MISSION

The mission and core purpose of the American Tinnitus Association are to promote relief, help prevent, and find cures for tinnitus, evidenced by its core values of compassion, credibility, and responsibility.

CORE IDEOLOGY

CORE PURPOSE
To promote relief, help prevent, and eventually find cures for tinnitus.

CORE VALUES and GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Compassion
Evidenced in a spirit of hope reflected in the commitment to prevention, finding a cure, and supporting those affected by the condition.

Credibility
Evidenced in accurate information from reliable sources, transparency in decision-making, and an earned reputation for trustworthiness.

Responsibility
Evidenced in patient-centered advocacy by a collaborative community of forward-thinking leaders accountable to mission and members.

ATA’s Key Drivers of Change

Key drivers of change are powerful forces that necessitate ATA develop strategies to address. They are conditions and dynamics in the relevant environment that will make tomorrow very different than today.

ATA KEY DRIVERS OF CHANGE

1. Interconnectivity – commoditization of information, the expectation of free access, and the ease with which networks can be formed.
2. Demographics – as an indicator of potential subgroups (e.g., musicians, teen music culture, aging population, military).
3. Research progress – biomedical breakthroughs in genetics and other promising areas of relevant research.
4. Prevalence – 10-16 million (according to the Centers for Disease Control, CDC) people in the United States are affected by tinnitus at a level that disrupts their quality of life, with 50 million having some degree of the condition.

5. Research funding – availability of research funds continues to be small compared to growing need and opportunities.

6. Education – need for comprehensive and trusted source of vetted information about prevention, treatment, and progress toward a cure.

7. Awareness – increasing public awareness of tinnitus.

8. Ability to inspire the tinnitus community to commit resources to further the goals of ATA.

**Goals, Objectives, and Strategies**

**Goals** are outcome-oriented statements that represent what will constitute the organization’s future success for the next three to five years.

**Objectives** describe what would constitute success in observable or measurable terms. Objectives have a three-to-five-year timeframe and are reviewed once a year by the Board.

**Strategies** are activities that describe how the association will commit its resources to accomplishing the goal and bring focus to operational allocation of resources. Strategies have a one-to-three-year timeframe and are reviewed annually by the Board. They link long-term planning to annual planning. Finally, strategies set strategic priorities for committees, staff, and all other work groups.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PRIORITY KEY</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Critical</strong> – Within the current fiscal year</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Immediate</strong> – Within the next 1-2 years</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Intermediate</strong> – Within the next 3 years</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Long-term</strong> – Within the next 4-5 years</td>
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**MEMBER REQUESTS**

Symbol denotes high-frequency member request.
STRATEGIC PLAN TACTICS
Finalized: September 15-16, 2017
Updated: April 1-2, 2018 for April 2018 Board Meeting

GOAL A
People with tinnitus will be better able to achieve their fullest possible quality of life, and all who have an interest in tinnitus will value and trust ATA as the premier source of information and assistance about the condition.

Objective 1: Increase awareness of ATA among people with tinnitus and professionals.

a. Identify, create, and distribute relevant information among those who have tinnitus, and healthcare professionals. Immediate

#1: Include distribution of GP Guidelines (published in Spring 2017 TT magazine); distribution of the Provider Referral Flowchart (published in the Summer 2017 TT magazine); distribution of Patient Navigator (published in Spring 2018 TT magazine); ATA informational brochures; Tinnitus Today magazine distribution beyond membership; Conversations in Tinnitus podcasts; ongoing, active and prior ATA Research Grants (Website); access to Website sleep and therapeutic sounds, and other tinnitus management tools. Immediate

#2: Reimagining our informational brochure; potential for a series of brochures specific to a symptom(s), management techniques; or focused on a specific age group. Intermediate

#3: Revitalize the magazine, beginning with the Spring 2017 issue; continued focus on development of original material. Critical and Intermediate

#4: Develop eligibility requirements for the Health Professional Network to ensure that patients are referred to healthcare professionals who provide counseling and treatment options to those with tinnitus. Immediate

