



Background Information

In 1998, Janine Benyus's book, *Biomimicry: Innovation Inspired by Nature*, brought significant public attention to the pioneering work of scientists who were adapting nature's best ideas to solve difficult, modern-day problems. The term "biomimicry" was coined from the Greek words 'bios,' meaning 'life,' and 'mimesis,' meaning 'imitation.' This seminal book led to Ms. Benyus' founding of the nonprofit Biomimicry Institute in 2005 and the creation of AskNature.org in 2008.

Initially conceived as a professional tool, AskNature.org became a core resource for participants in educational design challenges. Within less than a year, AskNature.org attracted 250,739 visits from across 196 countries. Currently, AskNature.org stands as a free, curated online library, acclaimed as the world's largest, most accessible and comprehensive resource for nature-inspired solutions. It serves students, educators, and innovation professionals alike.

Constantly enhancing its resources, the Institute has created a vast array of vital programs including the Biomimicry Toolbox – an on-line guide to applying nature's lessons to design challenges; the Ray of Hope Accelerator program supporting innovative biomimetic startups; and a multimillion dollar partnership project to demonstrate scalable new pathways for the 92 million tonnes of fashion waste that is discarded each year, Design for Transformation.

In addition, The Biomimicry Institute continues to engage educators, science/technology institutions, design museums, botanical gardens, and natural history centers, to expand awareness of biomimicry and nature-inspired designs.

In 2024 the launch of the AskNature Hive will provide the world with a unique global community platform, for like-minded people from all walks of life and knowledge levels, to network and learn about the latest developments in biomimicry and the solutions it affords for

a healthier planet through lively discussions, monthly webinars with biomimicry experts, nature-forward challenges, and other engaging activities. In addition, in 2024, the institute will announce its ten-year plan outlining the vital next steps to creating a more sustainable and connected world.

The Biomimicry Institute continues its unwavering commitment to addressing three critical challenges: Climate Change/Biodiversity Loss, Human/Nature Disconnection, and the 'Take-Make-Waste' culture.

Common Links

www.biomimicry.org

www.asknature.org

https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCZKmNwSe3m9_TDTyBwOlXug



Strategic Plan

LETTER FROM THE CEO →

Dear nature-inspired community,

I am thrilled to share our strategic vision for how the Biomimicry Institute can play a part in realizing a Nature Positive, inclusive, and regenerative world.



Over the last twenty years, the Institute and its partners have helped to bring biomimicry to life, developed proof points that inspiration from nature really can change the world for the better, and spurred countless

innovations and initiatives. It has blossomed beyond our founders' wildest dreams, but all of us here at the Institute acknowledge that we have only just begun this journey to right our relationship with the natural world.

Today, we have an immense challenge in front of us—we see ecosystem collapse occurring daily. In response there is a scramble to enforce the commitments made by 188 countries to the Global Biodiversity Framework and for companies to understand their nature exposure and risk. The realization that we are now seeing the consequences of our extractive relationship with Nature and its ecosystems is finally sinking in, as is the realization that there is no meaningful solution to climate change without us remembering and repairing our connection to nature.

Our new strategic plan reflects the dynamic state of this moment in time and identifies the strategic role we believe biomimicry can play in bringing Nature Positive and regenerative solutions to bloom. We are eager to build on our roots and to work systematically across sectors and disciplines so

that the brilliance of our natural world and all living systems is once more part of our daily literacy and knowledge. In summary:

We aim to be disruptive rather than complacent—this moment requires thoughtful urgency.

We aim to be welcoming and to partner ethically with holders of traditional ecological knowledge to help disconnected communities to find the way back to our natural and universal connection to place.

We aim to create a sense of community and belonging where everyone can access nature-inspired solutions.

And we aim to collaboratively create thought-provoking knowledge that enables action and change.

Just as this plan was developed in community—with our staff, board, and stakeholders providing input and iterations—we seek your support to realize this vision and your willingness to dig in the soil with us, plant seeds, support their growth, and steward a thriving and fruitful movement.

