



Strategic Plan 2026 Overview

PRESENTED BY JEANINE B. WENT





OUR MISSION

(UNCHANGED)

THE COUNCIL OF PUBLIC LIBERAL ARTS COLLEGES ADVANCES THE COLLABORATIVE AIMS OF ITS MEMBER INSTITUTIONS THROUGH TARGETED INTERNAL PROGRAMMING AND EVIDENCE-BASED COMMON OUTCOMES THAT DRIVE PUBLIC AWARENESS OF THE VALUE OF HIGH-QUALITY, PUBLIC LIBERAL ARTS EDUCATION IN A STUDENT-CENTERED, RESIDENTIAL ENVIRONMENT.

OUR VISION

(NEW, SHORT, PITHY)

TO BE THE DEFINITIVE HOME FOR
PUBLIC LIBERAL ARTS EXCELLENCE —
THE GO-TO SOURCE FOR DATA, BEST
PRACTICES, ADVOCACY, AND
INNOVATION IN OUR SECTOR OF
HIGHER EDUCATION.



Community Building

1

EXPANDING COMMUNITIES OF PRACTICE WHERE BEST PRACTICES, SCHOLARSHIP, AND INNOVATION ARE SHARED ACROSS INSTITUTIONS.

Advocacy & Storytelling

2

DEVELOPING A CAMPAIGN TO TELL THE STORY OF PUBLIC LIBERAL ARTS INSTITUTIONS AND TO CHAMPION THEIR ENDURING VALUE.

Tangible Member Benefits

3

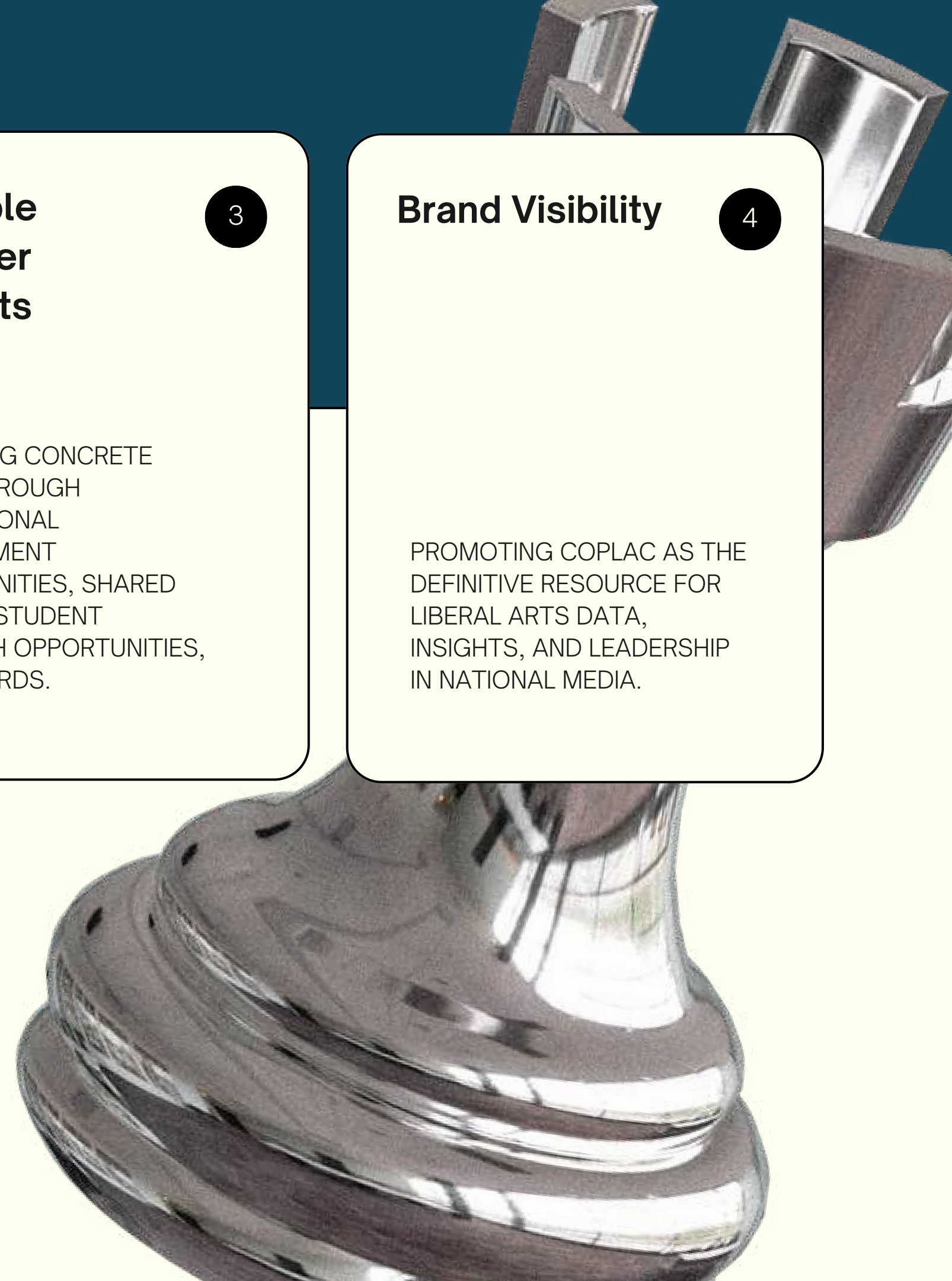
DELIVERING CONCRETE VALUE THROUGH PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES, SHARED GRANTS, STUDENT RESEARCH OPPORTUNITIES, AND AWARDS.

