

CREATING A MORE PROSPEROUS REGION FOR ALL • CREATING A MORE



International Institute of St. Louis

# STRATEGIC PLAN

2025-2027



INTERNATIONAL  
INSTITUTE  
SAINT LOUIS



# CONTENTS

<b>INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>MISSION, VISION &amp; PHILOSOPHY OF SERVICE</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>OUR STRATEGIC DIRECTION</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>STRATEGIC PRIORITIES</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>CARE</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>AMPLIFY</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>ENGAGE</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>CULTIVATE</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>SUSTAIN</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>CONCLUSION</b>	<b>10</b>

# INTRODUCTION

## WE ARE THE INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE.

We welcome the world to our region. We welcome opportunity. We welcome prosperity.

Their origins are different, yet their stories sound the same. They leave everything they know behind, seeking hope and opportunity in a distant and different land. Here, they thrive.

A new beginning for immigrants and refugees is daunting. Yet for more than a century, the International Institute of St. Louis has been welcoming, and has given hope with a promise for a future of prosperity.

For generations, their success had been our success. They have brought their unique cultures and talents to enhance the quality of life in our communities. From economic impact to cultural transformation, the story of a prosperous region cannot be written without immigrants and refugees.

The interests of refugees and our region are mutually beneficial. Our region needs population growth to revitalize the workforce and ignite prosperity for everyone. Immigrants and refugees need a place of refuge, and the safety and stability of a home. They deserve a place where they are welcomed, valued, and given the dignity to contribute to the development of the region.

Throughout the next three years, the International Institute will play its part in positioning St. Louis and Springfield as welcoming. We will be a facilitator of integration, a connector of resources, a builder of thriving communities, and an ambassador of our region to the world.

The International Institute will serve immigrants and refugees with care, amplify their voices and value, engage community stakeholders as partners in the transformation of our region, cultivate the talent needed to achieve our ambitious goals, and sustain the organization with a diversified financial plan.



# MISSION & VISION

***The International Institute of St. Louis provides opportunities for immigrants and refugees to thrive in order to create a welcoming, prosperous, and healthy region for all.***



# PHILOSOPHY OF SERVICE

***In 2023, the International Institute's staff adopted a Philosophy of Service. These four statements encapsulate our core values, guiding and inspiring us in serving the community to the highest standards.***

We serve with empathy, integrity, and respect.

We are accountable to our clients, our community, and ourselves.

We cultivate our clients' dignity through choice.

We support all aspects of immigrant and refugee journeys from arriving to thriving.



# OUR STRATEGIC DIRECTION

## Situation in 2024

In recent years, the International Institute has experienced dramatic growth—in programs, initiatives, and staff, as well as in demand for services. This growth poses specific challenges but is a necessary response to increasing need: there are more refugees in the world today than there have ever been, and in 2024 the International Institute served one of the largest influxes of new arrivals in its 105-year history. At the same time, resettling more immigrants in our region presents incredible opportunities: to reverse decades of population decline, strengthen our workforce and grow our regional economies, and further enrich the vibrant multiculturalism of our communities.

## Looking to the Future

In 2025-2027, we will embrace these opportunities strategically. In doing so, we will harness the key strengths of our organization, especially its compelling and inspiring mission, dedicated and skilled team, broad base of community supporters, and legacy of success in helping immigrants thrive. We will overcome growth-associated challenges by increasing operational effectiveness and more efficiently deploying financial and human resources; nurturing a positive organizational culture that supports our staff, clients, and community partners; and more actively shaping the public discourse around immigration. And we will seize opportunities to serve our clients and the communities in which we operate, all while laying a foundation for fiscal sustainability that will insulate the agency from shifts in the economic and political landscapes.



CREATING A MORE PROSPEROUS REGION FOR ALL

# STRATEGIC PRIORITIES



***Achieving our strategic goals depends on three key priorities: Resources, Relationships, and Reputation. These overarching priorities flow through the five pillars that constitute our Strategic Plan and their objectives.***

**Resources** pertain to both the financial and human resources necessary to achieve our goals. They encompass how we gain access to resources, how we use those resources, and how we can collaboratively leverage community resources in mutually beneficial ways.

**Relationships** acknowledge that the work of the International Institute intersects with and depends upon the success of others in our community. Our mission depends on mutually beneficial partnerships with other organizations, funders, volunteers, current and former clients, and the community at large. Shaping the public narrative around immigration and fostering multicultural competency in the communities in which we work are also ways of cultivating relationships that are crucial to our success in achieving our mission.

**Reputation** recognizes that the International Institute's expertise in helping immigrants thrive in our region, earned over more than one hundred years of service in this community, positions us as a thought leader. This is an asset that must be leveraged and protected. Our voice on issues affecting immigrants is respected, and we have the responsibility to actively use it to better educate the public and shape narratives on immigration. We must also remain diligent in maintaining our trusted reputation by maintaining high levels of integrity, transparency, and service quality.

**CREATING A MORE PROSPEROUS REGION FOR ALL**



The resettlement and integration services we provide immigrants and refugees remain the core of our work. We will continue to evaluate, innovate, and ensure quality in these essential activities to enable the populations we serve to truly thrive.

