

2025 Statement of Intent - Kevin Thompson

I, Kevin Thompson, am submitting my Statement of Intent to run for the Board of Directors.

You may have met me in science committee meetings, where I am the vice-chair, or you may have encountered me during the many times I have volunteered for our organization over the past 6 years.

I love this place! I love it for what it is; I love it for what it can be. If you are taking the time to read this statement, then you almost certainly feel the same as I do.

You may also sense, as I do, that Dallas Makerspace is not merely a "cool" place, but a sacred one as well: a temple to human self-reliance, creativity, individuality, fraternity, civic responsibility, and self-overcoming. Organizations like DMS can be oases of human self-actualization in a time where wider technological and social forces have placed these pillars of meaningful life in decline.

I am running for a board seat not merely to maintain DMS, but to help it flourish. I am a data scientist and consultant with a background in development economics research, econometrics, financial analysis, and machine learning. This very privileged, diverse set of experiences, for which I am eternally grateful, have gifted me with a combination of skills that are well-suited to the task of moving DMS in the direction it needs to go to ensure accountability, timeliness, institutional trust, and policy coherence.

Reforms, Supplementations, and Programs

What follows are a set of institutional reforms, institutional supplementations, and policy programs that I believe will lead us in the direction we need to go. **ALL proposals listed here are merely my suggestions and are open to amendment.**

Institutional Supplementations

We will begin with institutional supplementations that will be pivotal in moving forward on IT Infrastructure, Finance, and Expansion projects.

- A **finance steering committee** shall be formed in parallel to (but not integrated with) the Finance Committee. **Appointed members of this steering committee will be empowered as delegates of Dallas Makerspace with restricted authority that CANNOT make any decisions, promises, or sign anything on Dallas Makerspace's behalf unless explicitly empowered to do so by the board.** This steering committee, within its delegated capacities, will answer directly to the board and its members, and not to any officer of Dallas Makerspace. Domains this steering committee will be expected to analyze and advise on will include, but not be limited to:
 1. Reworking the DMS Chart of Accounts to meet our organizational structure and needs, which range from committee fundraising to business intelligence.
 2. Analyze the potential for a retrospective accounting project, potentially with outside help.
 3. Analyze our current credit position, and develop a credit improvement plan, potentially with outside help.
 4. Develop a simple budgeting framework that allows us to separate money for capital budgeting, money for our credit improvement plan, money for expansion, and money for any potential future move or potential purchase of a building.
 5. Massively improve monthly financial reporting at board meetings. Revenue and expense is simply not enough information for management.
 6. Develop a mock-up financial KPI dashboard that can be placed on terminals around DMS.
 7. Propose an effective means of imposing financial controls on purchasing officers and suggest any necessary or desired reforms to the current purchasing officer system at Dallas Makerspace.
- An **IT steering committee** shall be formed in parallel to (but not integrated with) IT Infrastructure Committee. **Appointed members of this steering committee will be empowered as delegates of Dallas Makerspace with restricted authority that CANNOT make any decisions, promises, or sign anything on Dallas Makerspace's behalf unless explicitly empowered to do so by the board.** The appointed members of this steering committee will have complete and unfettered observational access to our systems. **They will NOT be empowered to alter or update our systems without CTO approval.** This steering committee, within its delegated capacities, will answer directly to the board and its members, and not to any officer of Dallas Makerspace. Domains this steering committee will be expected to analyze and advise on will include, but not be limited to:
 1. Feasible and desirable IT administrative structures for Dallas Makerspace, and the scope of each role in the recommended administrative structure.
 2. Doing a thorough IT needs assessment of Dallas Makerspace and reporting the results of this needs assessment to the board.
 3. Identifying key opportunities for outsourcing responsibilities or saving on cost.
 4. Developing an IT and Data strategy for Dallas Makerspace to the board.
 5. Will forward their estimated costs and timelines to the finance steering committee upon completion to assist them in their work.
- An **Expansion steering committee** shall be formed. **Appointed members of this steering committee will be empowered as delegates of Dallas Makerspace with restricted authority that CANNOT make any decisions, promises, or sign anything on Dallas Makerspace's**

behalf unless explicitly empowered to do so by the board. Domains this steering committee will be expected to analyze and advise on will include, but not be limited to:

1. A feasible and cost-effective set of options for compartmentalizing and completing the Dallas Makerspace expansion.
 2. Members of this steering committee will oversee the proper execution of this expansion and report on progress and roadblocks to the board.
 3. Any electronic communication between members of this steering committee and outside businesses/contractors or the landlord concerning expansion shall include the chair and vice-chair of the relevant stakeholder committee(s) either by inclusion in a group chat or by being cc'd in an email.
- The board shall appoint **two** new officers: a **facilities officer** and a **logistics officer**, both of whom report to the COO. We will also have more purchasing officers within facilities and logistics as well to further reduce the burden on the COO. The new purchasing officers will be subject to financial controls that will be specified upon further discourse among the board, the finance steering committee, the CFO and Finance Committee, and the rest of Dallas Makerspace.

Institutional Reforms

- Dallas Makerspace Board
 1. Any electronic communication between members of the board and outside businesses /contractors or the landlord concerning anything related to a committee or its space shall include the chair and vice-chair of the relevant stakeholder committee(s) either by inclusion in a group chat or by being cc'd in an email.
 2. Dallas Makerspace's official board meetings will be reformed to include a more active participation by committee representatives through a Committee Parliament discussed in subsection 3 of the institutional reform section of this document. During meetings where the committee parliament congregates, the committee parliament and the board will sit on opposing sides of the meeting room facing each other and regular members of DMS will be seated perpendicular and adjacent to these groups. The speaker of the committee parliament will sit on the opposite side of the room as the regular DMS membership. Procedures for these new forms of meetings will be decided in the future.
- Document Management System
 1. Dallas Makerspace will choose or implement an **effective, easy-to-use, version-controlled** document management system to enforce transparency and accountability. Most documents SHALL be accessible either to the entirety of the membership or all chairs, vice-chairs, officers, and board members. PII on these documents shall be redacted to protect the privacy of stakeholders.
 2. Upon adoption of a document management system that meets our requirements, ALL agreements, contracts, leases, building plans, expansion drawings, and proposals under consideration to or from businesses/contractors, shall be version-controlled and included in the document management system with previous versions also available for viewing by the general membership.
- Committee Parliament
 1. The quarterly C^3 committee meetings, or "beer-and-bitch" shall be replaced with a committee parliament, as specified in part 4 of this subsection, and this group will only be asked to congregate either during one official board meeting per quarter or one official board meeting per month, depending on further discourse and feedback. The purpose of the committee parliament is to give committees additional ability to hold the DMS board of directors accountable.
 2. The Dallas Makerspace Vice President officer position will be abolished and replaced with a **Committee Parliament Speaker** officer position. The speaker will be elected by the committee parliament and the elected speaker will be appointed by the board. The Speaker of the Committee Parliament will oversee the order of the board meetings at which the committee parliament attends. The speaker will enforce whatever parliamentary processes Dallas Makerspace decides to go with and will be able to both call the committee parliament and any board members to order.
 3. Upon repeated flagrant violation of the order of an official board meeting where the committee parliament is congregated, the speaker is empowered to name the offending member and expel them from the meeting for the remainder of the day, even if that offending member is a board member.
 4. The committee parliament shall be a counter-majoritarian institution within Dallas Makerspace made up of a collection of representatives elected or appointed by committees or their respective chairs. **There will be ONE representative per committee.** Committee representatives are the respective chairs by default, but a chair may elect to have someone else represent the committee for either some meetings or all meetings during their tenure as chair.

Policy Programs

While the work of the steering committees will be pivotal in advancing Dallas Makerspace towards its goals, we will have to take swift actions in the short term to ensure that committee and facility needs are met.

