



Institute-level Strategic Plan: 2024-2028



**It all started
in a tent, in 1949.**

The Aspen Institute was founded in the aftermath of WWII in an age of hope and institution-building when we gathered a group of thinkers and doers from civil society and the business world to discuss nothing less than the future of humanity.

And, for nearly 75 years since, we broadened our reach worldwide, igniting leadership, solutions, and transformation.

Through dialogue and convenings, we have set the conditions for emerging and established leaders to build understanding on some of society's greatest challenges.

With deep expertise in policy solutions, collective impact, values-based leadership, and other methods of driving change, we have supported and enabled these leaders to create new possibilities in their communities and around the world.

And, we have built lifelong relationships with and among those people in our networks, creating community among a growing spectrum of deeply committed leaders.



Since that first convening, we have expanded the assets of the Institute with a commitment to dialogue, leadership, and action.

Programs and partners that address society's greatest challenges

Leadership initiatives and fellowships that catalyze self-reflection and impact

Impactful cross-Institute work in areas such as Economic Opportunity and Climate/Energy

Conferences, seminars, and place-based work in communities around the world

International partners working in 16+ countries

Access to and networks of leaders around the world

600+ mission-driven employees

An engaged board of influential leaders

A reputation for inclusive dialogue and convenings

A historic campus in CO and headquarters in DC

A distinctive aesthetic tradition

A trusted brand



Today's world presents urgent challenges and enormous opportunities.

In response, our calling is to link and leverage our unique constellation of assets in service of a more free, just, and equitable society.

Rise of artificial intelligence

Demographic transitions

Escalating rate of technological change

Polarization and division relating to identity and ideology

Need for economies that work for all

International crises and global instability

Increasingly urgent energy and climate challenges

Eroding public trust



To guide how we link and leverage our assets, we have articulated our Enduring Attributes and crafted an Institute-level Strategic Plan for the next five years.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Our Approach to Strategic Planning | p. 6

Our Enduring Attributes | p. 9

Our Institute-Level Strategic Plan | p. 12

Our Approach to Strategic Planning

Our approach was rooted in a thorough review of our programs and assets across the Institute.

Through collaboration with multiple stakeholder groups—including Program and Staff Leaders, Trustees, and Fellows—we looked at the strengths, needs, and opportunities of the Institute.

Board/Staff Strategic Working Groups

Over the past few years, we organized Working Groups focused on four key areas:

Policy Programs, Leadership, International Partners, and Rising Generations.

Each Working Group was co-chaired by a trustee and a staff leader, and each comprised both trustees and staff representing a variety of programs.

Each process included a wide-ranging and deep review of our assets and recommendations for how best to promote impact, excellence, and accountability across our programs.

Policy Programs

QUESTION EXPLORED

Relying on broad discovery and deep understanding of the complete array of Policy Programs, how might we make the most of our collective impact?

Leadership

QUESTION EXPLORED

How might we expand the reach and impact of the Institute's historic commitment to leadership?

International Partners

QUESTION EXPLORED

What should be our priorities for the growth, sustainability, and impact of our global network of Aspen Institutes?

Rising Generations

QUESTION EXPLORED

How might we further our efforts to include and empower young people across our work and enhance their leadership in the world?

How We Shaped Our Strategic Plan

The Strategic Planning process was led by a Strategic Planning Committee (SPC) and a Steering Committee consisting of trustees and staff leaders (see next page for membership).

The SPC and the Steering Committee engaged in a broad range of conversations and working sessions.

Our approach emphasized cross-Institute collaboration, input from several stakeholder groups, and multiple iterations.

