

FEDECRAIL STRATEGIC PLAN 2023-2028

FEDECRAIL

FEDECRAIL was established in year 1995 with the aim of supporting heritage rail at an international level. FEDECRAIL has successfully done this for over 25 years.

FEDECRAIL developed its first strategic plan in 2017, which extends until 2023. In 2021-2022, a review of FEDECRAIL was initiated. This was so we could understand how to develop the organization. To create the vision, goals, and strategies that will make FEDECRAIL a modern and developing organization. This strategic plan lays out strategies for FEDECRAIL as an organization from 2023 until 2028. One of the strategies is the creating of an annual plan so our volunteers can see what they need to deliver each year.

Covid 19 and the sudden economic and social changes have led to rapid changes in the programme, highlighting priorities that must be evaluated within FEDECRAIL itself. We are aware that our activities reflect national situations and that the sector has been affected both economically and socially for some organizations. Heritage Railway Association's desire in 2021 to leave our organisation and the UK also leaving EU. And the latest event that is affecting the whole of Europe is the invasion of Ukraine by Russia in February 2022.

The FEDECRAIL board set up a working group to revise the current strategic plan into a new plan for the period 2023-2028. The working group decided to introduce the SMART (Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant and Time-bound) criterion into the plan. So SMART is adopted throughout this strategic plan and will be linked to a traffic light system. So, it is clear by the colour allocated that which items should be implemented quickly as they are in red, with yellow for the medium term and green has a longer time horizon.



Using SMART creates the conditions for the strategic plan to be a living document. This gives the board and other volunteers a tool to prioritize and complete assignments and projects that enables FEDECRAIL to fulfil its goals, visions, and strategies for the preservation of moving cultural heritage and the needs of its members.

So, it is critical that the Plan is regularly reviewed and remains flexible to policy, social and economic change throughout its period of adoption, especially in the aftermath of Covid-19 and the huge challenges ahead in re-building our organization and boosting visitor confidence.

STRATEGIC PLAN

Strategic planning is a process in which an organization's leaders define their vision for the future and identify their organization's goals and objectives. The process includes establishing the sequence in which those goals should be realized so that the organization can reach its stated vision.

The product of strategic planning is a strategic plan. It is often reflected in a plan document or other media. These plans can be easily shared, understood, and followed by the board and the working groups, members and other of interest.

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Strategic planning offers that type of guidance. Essentially, a strategic plan is a roadmap to get to goals. Without such guidance, there is no way to tell whether the organization is on track to reach its goals.

- *The Mission*
- *The Goals*
- *The Objectives/Goals*
- *Alignment with short-terms goals*
- *Monitoring and revision*

Balanced scorecard components



The strategic plan does not detail how the organization is to achieve its goals and vision. It clearly points to a common direction which is then followed by the board's annual plan and the working groups' executive plans that set out the tasks required.

For FEDECRAIL to be able to fulfill its strategic vision, additional documents must be produced, that also impact assessments and financial impact. To achieve the goals, new people must also be recruited.

Vision:

FEDECRAIL aims to be a modern inclusive, member-oriented organization that works actively for rail bound mobile cultural heritage. Welcoming stakeholders of all nationalities, regardless of their gender, age, disability, sexual orientation, religion or ethnicity

Mission:

FEDECRAIL aims to establish and maintain relationships with relevant organizations at European level to represent its members, promote and facilitate exchanges between members on all relevant issues. Support members who are facing increased political, economic, or social hardship.

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All the areas relating to the 3 points of article 1-2 of the Constitution and they can be included in the strategic plan as they are part of FEDECRAIL's own mission. Therefore, individual projects relating to each point will be extrapolated and included in the strategic plan. For the sake of expediency, these are FEDECRAIL's aims:

1. The encouragement of mutual cooperation between member organizations in the rail field and their members by the provision of advice and assistance when and where possible and the convening of joint meetings and seminar.
2. The study and resolution of problems and developments relating to museum, tourist and other similar railways or tramways (regardless of the method of traction), railway museums and railway preservation groups
3. To act and speak on behalf of its members at an international level with particular reference to the potential impact of regulations and directives of the European Union and any other supra-national bodies on their activities.
4. To become part of the EU's green deal and gain recognition for the work of preserving the mobile cultural heritage and thus secure the future of the museum heritage.