***We will provide high-quality, holistic, person-centered, and equitable assistance to all immigrants and refugees and their families.***

# CARE



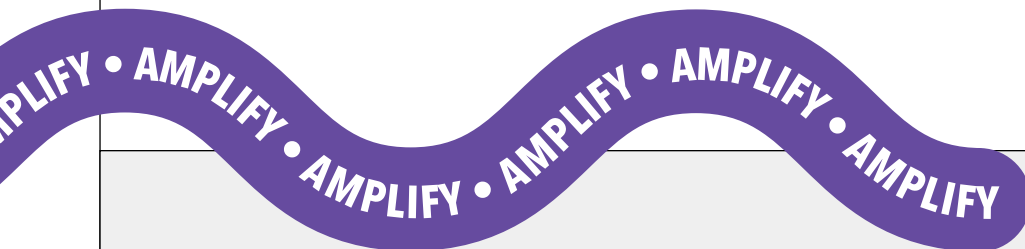
## OVER THE NEXT THREE YEARS, WE WILL:

- Develop a comprehensive, organization-wide assessment and needs-mapping system to support each client throughout their engagement with International Institute programs and services.
- Enhance programs and services to better support the needs of clients of all ages.
- Evaluate the impact of our services, including through ongoing client feedback, to facilitate continuous improvement and exceptional service.

# AMPLIFY

***We will amplify immigrant voices, stories, and impact to be recognized as a trusted leader for regional transformation.***

The International Institute is recognized for its expertise in helping immigrants successfully integrate in St. Louis and beyond. We must leverage its trusted reputation to become a thought leader and the go-to resource for information related to the immigrant experience, ensuring the strongest possible reception of and long-term well-being for immigrants in our region. We have the responsibility to positively shape regional and national narratives surrounding immigration, including by providing a platform for immigrants and refugees tell their own stories.



## OVER THE NEXT THREE YEARS, WE WILL:

- Advocate for immigrant issues at the local, state, and national level.
- Foster a strong understanding of how immigrants and immigration directly benefit all members of the communities in which they settle.
- Continue to highlight stories of immigrant, client, and community successes and model best practices for ethical and survivor-centered storytelling.
- Facilitate immigrants' access to platforms where they can tell their own stories in their own words.
- Nurture International Institute supporters as ambassadors of our work in their communities to multiply our efforts in fostering multiculturalism and make our region more welcoming.





Helping new arrivals thrive and contribute to our communities is a collective effort that can only be accomplished when community partners work together. The International Institute will serve as both a leader and a supporter in these efforts—leveraging our reach and expertise to convene partners when needed while also actively listening to other stakeholders and making space for them to drive action and progress.

# ENGAGE

***We will engage and collaborate with the community, organizations, government, and businesses to position our region as healthy, prosperous, and welcoming to immigrants and refugees.***



## OVER THE NEXT THREE YEARS, WE WILL:

- Foster a strong coalition of community partners working together to provide holistic, wraparound support for immigrants; cooperatively resolve community issues, including safety and crime; and ensure the areas we serve are perceived as safe and welcoming for all.
- Expand collaborative efforts to advocate for immigrants at a community level, including by actively learning from community leaders about their immigration-related concerns and answering questions they have or hear about in their communities.
- Partner with other organizations to annually convene community stakeholders to address challenges that immigrants face and how to overcome them.
- Support capacity building in other organizations so that they qualify for and receive funding to support immigrants, allowing our communities to meet increasing demand for services, programs, and experiences while maintaining high levels of quality.
- Implement a plan for the business community to play a role in promoting the value of immigrants and ensuring the community is welcoming, prosperous, and healthy.
- Ensure that current and former International Institute clients are meaningfully included in stakeholder engagement activities, and that their voices and experiences inform collective and collaborative actions.

***We will cultivate the well-being and capacity of the International Institute's team.***

# CULTIVATE

The International Institute's work relies on the dedication, expertise, and compassion of our team. Recognizing that successful people are critical for successfully achieving our mission, we will intentionally focus on supporting the well-being of our team and improving the organizational systems and resources on which they rely.



## OVER THE NEXT THREE YEARS, WE WILL:

- Implement transparent and efficient inter- and intra-departmental processes, procedures, and clear priorities and communication.
- Improve investments in professional development and continuing education for staff at all levels.
- Deepen staff support and well-being by offering competitive and equitable compensation and benefits and furthering efforts to foster a positive and uplifting organizational culture.
- Position the International Institute as an attractive employer of choice in the regions where it operates.
- Enhance efforts to attract, develop, and retain a talented, dedicated corps of employees, leaders, and volunteers.



# SUSTAIN

***We will ensure the sustainability of the organization through diversified funding strategies to support the agency, its clients, and programs.***

To ensure the International Institute is able to provide quality services for the next 100 years, we will continue efforts to secure diversified and sustainable revenue and funding, while also exercising sound and strategic fiscal stewardship of existing resources. Successfully shifting our funding ratio toward unrestricted and non-grant sources will insulate the agency from political and economic circumstances and ensure that our services are available to all who need them.

## OVER THE NEXT THREE YEARS, WE WILL:

- Expand our donor base.
- Continue to develop earned revenue programs that support and complement the International Institute mission.
- Tailor our fee-structure to sustainably support quality service while ensuring fair access to all in need.
- Produce a budget surplus that can fund an endowment, ensuring a stable and long-term supply of independent funding to support consistent and equitable program and service delivery.
- Continue to exercise responsible and transparent fiscal management and procurement practices to ensure the preservation and growth of existing resources.



# CONCLUSION

By the end of 2027, our region will be recognized across the country for its unique approach to welcoming and resettling immigrants and refugees. The impact that immigrants and refugees have on the region will be a common piece of the story that St. Louis and Springfield are welcoming and prosperous. Community stakeholders will be more engaged in transforming the community by attracting, welcoming, and resettling refugees and immigrants. There will be a trend reversal in population decline and increased participation of our new arrivals in the region's development.

***We are the International Institute, and we welcome opportunity for the region.***