9
months of
listening

50
hours of
interviews

7
time
zones



12 Steering Committee worksessions

11 Senior Staff Leadership worksessions

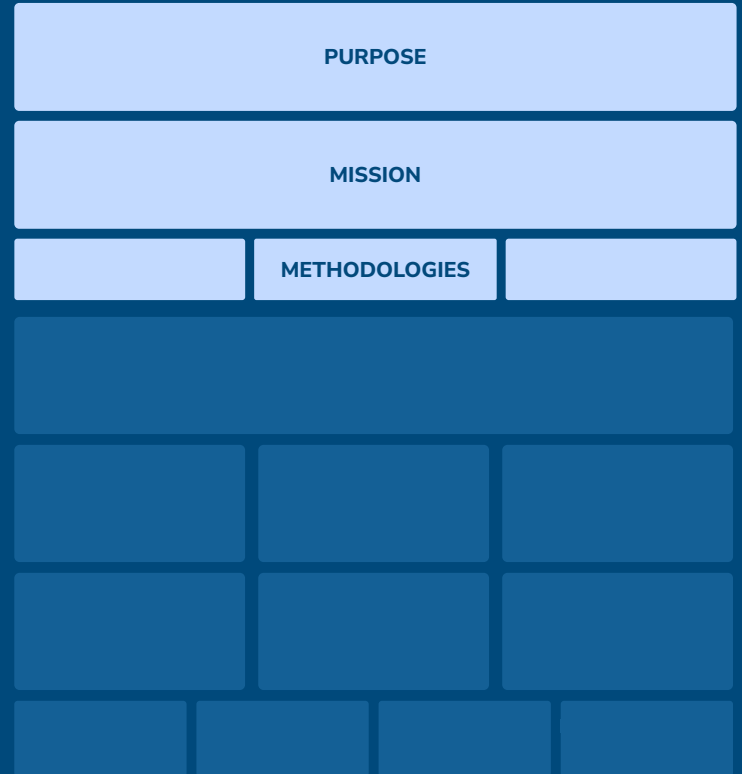
5 Strategic Planning Committee worksessions

4 Board/Staff Strategic Working Groups

Our Enduring Attributes

We started the Strategic Planning process by articulating our Enduring Attributes.

These are the evergreen elements that define why we exist, what we do, and how we do it.



OUR ENDURING ATTRIBUTES

PURPOSE

We ignite human potential to build understanding and create new possibilities for a better world.

MISSION

We drive change through dialogue, leadership, and action to help solve the greatest challenges of our time in service of a more free, just, and equitable society.

METHODOLOGIES

Facilitate dialogue and curate convenings

We convene a broad spectrum of people, with a focus on dialogue, community building, and creative collaboration.

Develop leaders and leadership

We create transformational experiences that enable diverse leaders to discover and refine their approaches—and, through this, we advance the field of leadership.

Enable solutions

We enable powerful, practical, and applicable solutions that accelerate progress, emphasizing co-creation and partnership.

We ignite human potential^A to build understanding^B and create new possibilities^C for a better world.^D

A

Ignite human potential

We create transformational experiences that help people tap into their human capacity for imagination, empathy, and collaboration—harkening back to our humanistic origins.

B

Build understanding

We cultivate the conditions to spark curiosity, deepen knowledge, and connect across differences, so that people engage with issues—and each other—more fully.

C

Create new possibilities

We inspire the breakthroughs and creative solutions—from the personal to the societal—needed to address the greatest challenges of our time.

D

A better world

We hold the optimistic belief that the sum of our work creates more free, just, and equitable societies across the globe.

Our Institute-level Strategic Plan

Inspired by our Enduring Attributes, we built our five-year Strategic Plan.

The plan captures:

OUR VISION

our aspiration for the next five years

IMPACT AREAS

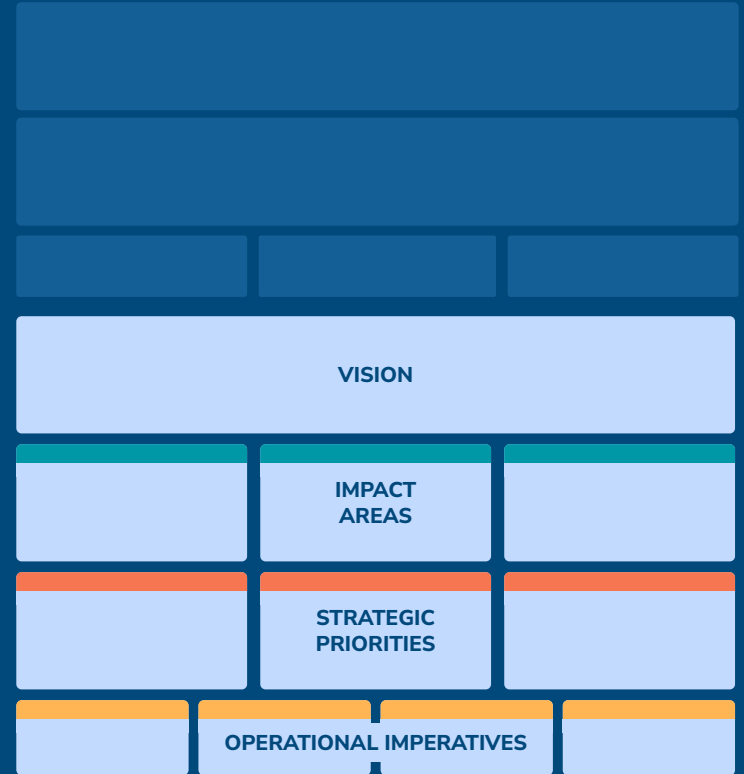
key themes around which we will focus our enterprise efforts