- Committees that are critically impaired from engaging in their core pursuits by material-need should be allocated the necessary funds and delegated the necessary powers to pursue their objectives by the end of the next quarter.
 1. As of writing this statement, the critically-impaired committees I have identified are:
 - a. Digital Media

- i. Requirements to lift the committee out of the critically-impaired category:
 1. Uniform workstations for classes.
 2. Honorarium rule modifications to reduce the no-show risk imposed on teachers by their limited classroom space.
 3. Correction to windows. .
 - b. Vector
 - i. Requirements to lift the committee out of the critically-impaired category:
 1. Air-line.
 2. Network connection
 - c. Photography SIG (which is technically sponsored by Digital Media, but I see that as a mere formality; budget allocations towards Photography should not be counted against Digital Media committee)
 - i. Requirements to lift the committee out of the critically-impaired category:
 1. Completion of the dark room
- Committees that are partially-impaired are next on the list of priorities for capital expenditures and improvements. These are committees that are functioning but are suffering from some sort of material handicap that prevents them from using all the functionality at their disposal. These committees should be allocated the necessary funds and delegated the necessary powers to be lifted out of this category by the end of next quarter:
 1. As of writing this statement, the partially-impaired committees I have identified are:
 - a. Woodshop
 - i. Requirements to lift the committee out of the partially-impaired category:
 1. Lathe room completion
 2. Correction to windows
 3. Correcting any potential issues in the electrical system.
- Honorarium Reform
 1. The board shall set the level of honorarium such that it matches the regular monthly membership cost (as of 4/19/2025, honorarium should be \$70).
 2. All tool classes will be given far softer honorarium requirements or perhaps no honorarium requirements at all, depending on further discussion.
 3. Committees with smaller spaces face a higher risk of their instructors not meeting the honorarium requirements. Honorarium rules for these committees will be adjusted to reflect that reality so that it's not harder to get teachers than it already is.
 - a. It is my opinion that we should consider having a two sign-up rule for, say, Digital Media honorarium since they only have three spots for students.
- Tours
 1. Tours will be moved to Thursday nights since Dallas Makerspace is far more active during Thursday nights, making it easier for new members to network and socialize with the committee they are interested in without having to wait for the next committee meeting.
 2. Tour guides will be trained on how to give tours.
- Discounts
 1. Dallas Makerspace will not extend its current discount-regime to new members. We already provide a tremendous value to our membership at our price level and we need to raise revenue. I also agree with Burt's assessment that discounts subconsciously tell prospective members that we don't believe in our own value.
- Completion of Phase I
 1. Window Corrections and Lathe Room, as mentioned above.
 - a. The Lathe Room should be done (correctly!) within 30 days.
 2. Automotive moved into the new area with a second lift.
 - a. Automotive should be moved to the north building within 60 days.
 3. Photography SIG darkroom, as mentioned above.
 - a. This should be complete within 30 days.
 4. Anything else included in Phase I that was not mentioned here or above.
 - a. We shall begin work on building a new laser room and moving laser committee into that room as soon as the above three items are complete, or perhaps earlier if we determine that to be possible.
 - b. We must make sure that airflow issues in Ceramics are addressed and that ceramics committee members are comfortable during both hot summers and cold winters.
 - c. After the laser room is moved, we finish the woodshop expansion and then we begin marketing our space hard while building new processes for onboarding new members and incentivizing instructors to go towards private pay for advanced classes. We will then redirect our honorarium budget towards increasing honorarium for introductory classes.

Signature Kevin Thompson

Member Support / Endorsements:

Page History:

Version	Date	Author	Comment
7	2025-04-19	Kevin Thompson	
6	2025-04-19	Kevin Thompson	
5	2025-03-31	Kevin Thompson	
4	2025-03-31	Kevin Thompson	
3	2025-03-31	Kevin Thompson	