WORKING AREA/OBJECTIVES

Within the three points above we can identify permanent actions that we will include in the SP and that are aimed at pursuing the objectives of the Statute:

1. **Evaluate and develop FEDECRAIL as an organization**
2. **Representing member interests and Lobbying**
3. **Transfer of knowledge & Engaging Youth & Volunteers**
4. **Communications – members & public facing**
5. **Fund-raising**
6. **Digitized working methods for FEDECRAIL**
7. **The Visitor experiences**
8. **Working Groups**
9. **Continuous policy – continuous improvement.**

1. Evaluation and development of FEDECRAIL as an organization

For more than 25 years FEDECRAIL has worked for the heritage rail sector on an international basis. During these years, FEDECRAIL activity has safeguarded the interests of European Heritage Rail players in several ways. FEDECRAIL is part of most organisations within Europe and worldwide for the preservation of the mobile cultural heritage.

To be able to progress with the work, there is also a need to evaluate one's own organization. This needs to be done together with members to create an efficient, modern, and member-oriented organization that always works for the members' best interests.

MAIN ACTIVITIES/ACTIONS

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- Regularly evaluate how the organization's constitution is working.
- Evaluate the need and if needed draft and implement internal rules.
- Create processes, with follow up and regular evaluation of activities and interventions.
- Evaluate if the current membership systems, membership fees and point systems are still relevant for today's needs.
- Have good financial management that provides value for money to members.
- Develop an HR / HRM / VR strategy.
- Actively work to recruit more volunteers/collaborators.
- Promote good working relations between the board and its volunteers in the working groups.

Evaluating and reviewing the organization's structure that exists today is not the same as constantly making organizational changes, but to see if the way the association works creates meaning, identity, and image.

2. Representing member interests and Lobbying

FEDECRAIL seeks to protect and promote the interests of its members with consideration to the values of cultural heritage and tourism development. This will be done through monitoring of developments in legal, environmental and safety related issues.

MAIN ACTIVITIES/ACTIONS INTERNAL

- safeguard the interests and future operations of its members (for example, the use of traditional fuels like coal, wood, and diesel fuel). Through monitoring developments in legal, environmental and safety related issues. By representation, maintaining and lobbying with EU and non-EU governmental authorities and institutions.
- assisting members working with historic trains on national lines and on separate tourist lines.
- Establish structured monitoring of EU law, not only by monitoring public consultations, but making by developing new direct contacts with members of the European Parliament.
- Develop new and closer contacts and a communication network with the members and the members' members.
- Supporting projects of individual members giving assistance with specific advice if needed.
- Marketing FEDECRAIL and its members in different ways such as YouTube, Facebook, Instagram etc to gain wider knowledge on heritage rail and the challenges it faces.
- Keep updated on CSM-RA and see how we can support and strategically develop supporting guidance documents.

To achieve the above strategy, more effort needs to be made by the collaborators within FEDECRAIL. For example, board members should take the time to visit the members. To conduct active communication and listen to the problems that our members have. FEDECRAIL is working on a European level that also need to create a contact with the National level, so the implementation of rules benefits our members. The detail of how to do this will be formulated in the annual plans and then the executive plans for working groups with that task. FEDECRAIL shall also organize meetings for its members and members' members in both physical form and via a web platform.

ACTIONS EXTERNAL

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With many of the internal strategies, there is a need to work with external partners so that mobile cultural heritage will also be part of the green deal in the EU. To achieve this goal, FEDECRAIL needs to work with other equivalent organizations facing similar challenges.

FEDERAIL has identified several other organizations that are important to work with or be part of to promote the preservation of mobile cultural heritage.