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

the strategic moves we will make to fulfill our vision

OPERATIONAL IMPERATIVES

the key operational actions we will take to strengthen the Institute

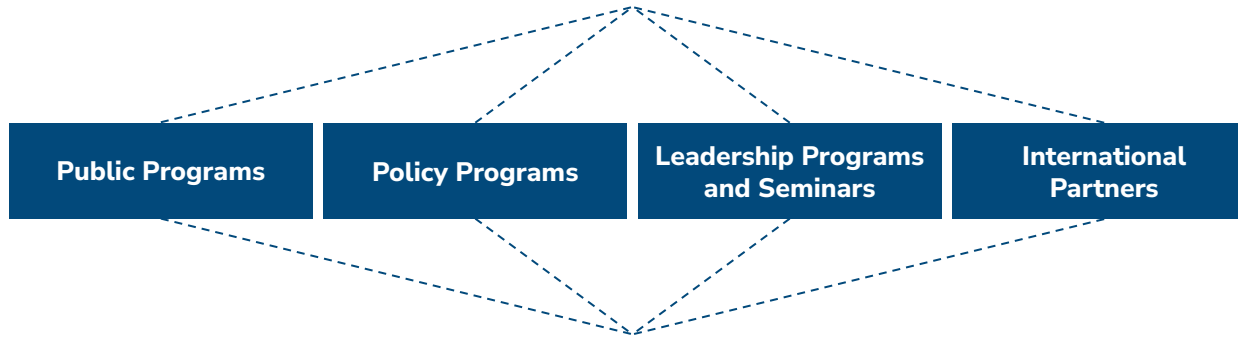


An Institute-level Strategy

Throughout our history, the Institute has led with a spirit of partnership and openness to new ideas.

This ethos continues to drive the diversity and relevance of our initiatives and programs.

The breadth of our work, coupled with our methodologies, is essential to the strength of our impact.



Building on that strength, our plan establishes **strategic priorities at the Institute level** for the next five years.

This approach will help link, leverage, and amplify assets across the Institute to **accelerate our collective impact.**

OUR FIVE-YEAR INSTITUTE-LEVEL STRATEGY

VISION

By 2028, we are a **thriving interconnected community of leaders driving impact across geographies, generations, and viewpoints.**

IMPACT AREAS

Economic Opportunity

Climate and Energy

Societal Trust *(New)*

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

New Impact Area

Leverage our programs, methodologies, and networks to strengthen **Societal Trust**

Bold Move

Establish a community of practice to ignite **Leadership** worldwide

New Focus Audience

Intentionally engage, learn from, and invest in **Rising Generations** to increase our relevance and impact

OPERATIONAL IMPERATIVES

Broaden and deepen engagement with an **invigorated brand**

Connect our communities and programs through **state-of-the-art systems**

Strengthen our vision for a thriving community with a **revitalized campus**

Support our aspirations through a targeted **fundraising campaign**

Strategic Priorities

Our Strategic Priorities outline the three moves we will make to fulfill our vision:

- **A new Impact Area:** Go deep on Societal Trust
- **A Bold Move:** Go big on Leadership
- **A new Focus Audience:** Go strong in our partnership with younger people

For each Strategic Priority, we provide a description as well as a set of new initiatives we will pursue to deliver impact over the next five years. **We will also continue to grow and lift up the many existing programmatic efforts making a difference in each of these areas.**



NEW IMPACT AREA

Leverage our programs,
methodologies, and
networks to strengthen
Societal Trust

For decades, the Institute’s work has reinforced trust between individuals, in institutions, and in sources of information around the world—bringing people from all sectors and disciplines together to advance solutions and develop the leadership of those working to bridge divides.

