ISFAA Strategic Plan 2023-2027

Organization of this Strategic Plan

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1. Overview of the Strategic Planning Process

Developing the Indiana Student Financial Aid Association (ISFAA) Strategic Plan was guided by the following activities beginning in late 2021 and concluding with the unveiling of the Strategic Plan at the *ISFAA Winter Conference* in March 2023:

- Obtained ISFAA Executive Board approval and sponsorship for a new ISFAA Strategic Plan using Stephen Hundley and Caleb Keith from IUPUI as external consultants to facilitate the process
- Convened a specially-appointed Strategic Plan Task Force to develop ISFAA's Strategic Plan (see *Appendix A* for ISFAA Strategic Plan Task Force Membership)
  - This Task Force met bi-monthly from January 2022 through November 2022
  - Subgroups of the Task Force met in between meetings to work on areas of the Strategic Plan
- Conducted an environmental scan of issues confronting both higher education and associations (see *Appendix B* for ISFAA Environmental Scan Information)
- Conducted a situational analysis of ISFAA involving association members
- Clarified and/or updated the mission, vision, and values of ISFAA
- Developed goals, objectives, and metrics aligned with the future directions of ISFAA
- Engaged the ISFAA Executive Board in a review of the draft plan, including a discussion of strategic plan implementation implications and considerations
- Produced the final Strategic Plan document for ISFAA
- Communicated the new Strategic Plan to ISFAA membership at the *ISFAA Winter Conference* in March 2023

2. ISFAA Mission

The purpose of the Indiana Student Financial Aid Association (ISFAA) is to cultivate talent of financial aid administrators in Indiana, promote communication and collaboration among its members across the state, and advance and share best and promising practices consistent with standards in the field.

Supporting this mission are activities designed to:

1. Enhance the professional knowledge and capabilities of financial aid administrators and others involved with the administration of financial aid through training opportunities, information sharing, regular conferences, and networking activities.
2. Facilitate the exchange of information and ideas among individual members, institutions, organizations, and sponsors of student financial aid funds in Indiana.
3. Promote an awareness of emerging and enduring practices related to financial aid awarding strategies, coupled with federal and state policies.
4. Educate and support students and families regarding financial aid policies by helping with FAFSA filing, financial literacy training, and other educational opportunities.

3. ISFAA Vision

ISFAA's vision is to be a dynamic, affordable, broadly representative member-driven organization providing advocacy, mentorship, and professional development for its members to promote and advance the field of financial aid administration in the state of Indiana through intentional engagement with students, families, and other stakeholders.

4. ISFAA Values

- Integrity, transparency, and honesty in interactions among members and stakeholders
- Diversity, equity, and inclusion as emphases within, and throughout, organizational offerings and interactions
- Collaboration, support, and collegiality among, and for, members
- Education, training, and development for members and constituent groups

5. ISFAA Strategic Goals and Objectives

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Overview of ISFAA Strategic Goals:

1. Increase and enhance ISFAA membership and member engagement by promoting the distinctiveness and benefit of ISFAA to various association stakeholders.

2. Offer ongoing professional development opportunities to meet ISFAA members' needs.

3. Embed diversity, equity, and inclusion within and throughout ISFAA operations, including the leadership pipeline and infrastructure.

4. Increase outreach and cultivate partnerships to promote student aid and postsecondary education's benefits to ISFAA's stakeholders in various communities and contexts.

5. Create and maintain an infrastructure for sustainability, planning, and fiscal stewardship to support ISFAA's ongoing mission to be an engaging, member-driven association.

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Goal 1: Increase and enhance ISFAA membership and member engagement by promoting the distinctiveness and benefit of ISFAA to various association stakeholders.

Objectives:
1. Develop a membership communication plan
2. Plan and facilitate periodic townhall meetings for membership
3. Schedule and implement regional meetings for membership
4. Develop a system/process to support early involvement of members, including with a detailed list of member benefits and opportunities for engagement
5. Conduct an annual outreach to non-member institutions and individuals to increase association membership
6. Conduct an annual membership survey related to membership engagement and communication

Goal 2: Offer ongoing professional development opportunities to meet ISFAA members' needs.

Objectives:
1. Continue to offer virtual and in-person professional development opportunities (e.g., annual conference, workshops, leadership symposium, training sessions, "lunch and learn" sessions) for association members
2. Conduct annual survey of membership to determine wants and needs related to professional development
3. Establish financial aid groups based on region or student information system (SIS) for additional support and training opportunities
4. Offer financial aid training resources for institutions (e.g., new staff, retreats, refresher)
5. Plan and facilitate at least 5 events in addition to the annual conference that qualify for FAAC Recertification Point Activities
6. Share information from other associations and their conferences (e.g., MASFAA, NASFAA, FSA) with ISFAA membership

Goal 3: Embed diversity, equity, and inclusion within and throughout ISFAA operations, including the leadership pipeline and infrastructure.

