



Wrestling Fans International Association (WFIA)

Mission, Vision, Programs, and Strategic Initiatives

Preserving the Past • Supporting the Present • Inspiring the Future

A 501(c)(3) Nonprofit Organization Dedicated to Preserving the History and Heritage of Professional Wrestling

Executive Summary

The Wrestling Fans International Association (WFIA) is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization dedicated primarily to preserving the history, heritage, and traditions of professional wrestling and making that history meaningful and accessible for future generations. The WFIA also honors and supports the people who built the industry through education, recognition, responsible charitable service, scholarships, publications, and collaborative partnerships.

Founded on the belief that professional wrestling history belongs to everyone, the WFIA seeks to serve fans, historians, collectors, researchers, authors, museums, educational institutions, and wrestling organizations around the world. Preservation is the organization's defining charitable focus and the foundation around which its long-term programs and partnerships are built.

Our Mission

The mission of the Wrestling Fans International Association is to preserve, document, promote, and celebrate the history and heritage of professional wrestling while honoring the individuals whose contributions shaped the industry and supporting its future through education, service, and collaboration.

We accomplish this mission through historical preservation, digitization, educational programming, publications, oral-history projects, scholarships, community outreach, responsible benevolence, and partnerships with organizations whose work complements our own.

Our Vision

The Wrestling Fans International Association envisions becoming a nationally and internationally recognized organization for the responsible preservation and interpretation of professional wrestling history.

We strive for a future in which the stories, records, artifacts, photographs, publications, recordings, and personal collections that document professional wrestling are protected from loss and, when legally and ethically appropriate, made accessible for research, education, and public appreciation.

Our Core Values

Preservation

We protect professional wrestling history through responsible acquisition, documentation, conservation, digitization, research, and education.

Integrity

We conduct organizational activities with honesty, professionalism, accountability, transparency, and responsible stewardship of donated funds and materials.

Education

We believe wrestling history should be carefully researched, documented, interpreted, shared, and celebrated.

Collaboration

We believe preservation is a shared responsibility and seek constructive relationships with museums, halls of fame, historians, collectors, authors, educational institutions, and wrestling organizations.

Service

We honor the people who built professional wrestling through recognition, community support, responsible benevolence, and programs that strengthen wrestling's future.

Stewardship

We accept historical materials and financial support with a duty to preserve, document, protect, and use them in ways consistent with the WFIA mission.

About the WFIA

The Wrestling Fans International Association brings together fans, historians, authors, collectors, researchers, photographers, promoters, wrestlers, referees, broadcasters, and other industry professionals who share a passion for preserving professional wrestling's rich heritage.

As a nonprofit organization, the WFIA provides opportunities for members and supporters to participate directly in preservation, education, research, charitable service, and community engagement.

Organizational Programs

Wrestling Heritage Preservation Fund

The WFIA proposes to establish a Wrestling Heritage Preservation Fund dedicated to protecting historically significant wrestling materials before they are lost, dispersed, damaged, or discarded.

Subject to board-approved policies, available funding, and project review, the fund may support:

- Acquisition of historically significant wrestling memorabilia and archival materials
- Preservation and conservation of rare documents and aging collections
- Conservation and digitization of photographs, film, video, and audio
- Archival storage supplies and appropriate preservation equipment
- Historical research, cataloging, and documentation
- Museum-quality preservation and exhibition projects

Historical Collection and Preservation

The WFIA seeks to identify, evaluate, acquire, preserve, and responsibly steward historically significant materials, including:

- Championship belts and significant ring-used or ring-worn artifacts
- Event programs, posters, magazines, newsletters, and promotional materials
- Contracts, correspondence, match records, research files, and organizational records
- Photographs, negatives, slides, film, video, and audio recordings
- Personal collections and estates with meaningful historical value

Before actively soliciting large collections, the WFIA should adopt a formal Collections and Acquisition Policy defining what the organization accepts, declines, purchases, borrows, or receives as a gift; how ownership and provenance are documented; how duplicates and restricted materials are handled; and who has authority to approve acquisitions.

Digital Preservation Initiative

Many wrestling-related paper records, photographs, tapes, films, and other media are deteriorating. The WFIA will work to digitize fragile historical materials for preservation and research, subject to ownership, copyright, donor restrictions, privacy considerations, and available resources.