#5: Review and promote the latest in relevant apps in tinnitus. Immediate

#6: Creation of ATA’s New and Emerging Technologies Virtual Store: Practical items to help those with tinnitus better manage their condition and live with less stress, (e.g., enriched sound therapy products, hearing protection, books, OTC devices.) Those who are bothered by tinnitus or having trouble sleeping easily, or who have other symptoms, may select and try devices that may prove effective. Aim of these products is to assist in habituation and restoring quality of life. Intermediate
Products Selected: Products featured in the virtual stores will have been vetted by those with tinnitus, as well as by audiologists and other healthcare professionals who have found them to be effective for a reasonable percentage of their patients.

#7: Continue to emphasize themes for *Tinnitus Today* far in advance to attract new contributors, researchers, patient journey stories, and advertisers.

**Critical**
- Winter 2017: Annual Research Issue
- Spring 2018: Habituation
- Summer 2018 – Pharmacology
- December 2018 – Annual Research Issue

#8: Push marketing pieces via social media and email to patient providers, patient community, and researchers, in collaboration with the British Tinnitus Association and Tinnitus Research Institute for *Tinnitus Awareness Week*, February 5-11, 2018.

**Critical**

b. Ensure that help hotline staff and volunteers know which healthcare professionals to refer those struggling with tinnitus. **Immediate**

#1: Grant proposal to be submitted by September 22nd deadline to the Ray Charles Foundation. Funding sought for development of an ATA help line.

**Critical**

Includes training and materials, with project overseen by a part-time Coordinator who manages volunteers and rotating staff.

**Immediate**

Suicide intervention training from the Veterans Administration.

**Critical**

#2: Reestablishment of relationships with foundations that previously awarded grants to ATA to provide additional opportunities for financial assistance to address ATA referral education.

**Immediate**

**Objective 2: Increase quality, variety, and depth of information.**

a. Establish tool kits for people with tinnitus, family/friends, professionals and support groups. **Immediate**

#1: IDA-developed and approved Patient Focused Education and Awareness Tool Kits that serve as an informational source for helping those with tinnitus better manage their condition.

**Immediate**

#2: Tinnitus Options Grid: Shared Patient Decision-making – Empowering the Patient. Americanized from UK Research.

**Intermediate**
#3: Support Groups Online Training, plus development of educational modules for distribution.  
**Intermediate to Long-Term**

#4: Increase variety of podcasts and experts.  
**Critical**

**2017 Podcast Schedule**
- ✔ #1 The Journey of Tinnitus
- ✔ #2 Training Clinicians in Tinnitus Care
- ✔ #3 Neurornodulation to Suppress Tinnitus Care
- ✔ #4 Ringing Ears and the Neuroscience of Tinnitus
- ✔ #5 Managing Meniere’s Disease and Tinnitus

**2018 Podcast Schedule**
- ✔ #6 Shared Decision Making in Tinnitus Care
- ✔ #7 Mapping Tinnitus in the Brain
- ✔ #8 Breakthrough Using Multisensory Stimulation to Reduce Tinnitus
- #9 Research on Mindfulness-Based Cognitive Therapy for Tinnitus Treatment
- #10 Habitation to Tinnitus Using Cognitive Behavioral Therapy
- #11 Talking About Tinnitus with Children
- #12 ATA Advocacy Efforts in Washington, DC

**b. Expanding awareness of the effects of noise.**

**Immediate**

#1: See Prevention/Sound Control Strategies Podcast

**Immediate**

#2: See Prevention/Sound Control Theme for Spring 2019 Tinnitus Today magazine

**Immediate**

- ✔ Spring 2018: Apps
- ✔ Winter 2017: Purple Table
- Spring 2019: Prevention / Sound Control

**Objective 3:** Increase accessibility and quality of experience within website/portal.

**Immediate**

a. Reconfigure website to improve user experience and accessibility.