With gratitude,

Amanda Sturgeon

Amanda Sturgeon

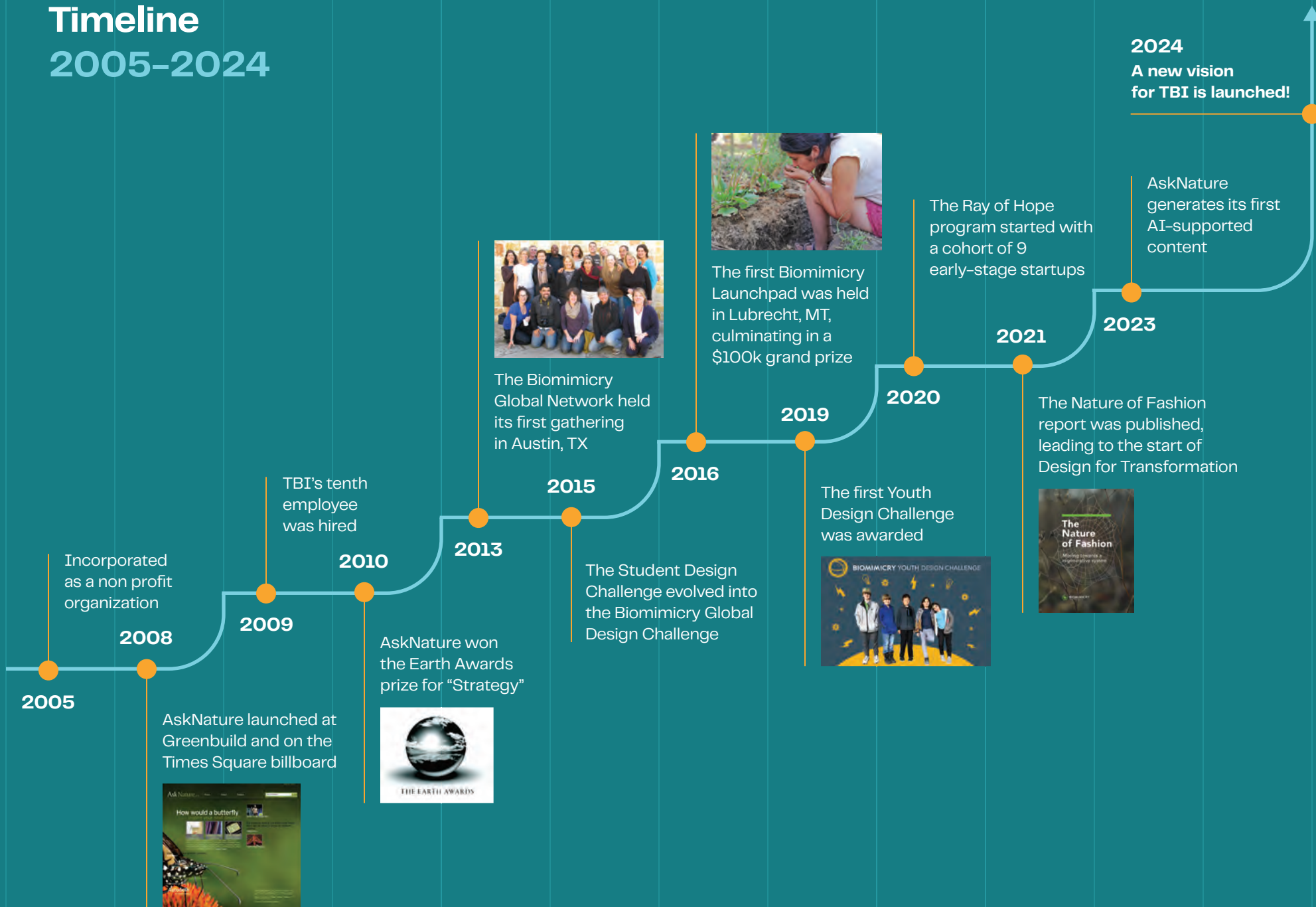
"We're awake now, and the question is how do we stay awake to the living world? How do we make the act of asking nature's advice a normal part of everyday inventing?"