Brand Visibility

4

PROMOTING COPLAC AS THE DEFINITIVE RESOURCE FOR LIBERAL ARTS DATA, INSIGHTS, AND LEADERSHIP IN NATIONAL MEDIA.

Four Strategic Pillars



Pillar I: Strategic Aim

COPLAC will become the essential professional home for faculty, staff, and administrators across public liberal arts institutions – a living community where ideas are exchanged, expertise is cultivated, and best practices are elevated.



Community Building

- ✓ Communities of Practice
- ✓ Leadership & Governance Development
- ✓ Membership Growth

Pillar II: Strategic Aim

COPLAC will amplify the strength of the organization by launching a sustained, compelling national and international campaign to articulate and promote the transformative value of the public liberal arts, influence policy, and inspire the next generation of students and educators.

Advocacy & Storytelling

- ✓ Public Liberal Arts Story Campaign
- ✓ Policy Advocacy



Pillar III: Strategic Aim

COPLAC must deliver clear, demonstrable value to faculty, staff, students, and institutions. This pillar ensures that every constituent on a COPLAC campus will find concrete benefit in COPLAC membership.

Tangible Member Benefits

- ✓ Professional Development
- ✓ Organizational Advancement (grants & fundraising)
- ✓ Student Study Away/Abroad
- ✓ Awards/Recognition



Pillar IV: Strategic Aim

COPLAC will establish itself as the definitive national voice and data resource for public liberal arts education, becoming the first call for journalists, policymakers, and researchers seeking insight into our sector of the higher education landscape.