In an era of rapidly declining trust and of the seismic advancement of artificial intelligence—and building on learnings from organizing our work over the past several years around Impact Areas on Economic Opportunity and Climate and Energy—we are poised to leverage our programmatic expertise and convening power even more purposefully to address society’s growing trust deficit.



NEW IMPACT AREA

Leverage our programs, methodologies, and networks to strengthen **Societal Trust**

PROPOSED NEW INITIATIVES

Pilot multi-year, multi-program initiatives focused on trust

- Select a few communities to host conversations and build dialogue among relevant and influential local partners representing diverse backgrounds
- Explore the elements of trust-building in these communities in which partners are eager to invest
- Bring select Institute programs to those communities based on what is relevant to them and their needs
- Partner with enterprise-wide funders to conceive and execute on these efforts

Explore piloting a major public convening on the theme of Societal Trust

- In the style of the Global Inclusive Growth Summit and Aspen Ideas: Climate, engage with partner(s) with whom we might pursue a major convening focused on this new Impact Area
- Showcase our substantial portfolio of trust-building efforts across the Institute and our international partners

Launch an initiative around Artificial Intelligence

- Design and launch an initiative focused on artificial intelligence and the electoral process in fall 2023
- Explore additional initiatives on artificial intelligence and national security, economic opportunity, healthcare, and energy/climate
- Throughout 2024, ensure the prominence of artificial intelligence in major convenings such as the Aspen Ideas Festival and the Aspen Security Forum

As we implement these new initiatives, we will continue to grow and lift up the many existing programmatic efforts making a difference in this area.



BOLD MOVE

Establish a community
of practice to ignite
Leadership worldwide

Since our founding, the Institute has helped leaders worldwide to learn, grow, and enhance their work. Our leadership networks are large, deep, and expanding—and there's more we can do in the next five years to stand out in the critical field of leadership.

We can develop new ways to support the thousands of leaders in our networks working in many fields and places—and build with them a new interconnected global community. We can expand our renowned seminars to reach a broader spectrum of participants—empowering many more leaders to deepen their thinking and their impacts. And, leveraging our expertise and experience, we can claim our role as a thought leader and facilitate more effective leadership in every sector.



BOLD MOVE

Establish a community of practice to ignite **Leadership** worldwide

PROPOSED NEW INITIATIVES

Build a global, interconnected leadership community

- Develop the digital platform and protocols to connect Institute-affiliated fellows into a cross-Institute leadership community; design platform in 'layers' to eventually include Institute program participants and external partners
- Pilot new and distinguished resources and experiences that bring together the cross-Institute leadership community with Policy Program expertise, external practitioners, and thought leaders around nodes of shared interest and place-based collaborations
- Amplify the impact of the International Network of Partners by creating new shared convenings and activities
- Attract and engage external practitioners and thought leaders to advance the collective practice of leadership

Extend our reach and deepen our impacts by growing seminars

- Expand and augment our unique existing leadership seminars and develop new custom seminars for Institute programs, partners, and external clients (The Socrates Program is similarly exploring expansion of its activities.)
- Invest in business development, the Office of Curriculum and Moderators (OCM), and the necessary infrastructure (staff, etc.) to create the capacity to effectively grow our seminar offerings and increase revenue
- Reposition and leverage OCM to serve as a resource as needed for Institute programs across the enterprise, as well as for staff professional development
- Become a partner of choice to corporations, NGOs, and universities for values-based leadership development

Articulate and disseminate our perspective, learnings, and best practices on leadership

- Keep building our cross-program learning collaborative to gather views, experiences, and learnings—including those of external partners—in order to articulate and evolve our perspective and best practices on leadership
- Continue to develop and promote our approach to values-based leadership
- Continue to develop and improve the methods by which we evaluate the impact of our leadership practices
- Design and implement an external communication strategy that includes a commitment to capture and disseminate the impact of our leadership work

As we implement these new initiatives, we will continue to grow and lift up the many existing programmatic efforts making a difference in this area.



