



TAPPING OUR ROOTS  
REACHING THE SKY



strategic plan • 2019 • 2020 • 2021



## Letter from the Executive Director

Dear Friends

This IAIA strategic plan, covering the period of 2019-2021, coincides with the 50th anniversary of impact assessment (IA) as a legally recognized planning tool, and the 40th anniversary of IAIA as an organization.

As we move further into the 21st century, major impacts from development are cumulatively altering climate, the biosphere, human health and welfare, and social structures. Global deforestation and desertification, the loss of biodiversity, the deterioration of freshwater and marine systems, the degradation of agricultural systems, and planetary toxification are all accelerating. These are changes that especially imperil Indigenous and impoverished populations, and have impacts on gender rights and cultural heritage that were not recognized a half century ago.

IA methodologies and legal processes can help address these challenges, as well as help mitigate against unplanned and potentially adverse effects from new technological developments, e.g., in biotechnology, nanotechnology and artificial intelligence.

IAIA needs to pick up the mantle and serve as a strong advocate for IA, not only within the profession but also within the wider international arena and on the public stage. It is my hope that this strategic plan will help bolster IAIA's abilities to do its important work and better position it as a leader in the global community, both in the public and private sectors.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read "David Bancroft". The signature is stylized and fluid.

David Bancroft

# Introduction

The International Association for Impact Assessment (IAIA) is quickly approaching its 40th anniversary as an organization. It has had as many Boards of Directors and Presidents as it has had anniversaries, as well as five Executive Directors. In addition, while some of the people, programs, and projects of IAIA may have changed over the years, the one remaining constant is IAIA's purpose. As stated in its Articles of Incorporation and reaffirmed in its 2008 bylaws, IAIA's purpose is "the betterment of society through the encouragement of improved policymaking processes concerning the analysis of the future consequences of present decisions."

In 2018, the IAIA Board of Directors made the decision to hire an Executive Director in Washington, DC, while maintaining and promoting its staff at Headquarters. Through times of change, it is often good practice for an organization to look to the past to ensure it is keeping with its history and heritage. The IAIA Board of Directors has done just that in taking a fresh examination of the organization's Vision and Mission Statements in the context of its founding documents.

"Tapping Our Roots. Reaching the Sky" presents refreshed vision and mission statements that should serve IAIA well as it moves boldly into the 2020s.





# Purpose of the plan

IAIA was organized in 1980 to bring together researchers, practitioners, and users of various types of impact assessment from around the world. IAIA involves people from multiple disciplines and professions. Our members include corporate planners and managers, public interest advocates, government planners and administrators, private consultants and policy analysts, and university and college instructors and their students. IAIA has members from more than 120 nations and holds annual conferences and events around the world to promote best practices in impact assessment.

IAIA's Strategic Plan 2019-2021 was approved by the Board of Directors to guide the Association's work over the next three years.

The Strategic Plan 2019-2021 will help IAIA:

-  **Increase the value of membership, thereby growing the membership in numbers and geographic composition.**
-  **Improve its profile to be seen as the leading global network of impact assessment professionals.**
-  **Achieve greater impact and influence in the field of impact assessment.**
-  **Maintain the financial sustainability of the association.**
-  **Create a better world by being a proponent for the use of impact assessment by public and private decision makers.**

Experience at IAIA has demonstrated that projects and activities with a champion are the most successful. Therefore, to the extent possible, each activity identified in this document will eventually have a champion identified who will lead the project or be significantly involved. This may be the IAIA Executive Director, a member of the IAIA staff, a member of the IAIA Board of Directors, or an IAIA Task Force. These champions will be accountable through the IAIA Executive Director to the IAIA Board of Directors for this activity.

IAIA welcomes the involvement of its members in assisting with projects that help the association achieve its objectives. Please contact IAIA staff should you wish to become involved in any of the priority activities identified in this Strategic Plan.





The Strategic Plan is anchored in IAIA's vision, mission, and values. It is important to recognize these up front to see the links to the five strategic areas and goals.

## IAIA's character: Our mission, vision, values

### IAIA'S VISION

**A just and sustainable world for people and the environment.**

*Simply put, an organization's vision clearly states what it aspires for the world.*

### IAIA'S MISSION

**IAIA provides the international forum to advance best practice and innovation in impact assessment and advocates for its expanded use for the betterment of society and the environment.**

*The mission statement describes, in general terms, what an organization does to help achieve its vision.*

### IAIA'S VALUES

**IAIA promotes the application of integrated and participatory approaches to impact assessment, conducted to the highest professional standards.**

**IAIA believes the assessment of environmental, social, economic, cultural, and health implications of proposals to be a critical contribution to sound decision-making processes and to equitable and sustainable development.**

**IAIA is committed to the promotion of sustainability, freedom of access to information, and rights of citizens to have a voice in decisions that affect them. When we assess the impact of policies, plans, programs, or projects, we promote the free flow of complete, unbiased and accurate information to decision makers and affected parties. We believe that impact assessments should be inclusive and comprehensive, addressing the broad range of environmental, social, and health impacts. Respect for human rights and human dignity should underpin all assessments. We acknowledge that we have a duty of care to both present and future generations.**

#### FOR MORE DETAILS

In addition to our values, IAIA promotes a number of specific ethical and professional responsibilities. See [www.iaia.org/about.php](http://www.iaia.org/about.php) for more information.