Objectives:
1. Diversify Executive Board by implementing leadership building and professional development activities to expand pipeline of volunteers
2. Expand activities focused on diversity, equity, and inclusion issues to grow knowledge and encourage activism (e.g., workshops, conference sessions, keynote speakers, monthly newsletter)
3. Establish and conduct a regular climate survey of the ISFAA membership on DEI issues
4. Review volunteer form and other forms of data collection (membership, workshop) for inclusion of information on individual diversity

Goal 4: Increase outreach and cultivate partnerships to promote student aid and postsecondary education's benefits to ISFAA's stakeholders in various communities and contexts.

Objectives:
1. Provide MASFAA, NASFAA, and FSA conference updates to the larger membership
2. Plan and facilitate "lunch and learn" opportunities members to share knowledge with those who were unable to participate in larger associations or attend conferences
3. Leverage CHE webinar partnership to provide greater access to resources across association membership and work with VA to propose statewide training (leverage organizational size) for institutions
4. Leverage the association website to provide tool kit of various presentations, materials, and resources available for use by members, high schools constituents, and local partners

Goal 5: Create and maintain an infrastructure for sustainability, planning, and fiscal stewardship to support ISFAA's ongoing mission to be an engaging, member-driven association.

Objectives:
1. Conduct an annual membership survey related to membership engagement and communication
2. Develop an internal audit process
3. Develop a policy and procedures manual
4. Maintain effective and easily accessible archives including but not limited to meeting minutes, checklists, job descriptions, audits, committee reports
5. Plan for and prepare committee chair succession and transition processes
6. Establish a communication plan to non-members, non-renewed members, and new members
7. Monitor, review, and revise, as necessary, the association's investment strategy

6. Suggested Metrics for ISFAA Strategic Plan Goals

The following table outlines suggested metrics to gauge periodic progress on achieving ISFAA Strategic Plan goals.

Goal	Suggested Metrics
1. Increase and enhance ISFAA membership and member engagement by promoting the distinctiveness and benefit of ISFAA to various association stakeholders.	- Number of new members - Number of retained members - Profile of membership - Percentage of member engagement - Unique members engaged (e.g., volunteers, committee composition) - Number of members attending association offerings (e.g., conference, townhalls, regional meetings) - Feedback from members about association's communications
2. Offer ongoing professional development opportunities to meet ISFAA members' needs.	- Number and type of professional development opportunities offered - Number and type of professional development resources/materials provided

Goal	Suggested Metrics
	• Feedback from participants about professional development experiences • Attendance at professional development offerings, including unique individuals • Number of members who earn NASFAA credentials after attending an ISFAA training sessions • Number of events that qualify for FAAC Recertification Point Activities
3. Embed diversity, equity, and inclusion within and throughout ISFAA operations, including the leadership pipeline and infrastructure.	• Profile of membership, committees, and Executive Board (e.g., race, ethnicity, gender, age) • Number of diversity, equity, and inclusion programmatic offerings • Nature of diversity, equity, and inclusion efforts in outreach and advocacy efforts • Audit and review of ISFAA Diversity statement developed by Access, Equity and Diversity (AED) committee
4. Increase outreach and cultivate partnerships to promote student aid and postsecondary education's benefits to ISFAA's stakeholders in various communities and contexts.	• Type of relationships and meetings with policymakers and external stakeholders • Number, type, and nature of relationships and collaborations with other associations and stakeholders for advocacy purposes • Number and type of toolkits and presentations shared publicly • Number of, and attendance at, external education offerings • Number of participants at guidance counselor workshops
5. Create and maintain an infrastructure for sustainability, planning, and fiscal stewardship to support ISFAA's ongoing mission to be an engaging, member-driven association.	• Financial audits • Board and committee member exit interview/survey • Type of protocol documents (e.g., policy and procedure manual) developed and used • Endowment of Pat Wilson Scholarship • Type of documents identified for submission to archives • Feedback obtained from annual membership survey and other association evaluation activities • Review of investment goals and strategy by incoming Board at President's retreat and by outgoing Board at January meeting

7. List of Appendices

- *Appendix A:* ISFAA Strategic Plan Task Force Membership
- *Appendix B:* ISFAA Environmental Scan Information