**Immediate**

#1: Transition website from one that appears visually aimed at older individuals to a more inclusive and contemporary one, reflecting the awareness and reality that tinnitus is an issue for everyone; provides prevention, education, and treatment. Tinnitus does not discriminate according to age or income.

**Immediate**

#2: Engage musicians, bands, celebrities, practitioners to provide short tinnitus talks, regarding their experiences with tinnitus; what are they doing; how are they dealing with their tinnitus; what are they doing to prevent tinnitus. Focus on reaching age group between 18-35 years old.
Long-Term

发展目标

3. Focus on building a robust Library of Sounds

阶段：中级

4. Search mechanism is not user-friendly; focus on creating an interactive and dynamic search tool that encourages return visits.

阶段：中级

2018年春季：
- Streamline Donation / Giving / Membership Join and Renewal Form
- Engage PayPal as new credit card merchant

目标4：增加草根参与感，通过志愿者和支持团体。

a. 建立更多支持团体和培训支持团体领导者和领导。

阶段：立即

1. 新的国家支持团体领导者，吸引新的支持团体领导者和团体，特别是在有高需求的地区，这些团体有高需求。

阶段：批评

GOAL B

研究者将认为ATA是寻求耳鸣疗法的必不可少的合作伙伴。

目标1：增加研究资金

a. 通过多种途径重新启动研究基金运动。

阶段：立即

b. 与新研究计划联系捐助者。

阶段：中间

- ATA-backed research
- SAC to Review the Year in Progress re Research

1. 讨论路线图——请求患者社区和临床医生的意见。超越研究者。

阶段：立即

c. 启动联络会议。

阶段：中间

1. 为耳鸣患者提供信息会议，根据地区安排。有可能将研究/临床医生的参会者与患者参会者联系起来，让他们了解最新的研究和管理策略。

阶段：中级
Tinnitus experts give talks about basic facts on tinnitus, treatments available, how to manage stress. The goal is to familiarize patients and families on all aspects of the impact of tinnitus, draw attention to therapy choices, and have the opportunity to share information. Those with tinnitus would be encouraged to bring a partner or friend for support. Minimal charge for light lunch and refreshments; hope is to cover costs through exhibit tables, and/or corporate sponsorships. This could also be a “Fund Me” event that is specifically underwritten by individuals.

#2: Practitioner conferences to encourage and promote training of practitioners on how to engage with patients with tinnitus in a positive and effective way that encourages dialogue and understanding of treatment options. To include counseling, understanding of the referral process flow-chart, raising awareness and understanding of counseling skills and process, focus on the process of adjustment to living with tinnitus, an opportunity to practice counseling skills, evaluating issues when working with tinnitus patients, increasing participants understanding of the medical background of the condition of tinnitus, and introducing them to practical management aids currently available. Provide training on how to respond appropriately to the many inquiries that are received.

Intermediate

#3: Consider creation of a national conference, such as the British Tinnitus Association’s research, clinician and patient conference, which covers the latest research, developments, and best practices in tinnitus treatments.

Long-term

d. Present research proposals to potential donors to attract funding.

Intermediate

#1: Create “Grant Naming” and “Fund Me” programs, in recognition of donations ATA receives in memory of loved ones. A donor can elect to fund an entire project or program, with a clear and dedicated focus, and titled in their name or in honor of a loved one. Solicit patient community to rank research and fund that specific research.

Intermediate

These could be limited to research only, or an opportunity to fund new programs and projects (i.e. ATA Help Hotline). It may take a few years to determine interests of donors and the best way to determine specific funding boundaries.

Objective 2: Increase accountability of funded research.

a. Report research activity and share with ATA and donors.

Critical

#1: Review “contract” requirements of researchers meeting milestones; perhaps pay final 10% of grant once grant review/results are provided to the ATA so that information may be shared with donors in a timely manner.

Critical

#2: Feature a SAC Column/Article in each issue of Tinnitus Today magazine.

Critical
#3: Include an Annual Review of Grants in each issue of *Tinnitus Today* magazine.