JANINE BENYUS → CO-FOUNDER



Timeline

2005-2024





Connect: through Community, Curiosity, and Convening

To realize our outcomes we are positioning the Institute as the connecting organism in the ecosystem of brilliant Biomimicry nutrients.

We will provide fertile ground for a wider dialogue and action to be centered around the new AskNature Hive and the existing AskNature platform to accelerate the adoption of nature-inspired solutions.

As a forest clearing fosters new growth in a succession of waves of different species, the AskNature Hive and co-labs will emerge in the next year, with the learning and convening activities emerging within the next two years.





Connect: through Community, Curiosity, and Convening



AskNature Hive

What is the seed we are planting?

A globally engaged online community platform dedicated to realizing a Nature Positive future through a biomimicry lens

What sprouts in the Hive?

Peer-to-peer knowledge sharing

Digital meet-ups

Action campaigns

Global challenges to build community

Conversations rooted in curiosity about what Nature can teach us

What fruit does it bear?

Cross-sectoral and interdisciplinary actions and collaborations

Deep sectoral dialogue and solutions

Identification of leverage points to change systems

Making nature-inspired innovations understandable

De-mystifying biomimicry



AskNature Co-Labs

What is the seed we are planting?

Communities of practice dedicated to surfacing and co-creating how "AskingNature" can bring solutions to specific challenges resulting in actions and campaigns to realize change

What sprouts in the Co-Lab?

Curated groups that provide different perspectives on a challenge

Academic and scientific knowledge sharing

Guides to inform the creation of a nature-inspired world

Nature-inspired solutions for whole sectors

Biomimicry for Social Innovation and Change

What fruit does it bear?

Realizing Nature-inspired actions for entire industries and sectors

Making biological research accessible and actionable

Developing new models of nature-inspired leadership and social/political and economic systems

The AskNature Convenings

What is the seed we are planting?

An annual bio-regional gathering of a nature-inspired community that is immersed in nature while weaving in global knowledge sharing and exchange.

What sprouts in the AN Convenings?

Nature-immersed learning and listening

Understanding and celebrating place/bio-regions

Connection with Indigenous communities and knowledge

Surfacing bio-regional innovations

What fruit does it bear?

Fostering an engaged community and mobilizing an action-based movement toward a regenerative future

Supporting traditional Indigenous knowledge and braiding it with academic science to better inform decision making

Increasing nature-inspired innovations tailored to bio-regional challenges

Connecting people and nature

AskNature Learning

What is the seed we are planting?

Accessible, live, and online learning and in-person mini-convenings created by both the Institute and other ecosystem learning partners.

What sprouts in AN Learning?

Multiple learning entry points to understand Biomimicry and the wider Nature Positive and regenerative future intelligence.

Sector specific "Genius" classes

Training and support for nature-inspired start-ups and innovators

Support for Youth and Higher Education to integrate nature-inspired science

What fruit does it bear?

Growing the knowledge base of nature-inspired solutions, case studies, and innovations

Enabling more innovators and businesses to be successful with nature-inspired innovations

Attracting new, diverse audiences to the world of nature-inspired innovation

[Link to AskNature.org](https://www.asknature.org)



Enable: through Generosity, Inspiration & Innovation

To realize our outcomes we will enable innovators, social entrepreneurs, systems change agents, and businesses to re-invent themselves to be in “right relationship with nature.” We envision a future where learning from nature is the first point of call when addressing the myriad of challenges we face as a result of the take-make-waste society and economic systems we act within. Like any single organism in a thriving ecosystem, we can not do this alone. Enabling partners and a wider ecosystem of change agents is at the heart of our strategy.





Enable: through Generosity, Inspiration & Innovation

Ray of Hope Accelerator

What is the seed we are planting?

Enabling nature-inspired start-up businesses and entrepreneurs to succeed.