# Strategic focus areas and goals

The IAIA Board and staff worked for over six months in the [development of this plan](#). The core elements were derived from a 360-degree SWOT analysis (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats) of IAIA utilizing a discussion guide questionnaire with over 30 Board members, staff, partners, stakeholders, and members.

From the results of the analysis, it became clear that IAIA needs to dedicate more resources to defining its brand, communicating its value to a wider audience, and widening the funding base for its activities. Utilizing the conclusions of the 360-degree SWOT analysis, and based on IAIA vision and mission statements, these [five strategic focus areas](#) were derived.

Strategic focus areas are themes and directions that IAIA may want to pursue in the coming years. They are broad categories that may, at times, combine a number of disparate objectives to achieve a larger purpose within the organization.

Goals identify objectives to be achieved within the plan time frame. IAIA will strive to achieve the listed goals over the next three years. The goals all support advancement in our five strategic focus areas, thereby advancing the vision and mission of the association. To the extent possible, the goals will be SMART: specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound. Where goal achievement cannot be quantified, efforts will be made to assess such goals qualitatively.

#1

## Elevating IAIA's profile on the world stage

IAIA's primary objective is to increase the use of impact assessment (IA) as a strategic decision-making tool in both the public and private sectors. While much of its necessary work is typically done just among the professional impact assessment community IAIA needs to take a prominent stance in advocating the role and benefit of IA to strategic decision makers, policy makers, and the general public. The adoption of a more publicly prominent profile will benefit IA practice and the constituencies that IA has historically been intended to help. In addition, it will benefit IAIA by ensuring that the purpose and role of our association is clearly known and valued beyond the current membership and partners.

- Goal 1.1** Defining IAIA's "brand" among the constellation of international environmental, social, and health organizations.
- Goal 1.2** IAIA to become the "Voice of Impact Assessment" with quotes, references, and/or related professional coverage in international media.
- Goal 1.3** Increase exposure through social media with "likes" and "followers."
- Goal 1.4** Establish an IAIA Executive Office in Washington DC.
- Goal 1.5** Create a virtual "Center for Excellence for Impact Assessment" to advance the concept of impact assessment into the next 50 years.





#2

## Extending IAIA's reach and depth

Members are the strength of IAIA. This focus area examines membership from both an individual and organizational perspective as well as evaluates mechanisms for membership growth. Overall, it intends to (1) understand and enhance existing membership value, (2) develop new membership streams, especially at the organizational level, and (3) promote membership growth.

- Goal 2.1** Increase Individual membership.
- Goal 2.2** Increase Corporate memberships.
- Goal 2.3** Create new Government, Multilateral Bank, and Nonprofit member category.
- Goal 2.4** Expand Student memberships and consider creation of a Senior membership category.

#3

## Empowering IAIA's partnerships and collaborations

IAIA has built a solid base upon which to expand its potential working relationships with other regional and global organizations. IAIA will continue to work with existing partners, but it will also strive to expand its network to find new opportunities with organizations that IAIA has not worked with in the past. This focus area also supports the aims of focus area #1, to grow IAIA's global presence.

- Goal 3.1** Identify and secure annual conference two years in advance by exploring alternative organizational methods.
- Goal 3.2** Organize one or two regional symposia annually in collaborations with other organizations.
- Goal 3.3** Take a more strategic focus on Affiliate relationships.
- Goal 3.4** Take a more strategic focus on the development of partnerships and activities.

#4

## Enhancing IAIA's knowledge sharing and capacity-building mandate

IAIA has a clear mandate to educate and share knowledge among practitioners and interested parties in the field of impact assessment. There is a continual need for training and knowledge sharing across the globe as countries strive to ensure sustainable development. IAIA achieves this mandate through its events, such as training at annual global conferences and regional symposia. However, there are more opportunities for IAIA in this focus area, and it will identify other avenues to deliver this service.

- Goal 4.1** Expand training and further develop the Professional Development Program (PDP).
- Goal 4.2** Expand the Webinar Program.
- Goal 4.3** Continue to develop the IAIA website.
- Goal 4.4** Translate key documents into targeted languages.
- Goal 4.5** Continue to improve the IAPA journal impact factor.

#5

## Ensuring IAIA's organizational sustainability

As a not-for-profit organization, with no endowments or long-term/annual funding source, IAIA is reliant upon very limited sources of revenue. As such, the association needs to carefully manage its operational budget and investments to ensure a viable future beyond the next fiscal year. Aside from sound financial management, many of the new products/services that IAIA will embark upon over the next three years will be implemented with a view to expand the value of the association and to diversify funding streams. The third leg of the stability stool is good governance. IAIA will review its governance structure and policies to ensure that it has a firm foundation to advance its mission.

- Goal 5.1** Diversify income streams from a wider section of the world's economy.
- Goal 5.2** Manage the Financial Sustainability Fund.
- Goal 5.3** Modernize financial processes to better track cash flows and support fund raising activity.
- Goal 5.4** Strengthen IAIA internal governance structure.



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