Appendix A:
ISFAA Strategic Plan Task Force Membership

- Megan Watson (IUPUI; ISFAA President Elect)
- Alex Delonis (Wabash College; ISFAA Training Commissioner
- Joel Short (Notre Dame; ISFAA Internal Operations Commissioner)
- Jennifer Reeves (IU Bloomington; ISFAA Treasurer)
- Kelly McGuire (Trine University; ISFAA Pat Wilson Scholarship Chair)
- Melissa Smurdon (Butler; ISFAA Delegate at Large)
- Vinny Vincent (Franklin College; ISFAA Training Chair)
- Julie Wonderlin (Ivy Tech Terre Haute; ISFAA Past President)
- Rob Wirt (Ball State; ISFAA Past President)
- Steve Queisser (Student Connections; ISFAA Associate Committee Chair)
- Sarah Owen (Ivy Tech; ISFAA Past Treasurer)
- Sarah Soper (IU East; ISFAA Past President/Membership Chair)
- Scott Thum (Indiana Tech; ISFAA Member)
- Tammy Murphey (Indiana Wesleyan University; ISFAA Member)
- Candice Sutliff (Rose-Hulman Institute of Technology; ISFAA Outgoing President)
- Lisa Bridgewater (IUPUI; ISFAA Incoming President)
- Stephen P. Hundley (External Consultant)
- Caleb J. Keith (External Consultant)

Higher Education Issues

1. Focus on unifying student learning through institutional learning outcomes, general education, and "signature" learning experiences leading to improved student success
2. Increasing engagement of students in the teaching and learning process
3. Focus on operational and wraparound support services to address students' holistic development and needs, including culturally-responsive approaches to learning interventions and services
4. Changing student demographics and the need to cultivate a sense of belongingness
5. Focus on aligning institutional activities supportive of Strategic Enrollment Management, with the goal of student success, persistence, and graduation
6. Enriching faculty and staff cultures and environments
7. Research/scholarship productivity, including multidisciplinary knowledge generation
8. Business operations, efficacy, and productivity; need for stewardship of scarce resources
9. Accreditation and public credibility, including societal expectations of higher education
10. Institutions as anchors in their communities
11. COVID-19 ongoing implications, adaptations, and lessons learned/what will "stick" going forward
12. Continued emphasis on data infrastructure, transparency, and disaggregation of data to identify potential equity gaps
13. Ongoing need for professional development resources for faculty and staff
14. Other Concerns:
    a. Concern about cost of a college education
    b. Concern about loan default rate
    c. Concern about evidence of graduates' salaries
    d. Concern about employer and societal expectations of graduates
    e. Concern about the overall value and return-on-investment of a college degree—including skepticism about the purpose of a college education
    f. Concern about the crowded marketplace of postsecondary providers offering easily-substitutable commodities lacking in meaningful distinction or differentiation
15. Future trends:
    a. *The necessity of higher education will grow in prominence:* despite some public skepticism, the aims and purposes of a college education are still valued, including its ongoing contributions to intellectual, cultural, social, economic, technological, and global development
    b. *There are several important priorities for the future, all of which build on prior and current issues and challenges, including:* a focus on quality and opportunity for students; an attention to affordability and value for those making investments in higher education; the need to provide safe and healthy learning environments; and the viability, continuity, and sustainability of institutions themselves
    c. *Institutions will sharpen their focus on equity:* there continues to be the need to close equity gaps, broaden access to those historically underserved by our institutions, and address the needs of the diverse array of students and colleagues increasingly attracted to our campuses

d. *Collaboration and innovation will be imperative for future successes:* fiscal constraints, demographic shifts in the student pipeline, global competition, and multidisciplinary approaches to knowledge creation and dissemination will require administrators, faculty, and staff to rethink traditional approaches, structures, and partnerships to remain vibrant and relevant

e. *The need to embrace complexity and adapt to the pace of change will persist*: heightened stakeholder expectations, technological advances, and pandemic-related disruptions, among other recent influences, have forced the higher education sector to adapt and respond perhaps more swiftly and nimbly than ever; going forward, institutional leaders will need to embrace new ways of accomplishing their missions, while simultaneously holding firm to the values that have made higher education such an enduring, invaluable contributor to society

Association Issues
1. Clarity of mission, purpose, and future directions
2. Sound finances and fiscal health, including diversification of revenue streams and risk management
3. Risk management
4. Competing and complementary resources available through plentiful alternatives
5. Relevancy and the ability to compete in a crowded marketplace
6. Association leadership capacity and talent development
7. Volunteer/member recruitment, engagement, satisfaction, and retention
8. Diversifying membership and leadership profiles
9. Keeping abreast of changes in content, technology, public policy, etc.
10. Navigating the advocacy and professional development roles
11. Identifying, implementing, and evaluating partnerships
12. Offering products and services that members value and are willing to pay for