What sprouts in the ROH Accelerator?

A deeper understanding of biomimicry, nature-inspired solutions and knowledge

Building a global community of practice of nature-inspired entrepreneurs

Reconnecting future business leaders with nature

Training and support for building a successful, Nature Positive business

What fruit does it bear?

Growing each cohort of successful nature-inspired startups and innovations to reach more parts of the world and bring more sector solutions to life

Providing innovations for existing businesses to adopt and support to pivot their business model towards a Nature Positive one

Growing the amount of investment and capital focused on a nature-inspired future

AskNature: ChatNature

What is the seed we are planting?

Radically scaling AskNature to be a virtually endless treasure of accessible, understandable, and applicable strategies from throughout Nature

What sprouts in the next generation of AskNature?

The development of AI tools to generate more content more efficiently

Integration of Traditional Ecological Knowledge into AskNature to expand indigenous knowledge awareness and adoption

Development of "Genius of Place" collections to realize bioregional and place-based inspiration

Launching AI-driven ChatNature tool so that AskNature can be better used for rapid and reliable Nature-based ideation and reference

What fruit does it bear?

Building AI into AskNature allows users of any age, education level, or language to instantly find models from Nature for any challenge they face

Faster, more integrated knowledge of Nature can realize vast scale inside other design and engineering tools

We bring nature-inspired solutions to life at a rapid scale

Ray of Hope Fund

What is the seed we are planting?

Enabling nature-inspired startup businesses and entrepreneurs to succeed through alternate, mission aligned, forms of capital

What sprouts in the ROH Fund?

An investment pool to disperse funds into the ROH startups

Patient capital that can allow nature-inspired solutions to move from prototype to pilot scale

Deeper levels of engagement with aligned impact investment partners

What fruit does it bear?

Accelerated rates of scale of climate and environmental solutions

Growing the amount of investment and capital focused on a nature-inspired future

Showcasing alternative, nature-inspired models of capital deployment

Braiding Fund

What is the seed we are planting?

Enabling a wider and more inclusive ecosystem of nature-inspired, Nature Positive, and regenerative initiatives to get seeded and off the ground

What sprouts in the Braiding Fund?

Development of a re-granting fund that is supported by multiple funders

Dispersing grant funds to under-supported and under-represented people and solutions that are key to enabling a nature-inspired future

Building the capacity of indigenous knowledge holders

The support of individuals to participate in learnings and training regardless of financial, social, or political constraints

What fruit does it bear?

Growing a series of solutions adapted for specific places, conditions, and cultural framings that one central organization may not have the capacity or lens to serve

Realizing a global ecosystem of nature-inspired innovators that is diverse and thriving

Catalyzing breakthroughs in the amplification and uptake of nature-inspired innovations



Amplify: through Partnership, Collaboration, and Joy

To realize our outcomes we will amplify our storytelling capacity, expand to diverse platforms and use a range of methods and multimedia formats to reach a wide, global audience. We are inspired by three ecological systems that uniquely distribute information: mycelium, murmuration, and seed dispersal. We expect to add to those as we also AskNature for ideas.





Amplify: through Partnership, Collaboration, and Joy



Mycorrhizal Partnerships

What is the seed we are planting?

We acknowledge that we can't achieve our goals alone; networks that transfer nutrients and knowledge to each other will enable greater impact.

Realizing a global ecosystem of thriving partnerships to spur forward hope-fueled action

In our collaborations we will seek to consistently spread the joy and positivity of life and Nature

What sprouts in the Mycorrhizal Network?

A respectful and mutually beneficial relationship between organizations that have a similar mission but may approach it from different perspectives

Shared resources and collaborative approaches

What fruit does it bear?

Leveraging wider networks to distribute information

Realizing global biodiversity and Nature Positive goals

Deeper connection to the pleasure of being connected to each other and Nature.

Murmuration Campaigns

What is the seed we are planting?

We will generate campaigns that are rooted in action generated from our AskNature Hive and Co-labs and mobilize audiences through a range of outlets.

