Vision
We envision a future where the understanding that learning is happening all the time radically redefines education. We are building toward the possibility for every person to practice self-direction, self-expression, and community co-creation as they grow. Finally, we imagine that facilitating reflection and sharing among learning communities will guide them in adapting with our continuously changing world.

Purpose
By building relationships and connection across learning communities, we increase the accessibility of community wisdom and support for all involved, improving the impact, sustainability, and resilience of all projects. By practicing transparency, reflection, generosity, trust, clarity, and responsibility within our community, we align how we relate with the world changes we hope will come from what we create. Finally, by intentionally crafting infrastructure for increasing collective intelligence, we accelerate all of our abilities to learn, innovate, and adapt.

Mission
Our mission is to support the operation of Self-Organized Learning Environments. Geronimo Education, DBA: “Agile Learning Centers” is also the holder of the ALC educational model as applied to early childhood, ages 8-18, and continuing education.
Practice

Those in ALCs have many different practices for caretaking their communities. Some of these are daily and abstract--like meeting to share intentions and reflections--while others are more concrete--like sorting mail and mopping floors. Similarly, we have many different practices for cohering and caretaking our global community. There's first and foremost the crucial work facilitators do locally to keep their projects running, healthy, and connected to other ALCs. There are all the sharing practices facilitators and families have taken up, to support the broader self-directed education movement with our stories. More measurably, there are the lists of projects and goals from current board and working group members committed to guiding the ALC Network organization in constantly learning and improving our ability to support ALCs in a wide variety of contexts.

2017-2018 Undertakings: check in with all ALFs and projects, gather data for member directory, support local projects hosting trainings and events, transition and expand board, hire administrator, upgrade conflict resolution support, clarify vision, update bylaws, update Ecosystem Charter document, restart weekly calls, support the creation of new work groups, support launch of calls by and for folks in different regions, create member email list, begin monthly newsletter email, publish First 5 Years document and subsequent annual reports, update member email list, present at conferences, host calls for facilitators hosting trainings, update resources to improve member onboarding, translate resources to increase accessibility, convene Advisory Board, fundraise, support local community hosting first international ALC Conference in Mexico, create network Instagram to increase visibility, commission webinar geared at parents interested in ALC and self-directed education, support organization of regional gatherings, bring new energy into web-tech team, start a book club, publish finance summaries, and support teens stepping into co-hosting trainings
Intentions for 2019: plan and gather funds to host an international gathering of facilitators in 2020, activate Board of Advisors, connect Starter Kit downloaders and seed meet-ups, activate newly formed Social Media Working Group, update social media pages and website, build supportive partnerships with organizations doing complementary liberation work, continue supporting grassroots organizing, continue increasing transparency and accountability, continue monthly newsletters, stabilize and begin distributing upkeep of tech, publish stories from facilitators and families in ALCs around the world, gather documentation to offer communities advocating locally for policies that recognize self-directed education, and compile decolonization and anti-oppression resources for distribution to facilitators.

Intended long-term Operations: host more international conferences and facilitator gatherings, seed regional retreats that inspire annual events, support practicing facilitators being able to mentor new facilitators, coordinate and ensure accessibility of regular ALF/ALC trainings and gatherings, provide more online courses, coordinate collaboration among ALC communities hosting trainings, increase accessibility of membership, strategizing responsible support of international growth, improve member onboarding, strengthen facilitator community, support ongoing distribution of power and resources, continue increasing transparency, organize and continue translating documentation to increase accessibility, update board again to broaden represented perspectives, work to stabilize finances, explore applications in adult education, convene a conference with primarily youth presenters.
Brief Notes from 2018

- **January**: New logo options and Individual Membership to the network are offered, ALF event is hosted in Guadalajara, ALC Mosaic hosts Akilah Richards
- **February**: Updated version of the Starter Kit is released, fundraising campaign towards which an anonymous donor pledged $10,000 in matching funds launches, Heartwood ALC hosts a local Conference, updated Ecosystem Charter and ALC Network bylaws are published, Starter Kit is translated into Spanish, ALC Mosaic hosts Wildwood ALC and ALC Heartwood folks, Mullumbimby Commons hosts an ALC-NYC alf
- **March**: Spanish-language translations of Starter Kit and The Facilitation Guide are released, ALF Summer plans begin being shared, ALC Mosaic hosts ALC-NYC visitors
- **April**: ALC-NYC is represented at the LEGO Conference, the First Five Years network report is published, Rubén Alvarado join the board, Board of Advisers is created, Akilah Richards and Liam Nilsen join the Board of Advisers. Alf event is hosted in Querétaro, México
- **May**: Meghan Carrico joins the Board of Advisers, ALC-NYC hosts ALC Mosaic folks and ALC Philly folks. ALF event is hosted in Bacalar, México and Quito, Ecuador
- **June**: ALC Philly represents us at the Small Schools Conference, season of ALF Summers and other events kicks off in earnest, ALC Mosaic and ALC-NYC present at AERO in Long Island, matching fundraiser started in February ends
July: ALF event hosted in Finland, Akilah and Marley Richards record “Race as it relates to ALC” and share on Soundcloud, season of ALF Summers etc. continues with events ultimately in several countries and languages

August: The ruling for an education custody court case in NYC reads in part: "The court therefore finds that the father has presented evidence that a self-directed learning environment is one in which children can flourish and thrive and that the school that the children are currently attending, Agile [ALC-NYC], meets the necessary conditions for successful learning."

