

2007-2010
Strategic Plan
of the
International Institute

3654 S. Grand Blvd.
St. Louis, MO 63118

Adopted: January 18, 2007



**INTERNATIONAL
INSTITUTE**
SAINT LOUIS

INTRODUCTION

Immigration is changing the face of America. Falling fertility and mortality rates in the US have produced an environment in which immigration is a key factor in economic expansion. From a low of 4.7% in 1970, the number of foreign-born individuals grew to nearly 13% of the total US population by 2005.¹

These newcomers represent a strong, positive force for growth. First and foremost, we will rely on them to fill economic niches, from high tech, to entrepreneurship, to workers for our growing service industries. They are a growing segment of our community's homebuyers, shoppers, taxpayers – and voters.

But, timely and successful integration of these newcomers presents challenges. Anti-immigrant hostilities threaten legal and illegal newcomers alike. Due to fears of additional terrorist attacks, controversy about how to best control our borders exacerbates the situation. And inadequate funding for English classes and other integrative services tie the hands of those who want to help.

In any case, for St. Louis to reach its full potential as a community and as a region, all of us must learn to live together, communicate, appreciate our cultural heritages, and resolve conflicts. Immigrants are central to the economic and social expansion of a region; at the same time, the cultural diversity they introduce is very attractive to the “new Mainstream”—creative young people from all backgrounds whose presence is also central to building a dynamic, fast-growing system.

The mission of the International Institute has never before been so vital to the growth of our region, state and nation. The Institute's deep roots and vast multicultural experience mean that the agency plays a critical role in providing services and building public appreciation of immigrants' contributions. By integrating newcomers into the wider system we can reach the Institute's vision of a “*thriving community with an ethnically diverse and engaged citizenry.*”

¹ Doris Meissner, Deborah W. Meyers, Demetrios G. Papademetriou, and Michael Fix, “Immigration and America's Future: A New Chapter,” Migration Policy Institute, September 2006; www.migrationpolicy.org.

I: PURPOSE OF THE PLAN

This strategic plan for the period of 2007 – 2010 is moving the International Institute toward its vision as stated above. It does so by affirming the Institute’s mission and core values and setting its goals and strategies. It is the blueprint for the agency’s future, providing a coherent framework for developing programs and assessing progress both inside and outside the agency.

The Institute, an 88-year-old charitable agency, is a member of the United Way of Greater St. Louis and the US Committee for Immigrants & Refugees. At the beginning of the plan period, the agency’s annual budget is approximately \$5 million. The agency’s services and its structure are complex. In addition to the challenges faced by every non-profit agency operating in today’s uncertain environment, the Institute must respond to wave after wave of immigration by making frequent adaptations as well as conducting on-going planning.

II. PROCESS

The plan was formally adopted by the Board of Directors at its meeting on January 18, 2007.

To establish the key assumptions of the strategic plan, the Planning and Programs Committee of the Board of Directors² utilized a variety of private and government documents as well as figures from the 2000 US Census and 2005 update. To identify opportunities and threats, the Board committee, working with senior staff,³ conducted an external assessment with 15 representatives from the arts, social services, government, business, and other non-profits to assess assumptions about the environment during the period of the plan. Using information gathered from a full staff meeting, they also identified other aspects of the agency’s strengths and weaknesses.

Following plan approval, the Committee will continue to establish measurable outcomes for plan strategies, and management is identifying

² List of members of Planning and Program Committee (Board/management committee) included in the Appendix.

³ List of Staff Strategic Planning Committee included in Appendix.

appropriate measurement tools, a process which should be completed by March 15, 2007. The Committee will meet at least annually to review progress and to make plan modifications as necessary.

III. VISION, MISSION AND CORE VALUES

Vision

A thriving community with an ethnically diverse and engaged citizenry.

Mission

To strengthen the St. Louis community by helping immigrants and their families become secure and successful Americans and by promoting the value of ethnic diversity in the social, cultural and economic life of the region.

Core Values

- Multicultural Competence
- Ethnic Diversity
- Community Partnering
- Global Perspective
- Service Focus
- Entrepreneurial Leadership
- Integrity

IV: GOALS AND STRATEGIES

1. To be a provider of a continuum of superior quality services for immigrants and their families

- 1.1. Provide survival adjustment services to newcomers and their families
- 1.2. Provide specialized services to those with complex needs
- 1.3. Transition immigrants from dependence on survival and specialized services to long-term self-sufficiency
- 1.4. Support immigrant efforts to build a strong, positive group identity and to preserve their arts and other forms of heritage
- 1.5. Advance the long-term, sustainable self-sufficiency of individuals and families

2. To be a leader in building a stronger, positive two-way relationship between the foreign-born and the wider community

- 2.1. Engage all St. Louisans in experiences that build appreciation for their many cultural traditions and for the contributions of immigrant communities
- 2.2. Strengthen linguistic and cultural communication for individuals and entities at the local, national and international levels
- 2.3. Empower ethnic communities to engage in greater participation in the social, political and economic fiber of the mainstream community

3. To be a leader in creating positive systemic changes

- 3.1. Provide leadership and participate in forces for positive change through local, statewide and nationally-based activities
- 3.2. Advocate and educate on behalf of sound public policy and funding leading to admission, resettlement and fair treatment of immigrants in the US as well as to protection of refugees worldwide
- 3.3. Enable the community-at-large to be more knowledgeable about immigrants, immigration and diversity issues and about the agency, itself

4. *To ensure the long-term stability of the International Institute for the benefit of the St. Louis region*

4.1. Provide for a diverse, knowledgeable and engaged Board of Directors

4.2. Generate more financial and non-financial resources

4.3. Enhance the agency's presence in the community

4.4. Operate in a legal, professional and ethical manner

4.5. Plan for the future

Service • Leadership • Partnership

Since 1919, the International Institute has been helping immigrants and their families become strong and well-connected St. Louisans and has fostered cross-cultural understanding.

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