**Critical**

#4: Develop an Annual Report that highlights ATA achievements for the year; how research monies were invested; how core purpose, mission, values and strategies were executed; key projects; how resources expanded services to communities connected to tinnitus; and summarization of balance sheet.

**Immediate**

b. Create a web-based message board for the tinnitus community.

**Long-Term**

#1: Create a space for people to exchange ideas through the Website about particular topics – possibly a quality sleep community, musician community, audiology community looking for new products, tested products and feedback, how to approach a difficult patient.

**Long-Term**

c. Engage more with researchers.

**Intermediate**

#1: Highlight new researchers in the field; encourage and motivate younger researchers to focus on tinnitus management strategies/cures. Recognize and promote new talent in research.

**Intermediate**

#2: Work toward ATA becoming a hub for researchers who have the ability and desire for human trials to connect with our tinnitus patient community, creating an additional pool of candidates so researchers have a greater pool of candidates to draw on. (Opt in) Bring together those seeking hope with those seeking to advance science to create a more active rather than passive relationship.

**Intermediate**

Add Clinical Trials in Research Issue Winter 2017

d. Arrange lab visits in order to 1) attract donations, 2) offer treatment providers insight into research, and 3) provide a forum for researchers to interact with tinnitus patients.

**Long-Term**

#1: Potential to begin April 2018 – Miami Ear Institute – during the Spring Board meeting. Open tour for members, support groups, create a “meet the ATA Board” opportunity. Highlight a research lab twice annually.

**Critical**

**Objective 3:** Consider intersecting research projects with Road Map to a Cure, and other guidelines as provided by ATA.

**Immediate**
#1: Partner with Tinnitus Research Institute, British Tinnitus Association, Better Hearing in Australia, in the development of research standards for tinnitus. Build consensus on research standards that would yield useful data within the international community, creating a cooperative network.

It is critical to challenge the research community to design high-quality research projects that can provide answers the tinnitus community so desperately needs.

**Immediate**

**Objective 4:** Increase collaborations between ATA and other funding agencies.

*a. Design framework for multidisciplinary and collaborative grants.*

**Intermediate**

#1: Ensure that tinnitus issues are addressed during the shift to a regulatory focus, as ATA’s input will be important to ensure that the unique issues surrounding tinnitus and OTC hearing aids are implemented in a manner that ensures the health of the patient.

**Immediate**

#2: Ensure that tinnitus issues (e.g. Progressive Tinnitus Management; screening, evaluation and management of tinnitus), are appropriately addressed in any Veterans Affairs (VA) activities to promote outsourcing of hearing-health services.

Given the current state of uncertainty within the VA as to the future role of hearing health and tinnitus, ATA is in a unique position to help educate the VA and congressional leaders about these issues, ensuring that access to appropriate tinnitus care is not disrupted. Work with ATA-designated staff to meet with VA staff and determine a plan of action.

**Immediate**

#3: Re-engage with allied partnerships and coalitions: take steps to re-establish our prior working relationship with the Congressional Hearing Health Caucus (CHHC), DoD, Hearing Restoration Project as a vital mechanism to allow ATA to maximize staff and consultant resources by working within this coalition.

The CHHC will be developing its 2018 agenda later this year, and ATA needs to have a seat at the table. Also, as staff changes are underway within the current CHHC member groups, it is a critical time for ATA to resume its direct involvement with CHHC to lay the groundwork for 2018.

**Immediate**

#4: Staff, Board, and volunteers work toward the goal of the ATA becoming the hub for disseminating tinnitus information related to initiatives within federal agencies, research organizations, clinical trial opportunities, and allied healthcare organizations/associations with patient community concerns.

**Intermediate**

#5: Request grant from grant makers/funders to fund research to determine tinnitus healthcare costs – The Human Cost of Tinnitus – with an economic evaluation of the healthcare cost of tinnitus management in the US, expanding on CDC, NIDCD, AAO, and VA evaluations.

**Long-Term**
GOAL C

ATA will have the organizational capacity to effectively pursue its objectives in education, support, advocacy, and funding for research.