September: Season of ALF Summers etc. wraps up, network Instagram account is created, second weekly ALF call is started

October: Emergent Strategy reading group convenes, Regional Gathering meets in North Carolina, planning for International ALF Gathering for 2020 starts, participate in Jornadas Ágiles Latinoamericanas annual event for practitioners of Agility in the Business World

November: “Congreso AÃgil” becomes first international ALC conference and is held all in Spanish, 18-month-old weekly facilitator call gets new hosts, weekly network business call is restarted, ALC-NYC hosts ALC Philly

December: Planning starts for spring and summer offerings across the network, Creation of Agile Co-Working Co-mmunity space in Xalapa, México, Heartwood ALC announces second annual local conference, work on meet-up guide for Starter Kit downloaders begins, we draft this annual report
From 2018 social media posts of projects in the United States and Mexico
ALF Summer Evolution

We are excited about the evolution of ALF Summer from a single gathering to regionally-based and locally-sourced events at the emerging ALC hubs across our network. We see this transition as vital to building and maintaining strong relationships and supporting diverse expressions of the ALC model as our network continues to grow. This shift has increased the accessibility of ALF programs, sparked translations of resources, still managed to connect facilitators from across ALCs, and allowed start-up programs to develop support relationships with established communities who remain valuable partners for them after the programs end. ALF Training events offered in 2018 included 17 events, across 8 countries, in at least 4 languages. The end-of-summer schedule on our website listed:

- ALF training Querétaro – Querétaro, Mexico – April 2-7
- ALF training Bacalar – Bacalar, MX – May 2-8
- ALF training Ecuador – Quito, EC – May 18-25
- ALF Summer Scandinavia – Sweden – June 25-July 8
- ALF Summer at ALC Heartwood – Atlanta, GA – June 7-15
- ALF Summer at ALC Mosaic – Charlotte, NC – July 9-20
- ALF Summer at ALC-NYC – NY, NY – July 12-14/20
- ALF Summer Barcelona at CoCreo – Barcelona, Spain – July 14-27
- Mesahat SDE Facilitators Training – Cairo, Egypt – July 12-29
- ALF Summer at Free To Learn – Sacramento, CA – August 2-11
- ALF Summer Philly – Philadelphia, PA – August 6-10
- ALF Summer Greece – Evia Island, GD – August 12-21
- ALF Puerto Escondido – Puerto Escondido, Mexico – September 16-22
- ALF training Querétaro - November 2-5
- ALF training Bacalar - November
- ALF training Xalapa @Educambiando - November 23 - 30
- ALF training Manua Kea -- San Luis Potosí, Mexico -- November 20-26

As we've grown, the role of the ALC Network has morphed from organizing and facilitating the training-gatherings to improving the infrastructure for connection, collaboration, troubleshooting, and sharing among those hosting ALC events. Some of our board members plan and facilitate trainings, but most of the network work at this point is about supporting folks in ALCs to run the events they feel excited to offer. We host calls. We pass requests for events to ALC staff in the relevant regions. We are available to work with event organizers to help them assemble facilitation teams that are experienced and balanced. We respond to concerns and mediation requests. We share event announcements on our platforms, and we love when folks send us celebratory photos to share after, like the following ones from this year.
### Snapshot: Who hosted how many where?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ALC Mosaic</th>
<th>ALC-NYC</th>
<th>Heartwood ALC</th>
<th>Free to Learn ALC</th>
<th>Educambiando ALC</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nancy Tilton, Tomis Parker, Lacy Manship, Dr. Sundiata, Akilah Richards</td>
<td>Mel Compo, Ryan Shollenberger, Chuck Savoy, Abby Oulton</td>
<td>Anthony Galloway Jr, Julia Cordero</td>
<td>Mel Compo, Nahla Simone, Abby Oulton</td>
<td>Abigail Gonzalez, Edgar Gonzalez, Julia, Yeremi Marin,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45 in North Carolina</td>
<td>23 in New York</td>
<td>18 in Georgia</td>
<td>17 in California</td>
<td>12 in Veracruz</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mauna Kea ALC</th>
<th>ALC Querétaro Community</th>
<th>Öland, Sweden Community</th>
<th>ALC Philly</th>
<th>Co-Creo ALC</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rebecka Koritz, Alex Aldarondo, Rubén Alvarado</td>
<td>Abigail González, Ari Hernández, Rubén Alvarado</td>
<td>Rebecka Koritz, Liam Nilsen, Rubén Alvarado</td>
<td>Ryan Shollenberger, David O'Connor, Jean Finlay</td>
<td>Pia Janzen, Rubén Alvarado</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33 in San Luis Potosí</td>
<td>35 in Querétaro</td>
<td>35 in Öland</td>
<td>12 in Pennsylvania</td>
<td>12 in Barcelona</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Congreso AÁgil - First International Conference