Brand Visibility

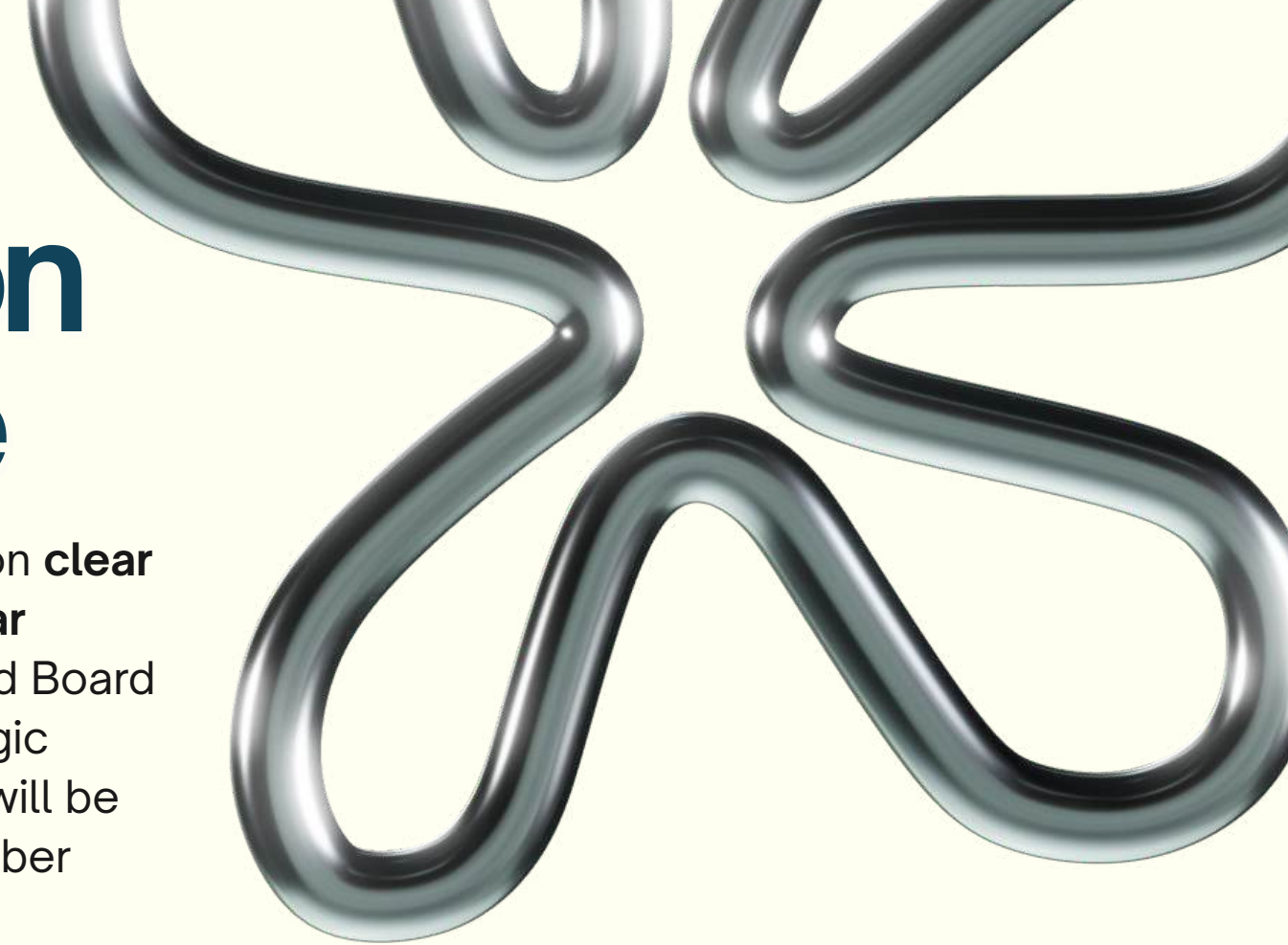
- ✓ Media Presence & Thought Leadership
- ✓ The Go-To Data Resource
- ✓ Digital Presence & Communications





Implementation & Governance

The success of this strategic plan depends on **clear ownership, adequate resourcing, and regular accountability**. The Executive Committee and Board of Directors will provide oversight and strategic guidance, while operational implementation will be led by COPLAC staff in partnership with member institution representatives.