NEW FOCUS AUDIENCE

Intentionally engage,
learn from, and invest in
Rising Generations
to increase our
relevance and impact

Youth (14-18), **Young Adults** (18-24), and
Young Professionals & Creators (24-34)

With strong programs and initiatives in different parts of the Institute partnering with young people around the world, we have been steadily growing our commitment to the Rising Generations and the organizations and systems that serve them.

In the years to come, we can become more intentional about partnering with, learning from, and engaging with young and emerging leaders. We will explore becoming a dynamic community of practice that serves younger people and the systems and organizations they rely on. And we can develop new opportunities to catalyze intergenerational learning and partnership.

Younger people represent the future of every community. We can and must ignite their agency, leadership, and civic engagement.



NEW FOCUS AUDIENCE

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**Youth (14-18), Young Adults (18-24), and
Young Professionals & Creators (24-34)**

PROPOSED NEW INITIATIVES

Explore new content and channels

- Design ongoing focus groups and surveys with Rising Generation members of our community to gather their perspectives on the interests and needs of the three segments of their generation
- Raise the Institute's brand profile among new and younger audiences by co-creating content on the channels that are most relevant to Rising Generations with voices and influencers that are most inspiring to them and by leveraging segmented market research
- Emphasize our commitment to Rising Generations in our marketing and communications strategy, including across our major convenings
- Design new convening opportunities centering on the voices of Rising Generations, including consideration of a new major public convening

Grow developmental experiences to ensure continuing engagement from youth to young professionals

- Explore growing our offerings of civil dialogue, values-based leadership, and civic engagement opportunities to Rising Generations through our existing programs, including in partnership with our International Partners
- Explore (a) amplifying narratives, research, practices, and policies (thought leadership) and (b) strategic partnerships in order to ensure that leadership development and civic engagement become a predictable part of coming of age in our society
- Engage alumni of youth programs such as the Bezos Scholars and others with new experiences as they become Young Professionals across the continuum of their engagement with the Institute and in their lives

Drive intergenerational inclusion across our broader Institute community

- Provide know-how and resources to programs seeking to impact Rising Generations through their work— from direct service to systems-change to societal narrative shift
- Support Institute Programs interested in incorporating youth voices and perspectives
- Create a community of practice that connects programs currently serving Rising Generations to each other and to the broader Institute for learning and collaboration

As we implement these new initiatives, we will continue to grow and lift up the many existing programmatic efforts making a difference in this area.

Operational Imperatives

There are four operational areas that we will strengthen in service of the Institute's Mission, Vision, Strategic Priorities, and financial sustainability:

- **An invigorated brand**
- **State-of-the-art systems**
- **A revitalized campus**
- **A targeted fundraising campaign**

Each Operational Imperative comprises several initiatives to enhance our enterprise- and program-level work.

The financial model of the Institute requires strong performance from various business operations (Aspen Meadows, Aspen Ideas Festival, Society of Fellows, subleasing in our DC office, and investment performance on our quasi-endowment) both to support service delivery to programs and to allow for necessary investments in technology and our facilities.



Broaden and deepen engagement with an **invigorated brand**

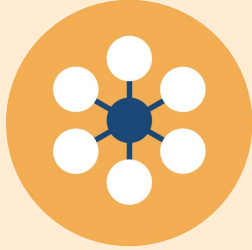
PROPOSED INITIATIVES

Strengthen our brand and positioning with key stakeholders

- Craft an enterprise-level strategy to bolster the Institute's brand, refine positioning, and activate our audiences—including redesigning our website
- Develop cross-Institute communications and audience engagement strategies focused on our Methodologies, Impact Areas, and Strategic Priorities
- Infuse the essence of our Bauhaus heritage across the Institute brand

Realign events services and strengthen content distribution

- Establish stronger cross-Institute, central capabilities to provide greater support to programs and create compelling in-person events and curated seminars, expanding our reach and developing new business relationships