After 6 months of intense work, organizers in Mexico hosted the first international ALC Conference in San Luis Potosí, Mexico this fall. On November 17th and 18th, they gathered 200+ people from 9 different countries at El Museo Laberinto for talks, games, workshops, performances, panels, and shared meals.
Mapping Our Impact

Since the 5 Year Report went out in March of 2018, our Starter Kit was downloaded 772 times, bringing the total number of downloaders to date up to 2678. The Starter Kit and Facilitation Guide are were both updated and translated into Spanish in the last year. They remain available for free on our website.

Starter Kit Downloaders as of December 15, 2018

ALC Network Member Organizations as of December 15, 2018
Network Membership

Since the launch of our Membership model in 2015, we have seen a consistent increase in new memberships each year. 2018 saw a 180.6% increase in network membership. We ended last year with 67 members. In 2018, we welcomed 59 new members and lost only 7.

In previous years, we saw increases in registrations tend mostly to coincide with the few ALF trainings scheduled for July. With an increase in distributed ALC Network activity in 2018--such as the update and translation of the Starter Kit, a fundraising campaign, and year-round event offerings in Latin America--we saw spikes in new registrations also become more distributed throughout the year.

As of the end of December 2018, the ALC Network shows a growth of 1437% since the launch of our membership program. Members are still concentrated in the United States, where our oldest and most solid projects are. Latin America generally, and Mexico specifically, has seen the most significant increase in interest and new projects over 2018. This is thanks in large part to the work of organizers and communities there, who intentionally focused on translations, resource sharing, and hosting events this year. We’re excited to have begun to hear collaboration between projects in Europe and Africa, as well as updates from start-up projects in Australia and Asia. To support connection among facilitators from all these projects, we’ve begun planning and fundraising for a global gathering we intend to host in 2020.
Sharing

The ALC Network is a grassroots, open-source organization that ultimately is working towards a world where young people grow educated and liberated through the experience of self-directing in supportive, diverse communities.

![Word cloud image generated at wordcloud.com from a week's conversation among facilitators in our Slack channel for #Support, fall 2018](image)

To this end, we educate ourselves, tend our local projects, connect with our broader ecosystem, generate open-source documentation of the work we were doing, and celebrate invitations to collaborate with aligned partners around the world. Much ALC Network work has been and continues to be carried out by facilitators and ALC community members who volunteer to share their gifts and energies in support of the larger network and our mission. Some of this work leads to the documents and websites we produce. Much of the work in 2018, though, was about holding space for connection and relationship building across ALC projects. For example, 8 facilitators currently host 5 different regular calls. That's 20+ hours of presence and support they offer new facilitators and each other nearly every week! While this community-building work is harder to measure and graph than membership registrations or monthly donations, we recognize that tending relationships is powerful and crucial work. We’re grateful for all the facilitators who offer this work, which is already part of how we tend our local communities, to keep cohering and strengthening our global community.
Finances

With accessibility as one of our priorities, we have collectively tried to keep our operating expenses low, in the hopes that this will let us keep our membership fee low while letting us focus less on fundraising than we otherwise would have to.

In 2017, we increased our spending on administration and tech support to tend the coherence of our network through the rapid expansion we found ourselves in the middle of. To this end, and to support the follow-up measure of increasing support for facilitator gatherings of all kinds, we have started an annual fundraising campaign to supplement smaller efforts facilitators organize through each year.

![Breakdowns of our expenses and revenue based on estimates for the year from late 2018.](image)

PayPal Activity chart showing value in USD of payments to ALC Network comparing 2018 with 2017

Downloaded 12/18/2018
In the past year we have developed new leadership, nourished increased communication between member organizations, begun engaging in a global conversation about education and children’s rights, and inspired an increase in ALCs broadcasting their stories on public platforms. We have managed all this without significantly changing our financial situation: as in 2017, we end the year with our expenses around $2000 lower than our income and without having to touch our savings.

