Practices</li> </ul>
<b>Courageous Learning</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ We are in community with members; teaching, coaching, &amp; learning from them</li> <li>▪ We are entrepreneurial, open to trying new things, not all of which work out</li> <li>▪ We accept that learning involves mistakes, but we don’t make the same ones twice</li> <li>▪ We seek and share feedback</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Acknowledgement of the friction in growth, and the inevitability of change and challenge</li> <li>▪ Participation in CWK programming</li> <li>▪ Creation of learning opportunities for their staff</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Mentoring, and partnering with others in the CWK ecosystem</li> <li>▪ Openness to new ways of doing business (open books, etc.)</li> <li>▪ Willingness to partner, share risk, try new things</li> </ul>
<b>Uncompromising Integrity</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ When we say something, we mean it</li> <li>▪ When we promise something, we deliver</li> <li>▪ We bring our whole selves to work</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Care of shared facilities/resources</li> <li>▪ Responsibility for food safety</li> <li>▪ Legal compliance</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Fair dealing/timely payment</li> <li>▪ Values-aligned investment / purchasing, etc.</li> <li>▪ Stewardship of CWK brand</li> </ul>
<b>Holistic Sustainability</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ We consider social and environmental impacts in our decision-making</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Local sourcing</li> <li>▪ Minimize environmental impact (e.g., composting, recycling)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Local sourcing</li> <li>▪ Minimize environmental impact (e.g., composting, recycling)</li> </ul>