3. Transfer of knowledge & Engaging Youth & Volunteers

FEDECRAIL seeks to facilitate the transfer of knowledge between staff and volunteers, to engage young people in railway heritage and support volunteers of all ages.

MAIN ACTIVITIES

- promote the documentation of knowledge and technology in all aspects to preserve, maintain and operate heritage rail transport.
- initiate the development of new methods and technology, which does not change the historical value and respect the concept of authenticity
- stimulate the use of existing methods and technology not yet used by our members, which aid sustainability and profitability.
- Make systems accessible to members to ensure a sound future which is sustainable financially, environmentally, and safe for all participants whether working or visiting.
- Promote the adoption of the Riga Charter with a view to using common methods in the restoration of railway heritage, for rolling stock, equipment, and buildings.
- Work for active competence transfer between generations to ensure preservation continues and the future generation's commitment.
- Create conditions for our members to continue to procure materials for restoration of track and rolling stock. By supporting and acting as an intermediary between associations, manufacturers, and other parties.
- To encourage excellent working conditions for all employees and volunteers and contribute to a high level of safety across all members. By actively learning from each other, evaluating, and working together FEDECRAIL can actively communicate externally that heritage rail is safe and follows best practice.
- Support in evaluating risks and the investigation of accidents within the heritage rail industry.
- Evaluate best practice and share that knowledge with well written documents. That covers investigations, and research across national borders for in the risks and the causes and prevention of accidents
- It is of great importance for FEDECRAIL to be an attractive organization for people with special expertise or interest in heritage rail to become active and work within FEDECRAIL.
- FEDECRAIL aims to be an inclusive association that promotes diversity and gender equality among its members and volunteers.

MAIN ACTIVITIES/ACTIONS

- Recruit new volunteers to FEDECRAIL with the required expertise, and a new generation that continues FEDECRAIL's work in the future.

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- Recruit new volunteers that reflect the diversity of society.
- Facilitate the transfer of knowledge and professional skills. By improving existing databases, technical exchanges, and practical training. For the benefit of current employees/volunteers and for future generations.
- Develop, where relevant, the use of innovative technical and managerial skills to all staff and volunteers of heritage rail organizations, in line with the original integrity of the objects and the related procedures.

FEDECRAIL will work to recruit young volunteers to undertake their activities. This can be done both through specially targeted initiatives for young people but also to work actively with the inclusion of young people in existing working groups, conferences, and assignments within FEDECRAIL. The youth exchange is of great importance not only to be able to gather young like-minded people but also for FEDECRAIL to market itself to the younger generations. There needs to be a clear process for recruiting young people as volunteers within FEDECRAIL after each youth exchange.

4. Communication - members & public-facing

Many of the above initiatives are dependent on first-class communication. That means that FEDECRAIL will produce and execute a detailed communication plan.

MAIN ACTIVITY/ACTION

- Communication Strategy – disseminating information & recommendations from Working Groups and board initiatives – Board to agree regular message after each Council Meeting.
- Develop Social Media messaging.
- Review changes in communication tools in the future as technology changes.
- Implement multi-lingual communication & broaden outreach.
- Recruit paid/volunteer-collaborators marketing/admin assistant part or full-time on adoption of Strategic Plan – Cost implication/adding value - see 5. Review of Membership Fees

5. Fund-raising

FEDECRAIL is a non-profit organization with its registered office in Belgium. Since it was founded, its financial support has been based on the membership fees of its members and the income from annual conferences. Technological innovation in the methods of communication has meant that since 2020 there have been considerable savings in the operation of FEDECRAIL. Particularly in the management of Council meetings. So now is the time to consider if the budget can be adjusted to reflect these new methods of holding meetings. FEDECRAIL must always be on the lookout for additional funds for its members, supplemented by actions to disseminate information on potential funding methods from which members can draw.

MAIN ACTIVITY/ACTION

- Look for funding from transnational European funds (ex-Interreg) by encouraging members to contact local/regional governments for funding of projects. In partnership with members who can participate from other countries.
- Encourage private donation and sponsorship programs related to tourism or education.
- Organizing donation programs directly aimed at private individuals.