Connect our communities and programs through **state-of-the-art systems**

PROPOSED INITIATIVES

Establish an integrated CRM system to centralize constituent data and enhance privacy and engagement

- Develop a technology and change management strategy and create policies and agreements for data use and privacy in partnership with programs and internal users
- Invest in, configure, and implement technology systems that can unify our existing Constituent Relationship Management (CRM) environment by connecting existing systems across the Institute to enable a 360-degree view of our stakeholders and audiences
- Invest in technology and tools that leverage the value of the unified CRM environment by enhancing its functionality and enabling seamless transfer of data across systems (e.g., fellowship recruitment software, sales and marketing tools, etc.)
- Build a central data services team that can manage the new system, optimize its value, and train and support programs in order to grow and deepen engagement with all Institute audiences through data collection, management, and analysis

Build targeted and unique experience journeys for our stakeholders

- Map the Institute's network
- Create experience journeys that are uniquely relevant to members of our community based on who they are, where they are in their journey of engagement, and their relationship with the Institute
- Develop an outreach strategy to more fully integrate our International Partners and International Fellows into our network
- Explore evolving our donor and alumni engagement into a comprehensive "membership" model tailored to different levels of engagement, areas of interest, and stages of investment



Strengthen our vision
for a thriving community
with a **revitalized campus**

PROPOSED INITIATIVES: Immediate Needs

Maintenance and Repairs

Address ongoing maintenance needs

- Resnick-Malek Health Center
- Koch Building
- Mayer Courtyard
- Doerr-Hosier Center
- Greenwald Pavilion
- Landscaping and public art

Benefits:

- Strengthens sustainability
- Ensures ongoing ability to host Institute events

Employee Housing

Explore options for employee housing in Aspen that not only meets compliance requirements but also supports the needs of our workforce

Benefits:

- Strengthens organizational Sustainability
- Unique moment of opportunity

PROPOSED INITIATIVES: Strategic Opportunities

Wellness Center

Renovate the Resnick-Malek Health Center to create a Wellness Center experience that supports the Institute's vision for nourishment of "mind, body, spirit"

Benefits:

- Strengthens the campus experience and the Meadows' sustainability
- Must address deferred maintenance

Bayer Center

Provide for the annual operations of the Resnick Center for Herbert Bayer Studies by building an endowment and other long-term funding sources

Benefits:

- Preserves and leverages our unique heritage
- Frees up discretionary resources



Support our
aspirations through a
targeted fundraising
campaign

PROPOSED INITIATIVES

Establish the building blocks of the campaign

- Establish a trustee campaign committee to inform campaign planning going forward
- Conduct a feasibility study to determine campaign target, anticipated support in diverse areas, and likely time frame

Launch the campaign in 2024

- Launch the leadership phase to secure 50-75% of pledges and commitments
- Launch the public phase in conjunction with the 75th anniversary of the Institute

Our Enduring Attributes and Five-Year Strategic Plan, At-a-Glance

Pulling together all elements of the plan with our Enduring Attributes gives shape to our Institute-level Strategic Plan for the next five years.

OUR ENDURING ATTRIBUTES

PURPOSE	We ignite human potential to build understanding and create new possibilities for a better world.		
MISSION	We drive change through dialogue, leadership, and action to help solve the greatest challenges of our time in service of a more free, just, and equitable society.		
METHODOLOGIES	Facilitate dialogue and curate convenings	Develop leaders and leadership	Enable solutions

OUR FIVE-YEAR INSTITUTE-LEVEL STRATEGY

VISION	By 2028, we are a thriving interconnected community of leaders driving impact across geographies, generations, and viewpoints.		
IMPACT AREAS	Economic Opportunity	Climate and Energy	Societal Trust <i>(New)</i>
STRATEGIC PRIORITIES	New Impact Area Leverage our programs, methodologies, and networks to strengthen Societal Trust	Bold Move Establish a community of practice to ignite Leadership worldwide	New Focus Audience Intentionally engage, learn from, and invest in Rising Generations to increase our relevance and impact
OPERATIONAL IMPERATIVES	Broaden and deepen engagement with an invigorated brand	Connect our communities and programs through state-of-the-art systems	Strengthen our vision for a thriving community with a revitalized campus