- High-resolution scanning of paper records, photographs, posters, and publications
- Digital restoration when appropriate and historically responsible
- Conversion and preservation of film, video, and audio
- Creation of archival-quality digital master files and working access copies
- Cataloging, metadata creation, backup, and long-term digital storage

Oral History Project

Every generation of professional wrestling carries firsthand stories that may never appear in published histories. The WFIA will seek to record and preserve interviews with:

- Wrestlers
- Promoters
- Referees
- Managers
- Broadcasters and ring announcers
- Photographers

- Historians and researchers
- Fans and family members

Interview releases, permissions, preservation standards, and appropriate access conditions should be established before recordings are published or deposited in the archive.

Digital Wrestling Archive

The WFIA proposes to develop a professionally maintained, searchable digital wrestling history archive. The archive may include materials such as:

- Championship and territory histories
- Event results and historical timelines
- Rare publications and research collections
- Biographical and oral-history materials
- Photographs and promotional materials
- Digitized archival collections for which the WFIA has appropriate rights or permissions

Digitization for preservation does not automatically grant the right to publish an item online. Public access should therefore be governed by copyright, ownership, donor agreements, privacy, and other applicable restrictions.

Traveling Historical Exhibits

As collections and resources grow, the WFIA may develop traveling historical exhibits for wrestling conventions, halls of fame, museums, libraries, schools, community festivals, historical societies, and other appropriate venues.

Exhibits may combine artifacts, reproductions, photographs, interpretive text, oral-history excerpts, and digital media to place professional wrestling history in a broader cultural and educational context.

Publications and Educational Content

The WFIA publishes a monthly digital newsletter and other content that may feature wrestling history, territory chronicles, wrestling legends, independent wrestling spotlights, historical research, awards, collector features, book reviews, event coverage, and member contributions.

The organization may also support historical books, research projects, educational materials, seminars, presentations, and other mission-aligned publications.

Wrestling Legacy Program

The WFIA should explore a planned-giving and legacy initiative for collectors, historians, wrestling professionals, families, and supporters who want their historical materials or charitable gifts to continue serving wrestling history after their lifetime.

Subject to legal, financial, and board review, opportunities may eventually include:

- Bequests and other planned charitable gifts
- Designation of the WFIA as a beneficiary where appropriate
- Donation of wrestling collections through estate plans
- Advance collection-planning conversations with collectors and families
- Legacy recognition for donors who choose to support long-term preservation

The purpose of this program would be to help prevent historically significant collections from being unintentionally discarded, fragmented, or lost. Any planned-giving program should be developed with qualified legal and financial guidance and should not provide individualized legal or tax advice.

Benevolence and Community Support

The WFIA believes in supporting the people who built and continue to contribute to professional wrestling. Benevolence remains part of the organization's service commitment, but it is not intended to be the WFIA's defining program.

When assistance is appropriate, the WFIA should use written eligibility, due-diligence, approval, documentation, and disbursement procedures. Whenever practical, assistance should be paid directly to verified service providers or provided through controlled forms of aid rather than unrestricted cash.

The WFIA should also seek collaborative relationships with established organizations whose primary expertise is benevolence. This allows the WFIA to support legitimate needs without unnecessarily duplicating programs, competing for the same charitable dollars, or assuming responsibilities better handled by organizations with deeper experience in that area.

Scholarship Program

The WFIA is developing scholarship opportunities for deserving student-athletes and other eligible students pursuing higher education, subject to board-approved eligibility standards, funding, and selection procedures.

- Academic achievement
- Leadership
- Community service
- Character
- Athletic or extracurricular achievement where relevant

Community Outreach

The WFIA may participate in wrestling conventions, fan festivals, Hall of Fame weekends, educational seminars, historical presentations, charitable fundraising, community service initiatives, and other events that advance its mission.

Collaboration and Partnerships

The Wrestling Fans International Association believes professional wrestling history is best preserved through cooperation and complementary strengths.

We proudly support and collaborate with organizations, institutions, historians, collectors, and preservationists whose work complements our own. The WFIA seeks opportunities to share knowledge, refer appropriate needs, coordinate preservation efforts, and avoid unnecessary duplication of services.