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- Informing about possible tax benefits for donations.
- Organizing crowd funding.
- Evaluating the presence of the railway sector at European expos with the promotion of preservation activities and the search for sponsoring companies.

6. Digitized working methods for FEDECRAIL

Every modern organization needs sustainable working methods, such as digital working with its governing and supporting documents available to those that need to access them online. The pandemic has shown that there are great opportunities to work digitally. Particularly to hold meetings online.

FEDECRAIL intends to work digitally to not only create sustainable situations for the association but also to increase communication and sharing of documents between volunteers, the board, and members. Via the website and social media.

MAIN ACTIVITY/ACTION

- Examine the available digital platforms and evaluate what is best for our business.
- Create a digital way of handling documents for both members and volunteers.
- through digital opportunities create a more open structure for members to share and organize information and documents.
- Create better conditions for the working groups' work processes linked to documents, meetings, and communication.
- Create better conditions and support for the board's work by sharing documents, minutes, routines, and methods.
- Develop a clear and more detailed digitization strategy that extends long-term to the organization.

7. The Visitor Experience

Number 7 is a new section about the strategic approach in attracting people (visitors/passengers). On a European basis, FEDECRAIL can assist on behalf of its members and associates, to re-align heritage rail in the growth of international Tourism.

FEDECRAIL seeks to:

- Set up and participate on a European level in campaigns which motivate tourism in general and that can encourage visits to heritage railways and railway-museums.
- Set up and participate in educational projects about the history of European railways, that can stimulate directly or indirectly the public interest in visiting heritage rail activities throughout Europe.
- Set up and participate in cultural projects about the history of transport in Europe and of European railways, that can stimulate directly or indirectly the public interest in visiting heritage rail activities throughout Europe.
- Develop good communication channels and support members in being able to manage social media and its impact.
- Through the development of a new communication plan, manage the marketing of FEDECRAIL and promote member attractions in general as a day out visit.

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8. Working Groups

To be able to fulfil FEDECRAIL's goals, visions and strategies, there are working groups who input to the annual plan and draft a detailed executive plan and implement it. These groups are.

WORKING GROUPS

- *Heritage Operations Group (HOG)* in conjunction with ERA and representatives of national members (Main Line operator dedicated)
- *Tram Group (TG)* follows all issues related to the Tram heritage management.
- *Environmental Group (EWG)* expand its remit and membership to include expert knowledge on climate change and use of fossil fuels.
- *FEDECRAIL Youth Organization* plans and coordinates the FEDECRAIL Youth Exchange for example and supports other working groups in getting in touch and involving young people in their work.
- *FEDECRAIL Conference Team* follows the planning of the annual conference with particular attention to the location, study visits and local logistics

If the board identify the need, they will set up new working groups to achieve FEDECRAIL's goals. It is the task of the working groups to work at a more detailed level than the board. They actively report on their work to the board as it is ultimately responsible for the organization's activities.

9. Continuous policy – Continuous improvement

Even if in this strategic plan the main aims and activities are carried out reported, permanent working groups composed of people belonging to the Board as advisors or to the Team as volunteers/collaborators coming directly from the members' associations are always operative.

- The areas followed by the groups may concern matters related to the management of FEDECRAIL and participation/representation in external boards of a European or international nature.
- For an organization to succeed, there needs to be clear support for the governing and supporting documents that are produced.
- There needs to be inclusive clear and good leadership based on building a team where the business actively relieves each other, and delegation of tasks takes place and emerges.
- There needs to be trust between volunteers and board members.
- The work needs to be based on good internal communication that consists of openness and transparency.
- There also needs to be financial and human resources for implementation and it is usually better to set fewer goals where it is possible to achieve the goals than many as well as large heavy documents where delivery fails.

Most goals can be achieved by working with a project organization. How the work is to take place must be decided by evaluating how large or small the task is to solve and, in this way, also provide the conditions for the working method that is best suited. It can also be easier to get some individuals involved in the short term instead of the long term, which can benefit the organization.