Inspiration to act and bring forth nature-inspired solutions

What sprouts in the Murmuration?

Identification of the leverage points and the "simple rules" of coordination to create a murmuration

Effective communication channels to streamline work and outreach

What fruit does it bear?

Focused and strategic change to a system

Powerful imagery and storytelling to raise awareness of hope-fueled action

Seeding Ideas

What is the seed we are planting?

We will cultivate innovative ideas that inspire and drive forward our mission.

Nurturing creativity and forward-thinking to address challenges and seize opportunities

What sprouts from the Ideas?

A culture of innovation and continuous improvement

Collaborative brainstorming

Prototyping and testing of new concepts

What fruit does it bear?

Breakthrough solutions

Dynamic adaptability and resilience

A thriving community of creative thinkers

Trees communicate with each other through a **mycorrhizal network** by exchanging nutrients, chemical signals, and electrical signals.

Birds in **murmurations** achieve remarkable coordination and cohesion by following simple rules: alignment, separation, and cohesion.

Seeds are dispersed through five primary methods: gravity, wind, water, ballistics, and animals.



How will we know when we are successful?

Measuring our impact.



We know that in nature, thriving occurs through mutualisms in the system. We will use the types of mutualisms as our guide for assessing our impact.



Connect:

We will reach 100,000 people each year through our community, co-labs, and learnings to forward the adoption of Nature-Inspired solutions within their organizations and work.

Through our convenings and Nature-immersive events, we will directly inspire a deep and lasting connection with Nature for 10,000 people annually, leading them to bring Nature's lessons and strategies to life.

Over the next 5 years, we will amplify thought leadership from the 5 annual co-labs and industry roundtables to create nature-inspired solutions that shift our take-make-waste society towards regeneration.



Enable:

Through AskNature we will make biological strategies and innovations accessible to 2 million visitors annually, creating 5 design tools and pathways for design professionals to directly integrate AskNature into their work.

Through our Ray of Hope Accelerator we will shift industry by providing \$5 million in funding for nature-inspired solutions, supporting post-program investments of \$1B+ across alumni companies.

Our Ray of Hope nature-inspired startups and innovations will realize sizable reductions in the footprint of the sectors that have the biggest impact on climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution; chemistry and materials, food & ag, consumer products, fashion, buildings, heavy industry and the ocean economy.

Through AskNature we will build bridges between Indigenous Knowledge holders and Western Science, working together to create at least 100 pieces of TEK content on AskNature.