**Objective 1:** Improve online marketing capability to improve functionality of technology. *Critical*

*a. Optimize operational funding.*

#1: Utilize the Website / Online Marketing to capture tinnitus patient and provider information. *Critical*

#2: Create dynamic Banner Advertisements as another avenue or revenue to market products / companies. *Immediate*

#3: See Virtual Store (See Objective 1, a, #6) *Intermediate*

#4: Market *Amazon Smile* more actively than we are doing so currently to create a steady, though smaller, stream of income with little effort. *Critical*

**Objective 2:** Reintroduce major donor fundraising. *Intermediate*

*a. ED and Board Members to collaborate on major donor fundraising. Create a Major Donor Committee.*

#1: Move to momentum and action campaigns, rather than passive requests for money.

For example: “Going Central” -- Moving to Center of Advocacy and Research Campaign, utilizing the “end of year” tax write-off. *Intermediate*

#2: Archer Tinnitus Fundraiser *Critical*

#3: The Sound of Silence Initiative *Critical*

#4: Develop Email Marketing and Create Development Committee. *Critical*

#5: Create Corporate Memberships – different than corporate sponsorships – for those who demonstrate commitment to people with tinnitus, emphasizing vendors that push ATA’s mission. Consider “inclusive partnerships” – welcoming those in industry with an interest in healthy hearing – for example, the broad range of companies that will be hitting the younger and middle-age market with OTC hearing devices.
Immediate

#6: Recreate Corporate Partner Program

Immediate

#7: Create Media Planner for potential vendors/partners to assess working with ATA.

Immediate

#8: Create an ATA Past Presidents Alliance focused on the future – utilize as a resource base, possibly pilot ideas with them. Utilize this incredibly important bank of knowledge and experience.

Intermediate

#9: Advocacy Open House Headquarters Welcome

Immediate

Objective 3: Implement new member drive.

Immediate

a. Develop an input, output, and effectiveness metric for the member drive (e.g., recruit 50,000 members in the next five years).

#1: Transition to Open Membership – Expectation today is that information is free, which necessitates the removal of the pay-wall, which has limited us from reaching our audience – preventing intake of younger and newer members (they will not buy into an organization on an old platform). In addition, representing 50,000+ of those who have tinnitus makes the ATA more of a player than one representing 4,000 members.

Critical to Intermediate

Transition to “Subscribers,” “Supporters,” “Partners”.

#2: By opening membership to everyone, allow nomination of Board members; introduce online voting.

Intermediate

b. Increase revenue, including new revenue sources.

#1: Podcast sponsorships

Immediate

#2: See Conferences

#3: See Virtual Store

#4: Create fundraising tool kits:

Leaving a Gift in Your Will

Immediate
Challenges, Organizing Your Own Events
Include tips, ideas, and advice on how to raise money. Include sponsorship forms.

*Intermediate.*

#5: Sustain a healthy financial balance sheet utilizing dashboard tools that utilize metrics to highlight to the Board that action/new direction may be required.

*Critical*

**Objective 4:** Increase research funding through multiple avenues.

*Intermediate*

*a. Engage new expertise to either repair or update the existing technology system, or contract for new database altogether.*

#1: Complete an IT Audit to understand not only architecture of our IT system, but to also understand the flow of money and information.

*Critical*

#2: Contract with Salesforce expert to resolve issues on back-end forms.

*Critical*

**BACKGROUND**

ATA Board Meeting: New York, NY
September 15-16, 2017
Minutes of Board Meeting

“The Board has, to date: deliberated on the Board outline of Goals and Objectives; endorsed the plan in principle; had our strategic plan consultant Glenn Tecker submit a written plan documenting the strategy; and reviewed and fine-tuned the Strategic Plan.

**Next Steps**
1. Finalize action plans for critical and immediate strategies.
2. Assign staff and committees.
3. Develop metrics and dashboards.
4. Implement and monitor the Strategic Plan with adjustments as needed.
5. Intermediate and Long-Term strategies should be rolling forward for review.”