Charts from Charlotte Metro Federal Credit Union, account overview 3/27/2018 and 12/19/2018

With most of our expenses still related to the upkeep of infrastructure, and with goals of hosting both an international gathering and a conference by 2020, we plan to continue setting up fundraising efforts that let us steadily realize our goals without decreasing the affordability of membership for new projects. We also intend for the financial sustainability of the organization to be one of the key topics we explore in 2019.
Our Board

Mercer Carlin is a founding parent from the original ALC in NYC. Mercer’s passion for and commitment to self-directed learning were much of the reason the Manhattan Free School was transformed into the first Agile Learning Center rather than simply folding in 2012.

Mercer spent 21 years in corporate America as an Executive at a company named TRANZACT. She has also done coaching, consulting, and facilitation work both as a freelancer and with an organization named ThinkHuman. Her passion has long been to create human focused, empowering cultures in the workplace. In 2016, Mercer joined our board, left her job, and began focusing on community building in and among ALCs. She currently co-hosts a weekly call, offers mediation and coaching, attends and supports ALF Summers, and is a vocal self-directed education advocate on Twitter.

Tomis Parker has been working directly with self-directed education models since graduating from college in 2008. After 4 years with the Manhattan Free School and some freelancing in the EdTech world, Tomis worked as part of the ALC-NYC founding team to transform the free school into the first Agile Learning Center.

In 2013, Tomis began running the ALC in NYC, where he remained the Director through the 2015-16 school year. During that time, he oversaw the launch of the Agile Learning Centers brand, trained new leadership, consulted with start-ups, co-organized the first Agile Learning Facilitator training program, and co-founded the ALC Network. He project-managed the launch of the Alliance for Self-Directed Education with other thought-leaders in the self-directed education field. Tomis has been on the board since 2014 and is currently based out of ALC Mosaic.
Abby Oulton started volunteering with the first ALC in the fall of 2013, and joined the staff a year later. She had just finished 6 years of exploring how different formal and informal education projects change societies, spending lots of time with kids and earning a degree from the Individualized Study program at NYU in the process.

While energized by and grounded in day-to-day facilitation, Abby additionally took on administration and community building for the school. After becoming one of the school’s directors, she started planning and co-hosting facilitator trainings, working to provide support for facilitators across the network, coaching new directors and emerging community leaders, and sharing stories from the NYC school.

In summer of 2017 she joined the board with the intention of adjusting operations to better reflect the scale and diversity of the expanded community. As in NYC, she primarily took on administration and community building work. She continues to write, host calls, coordinate trainings, and stay grounded in her work with the ALC-NYC community.

Rubén Alvarado participated in the 2012 Emerging Leader Labs incubator of projects for social transformation, where ALC was one of the projects being workshopped. There he became familiar with self-directed learning and the intentional creation of culture. He returned to the following year with the task of co-facilitating the incubator and serving as a personal coach for some members of the community. In the following years he has continued to facilitate the creation of self-directed learning spaces, mostly but not exclusively in Mexico and the United States. He was brought ALC practices and SDE principles to organizations of different natures: sports teams, recreation groups, companies, and artistic projects, among others.

In 2014 he participated as a facilitator in the Ágil ExAlt Learning Center, in San Juan, Puerto Rico and during 2015 and 2016 as a Self-Directed Learning Coach with Coaches Across Continents, a Sports NGO for Social Impact, in North and South America, Asia and Africa. Currently he works as a coach, support facilitator, community builder, and facilitator trainer across ALCs while also serving as a coordinator for Spanish-speaking regions.
For the Next Five Years

Check out our goals!

1. Increase accessibility by prioritizing translation projects, developing a system to adjust our membership fee for those whose local currencies are significantly weaker than the USD, and improving the onboarding of and burnout prevention for volunteers
2. Increase transparency by continuing to publish internal newsletters and committing to compiling and releasing regular annual reports
3. Increase sustainability by setting up regular and effective fundraising campaigns
4. Increase stability of our communication platforms and websites by intentionally redesigning them to scale with our community
5. Increase coherence by finding ways to fund and organize regular retreats for those doing network work, including those hosting ALF trainings

Support our work!

1. Practice authentic and respectful relationships with learners of all ages (you, too!)
2. Share our resources, social media posts, and story with your friends
3. Volunteer, either with your local ALC or with one of our network working groups
4. Donate by going to agilelearningcenters.org and clicking “Support”
5. Get in touch about sponsoring an upcoming conference or training

Connect with us!

1. Check out the free, open-source publications shared on our website
2. Sign up for an individual or organization membership
3. Host a workshop or training in your community
4. Find a local ALC or ALC Start-up and say “Hi!”
5. Attend a workshop or training
Thank you!

Feeling curious, inspired, or generous? We’d love to hear from you.
Find us at agilelearningcenters.org or email us directly at info@alc.network!