Potential and existing relationships may include:

- Cauliflower Alley Club
- George Tragos/Lou Thesz Professional Wrestling Hall of Fame
- Independent and regional wrestling museums and halls of fame
- Wrestling historical societies
- Wrestling conventions and fan festivals
- Authors, historians, researchers, collectors, and preservationists
- Libraries, archives, museums, universities, and other educational institutions
- Community and charitable organizations

Together, we can preserve far more than any one organization can accomplish alone.

Governance and Preservation Standards

Before the WFIA publicly solicits significant historical collections or launches a large-scale digital archive, the Board should adopt written policies that protect donors, the organization, and the historical record.

Priority policies should include:

- Collections and Acquisition Policy, including scope, provenance, appraisal, acceptance authority, loans, deaccession, and handling of duplicates
- Gift and Donor Agreement standards clarifying ownership, restrictions, permitted uses, and whether copyright or reproduction rights are transferred
- Digitization and Digital Preservation standards covering file formats, metadata, backups, storage, and preservation copies
- Copyright, Reproduction, and Public Access Policy distinguishing preservation from publication and online distribution
- Physical Storage, Security, Insurance, and Disaster Preparedness standards
- Oral History consent, release, privacy, and access procedures
- Benevolence eligibility, due-diligence, approval, payment, documentation, and conflict-of-interest procedures
- Conflict-of-Interest and ethics procedures for acquisitions, purchases, donations, and partnerships

These policies should be developed before the organization makes promises it cannot yet operationally support. Growth should follow a deliberate sequence: suggest, digest, test, measure, and then expand.

Long-Term Strategic Goals (2026–2035)

- Become a nationally and internationally recognized organization for professional wrestling history preservation and education.
- Establish and responsibly administer the Wrestling Heritage Preservation Fund.
- Develop a comprehensive, professionally maintained, searchable digital wrestling history archive.
- Build a documented physical collection according to board-approved acquisition and preservation standards.
- Develop a sustained oral-history program that records and protects firsthand accounts from across professional wrestling.
- Create traveling educational and museum-quality exhibits as resources allow.
- Develop the Wrestling Legacy Program and a responsible planned-giving framework.
- Support wrestling veterans through responsible benevolence efforts and collaborative partnerships with established organizations.
- Develop sustainable scholarship opportunities based on available funding and board-approved criteria.
- Grow membership throughout the United States and internationally.
- Build collaborative relationships with wrestling organizations, museums, archives, libraries, historians, collectors, and educational institutions worldwide.
- Pursue grants, sponsorships, donations, and partnerships that directly advance the WFIA mission without allowing funding opportunities to dictate or dilute that mission.

Phased Implementation

Phase I: Define and Protect

- Board review and adoption of mission, vision, values, and strategic priorities

- Update the WFIA website and public messaging to clearly communicate the preservation-focused nonprofit mission
- Develop collections, donor, copyright, digitization, benevolence, and conflict-of-interest policies
- Assess current storage, technology, staffing, volunteer, insurance, and financial capacity

Phase II: Pilot and Measure

- Begin with a limited number of preservation projects and donated collections
- Pilot oral-history and digitization workflows
- Create a basic catalog and preservation inventory
- Test one or more small historical displays at conventions or partner events
- Measure cost, staff/volunteer time, preservation needs, public engagement, and donor response

Phase III: Expand Responsibly

- Expand collection solicitation only after storage and stewardship capacity are demonstrated
- Develop the searchable digital archive in stages
- Seek preservation grants, sponsorships, institutional partnerships, and planned gifts
- Grow traveling exhibits and educational programming
- Review strategic goals annually and revise measurable targets as experience and resources grow

How You Can Support the WFIA

Supporters can help preserve professional wrestling history by:

- Becoming a WFIA member
- Making tax-deductible donations where permitted by law
- Sponsoring approved preservation projects
- Donating or discussing the future stewardship of historical collections
- Volunteering professional, research, archival, technical, or event skills
- Sharing historical research and documentation
- Participating in oral-history interviews
- Attending WFIA events and educational programs
- Promoting the organization's preservation mission

Every contribution helps ensure that professional wrestling's history is documented, protected, and carried forward.

Join Our Mission

Professional wrestling's greatest stories deserve to be preserved.

Its pioneers deserve to be remembered.

Its history deserves to be protected.

Together, we can ensure that the legacy of professional wrestling continues to educate, inspire, and connect generations to come.

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