Pillar Ownership

EACH PILLAR WILL BE ASSIGNED A BOARD CHAMPION

Implementation Committee

MEET QUARTERLY TO ASSESS PROGRESS & RECOMMEND ADJUSTMENTS

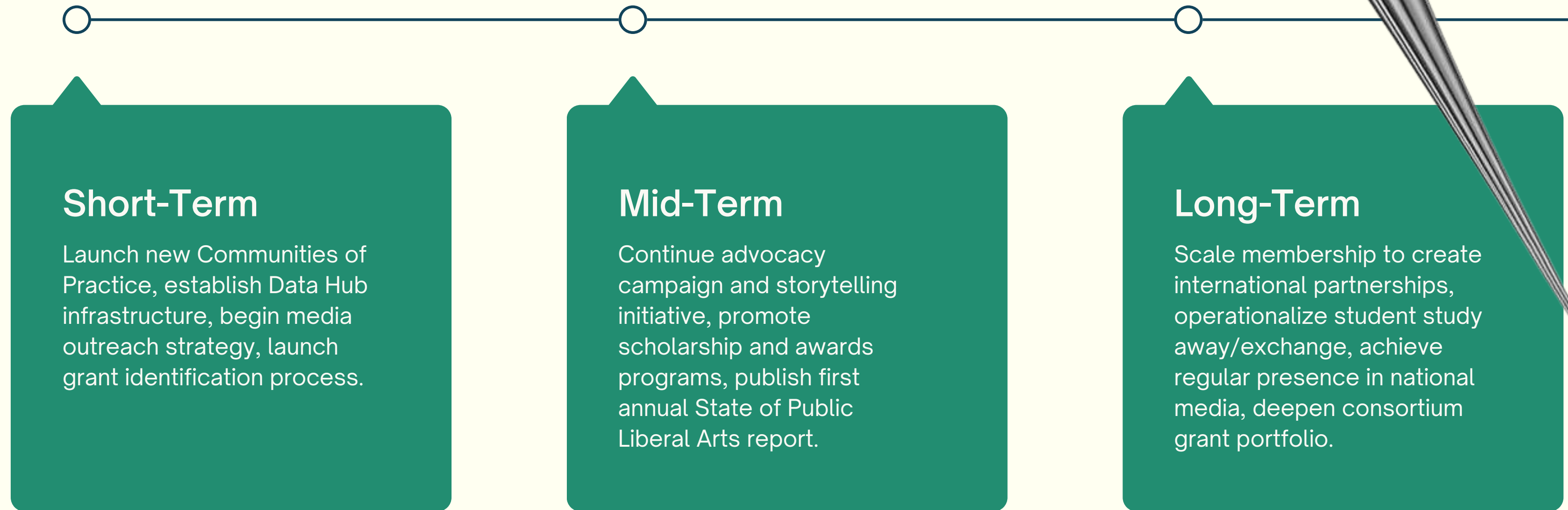
Progress Metrics

PUBLISHED IN YEAR-END COPLAC EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

A Phased Approach

GRADUAL 3-YEAR ROLL-OUT OF INITIATIVES

Implementation Timeline



Key Performance Indicators

PROGRESS AGAINST THIS PLAN WILL BE MEASURED
USING THE FOLLOWING ILLUSTRATIVE INDICATORS:



Communities of Practice

- # of active Communities of Practice
- Member participation rates



Media Placements

- Annual recognition/articles/quotes in *Inside Higher Ed*, *The Chronicle* and other national media outlets



Grants

- # of Shared Grants applied for
- # of Grants awarded



Student Engagement

- # of students participating in COPLAC research, study away/abroad exchanges, etc.



Awards

- # of Awards distributed annually



Statistics

- Website traffic
- Data hub usage statistics

Align the vision. Execute with purpose. Grow sustainably.

The four pillars of this plan do not stand alone — they are mutually reinforcing. A strong professional community builds the relationships that power advocacy. Advocacy creates the visibility that attracts resources. Resources deliver tangible benefits that deepen community. A thriving community garners positive attention on the national stage. Together, they define what COPLAC is and what public liberal arts can be.

Community input was essential in developing this living, breathing plan. 30+ COPLAC members responded to the Strategic Planning Survey, participated in Focus Groups, and/or provided additional insights after the initial draft was complete. Your collaboration and insights were essential to building COPLAC's Strategic Plan 2026-2029.

Next steps?

- Approve plan
- Volunteer your time/energy to be a Board Champion
- Track progress – without expecting too much at once