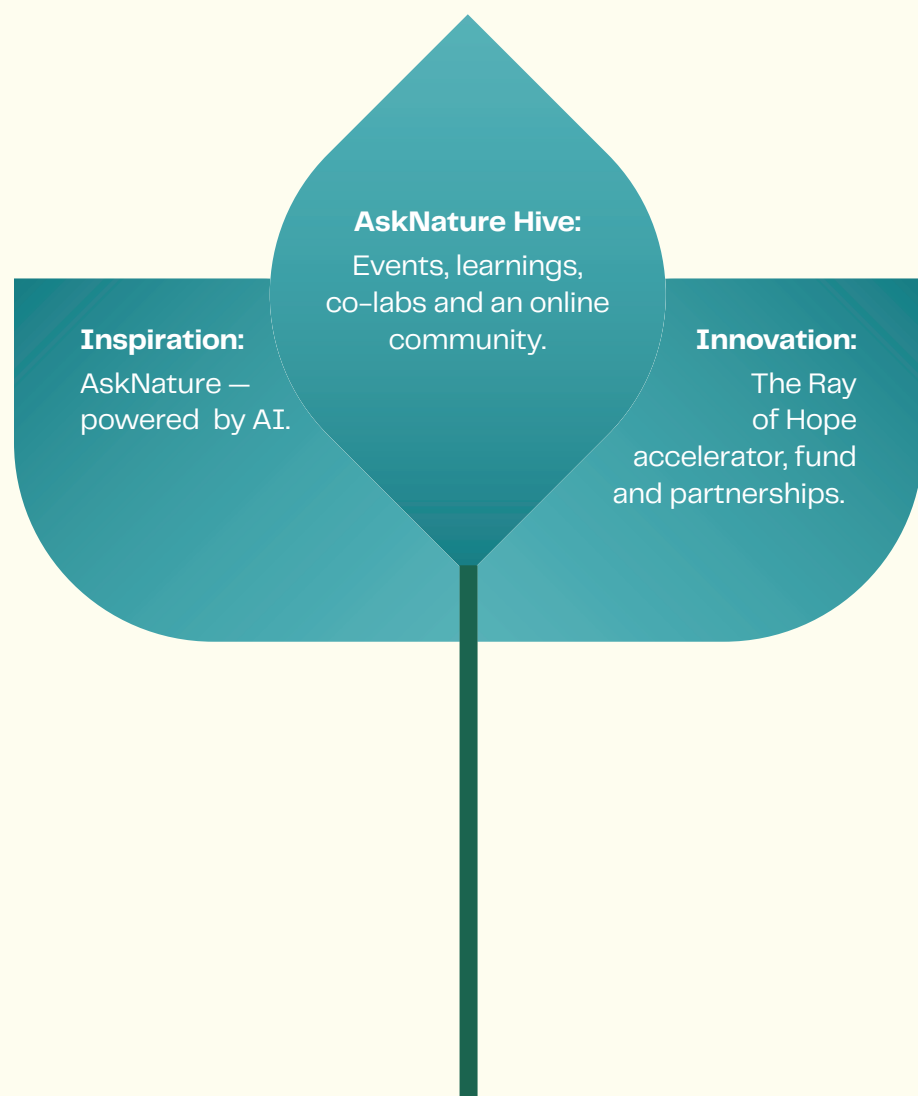
Amplify:

We will reach 1M+ individuals a year through our mission-aligned partnerships to disperse nature-inspired solutions, making biomimicry and hope-fueled actions widely known.

Over the next 5 years, our 5 global multi-media action campaigns will dramatically increase awareness of Nature-inspired solutions and have quantifiable and measurable change in policy, consumer behavior, and sector best practice throughout the world.

Through our engagements with business and corporate leaders, we will showcase 100+ diverse implementations of biomimicry solutions in market products, processes, and systems, helping them to shift from extractive to regenerative.

Operating Structure



Operating Values

Cultivate kindness.

Just like a garden thrives on care, our community flourishes with respect. We commit to nurturing each other with kindness, ensuring new, diverse communities supporting a regenerative ethos and a sense of belonging and welcoming into the biomimicry community.

Spread love, not weeds.

We commit to celebrating every being in our ecosystem, no matter their form or characteristics. Through deep and collaborative partnerships based on aligned outcomes, curiosity and compassion, we will ensure our words and actions help everyone thrive.

Honor the roots.

When sharing knowledge or content, it is essential to credit the original source, recognizing the roots that nourish our understanding. We commit to ensuring all collaboration will be properly and respectfully acknowledged, celebrating the synergies of human creativity.

Stay in the sunlight.

We pledge to concentrate on our capabilities and the positive changes we can effect. We commit to fostering hope and taking decisive action to achieve our goals. By staying focused on what we can do, we will illuminate the path forward and drive meaningful change.

Board:

Janine Benyus, Co-founder
Kent Snyder, President
Mary Davidge, Secretary
Erin Rovalo, Treasurer
Angela Nahikian
Jim Bunch
Evelyn Arce Erickson
Daniel Kinzer
Michael Painter

Staff:

Amanda Sturgeon
Miranda Berger
Megan Dwyer
Jen Fredette
Crista Good
Gretchen Hooker
Andrew Howley
Dave Hutchins
Angela Klinefelter
Sarah McInerney
Maelys Renaud
Kat Sitnikova
Collin Unsworth
Jared Yarnall-Shane
Kelli Young

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