

RISSE

# Strategic Plan

January 1, 2024 through December 31, 2026

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## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The purpose of the Refugee & Immigrant Support Services of Emmaus (RISSE) strategic plan is to articulate the long-term vision and priorities of the organization, as well as provide a framework for decision-making, growth, and future work over the next three years.

Guided by the Strategic Planning Committee of the Board, the process took place from September 2023 through April 2024, in consultation with strategic planning and fundraising consultant, Nancy Meyers Preston.

The Committee was first tasked with writing new vision, mission, and values statements. A mission statement that tells what the organization does, while necessary, is incomplete. By adding the vision statement that explains why the organization is doing that work – where it is aiming and the picture of the future you wish to create for the communities you serve – and the values statement explaining how the organization will do that work, the Board and staff will have three solid tools to serve as a barometer.

We engaged the leadership team through various methods. The Board completed a matrix and assessment survey. We also conducted SWOT analyses with the Board and staff. We evaluated the strengths and weaknesses and created a plan that enables us to: leverage our strengths, stop or fix weaknesses, take advantage of the opportunities, and counter any negative effects from external factors.

## **OUR GOALS FOR THE NEXT THREE YEARS**

We committed to focus our efforts on six (6) core themes, or broad overall priorities, adopted by RISSE leadership:

1. People
2. Services
3. Governance
4. Marketing
5. Development
6. Facilities

Goals statements that define what RISSE is trying to accomplish both programmatically and organizationally were developed for each priority.

Each goal carries with it several objectives. These are **SMART: Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-defined.**

## **AN EFFECTIVE STRATEGIC PLAN**

This strategic plan is aspirational, and by necessity, will impact the culture of the organization. We believe this plan will allow for more systematic management of activities and operations. It will ensure that decision-making is consistent with priorities established in the plan. While this document has been created, the process is not complete. In fact, to ensure successful implementation, the leadership team must refer to the strategic plan to inform decisions on an on-going basis, develop annual action plans (with specific activities, timelines, progress-against-goals, and responsibilities) for each objective, develop a process to monitor progress, and hold each other accountable. More importantly, the three-year strategic plan is a living document, where changes may occur because of implementation and in response to the needs of the community. A committed and diverse leadership team will take ownership of the strategic plan to support the agreed-upon goals and objectives.

It is my hope that the process of planning has energized and focused the Board and staff of RISSE.

***NANCY MEYERS PRESTON, APRIL 2024***



### **VISION STATEMENT**

Our vision is for New York's Capital Region to be a model community for welcoming, supporting, and celebrating refugees and immigrants.

### **MISSION STATEMENT**

RISSE supports refugees and immigrants to build new lives and thrive in the Capital Region.

### **VALUES STATEMENT**

The following values inform our work:

1. Honoring client-lived experiences while fostering new opportunities for independence and growth
2. Delivering responsive, client-centered, community-based services
3. Collaborating with empathy, dignity, and integrity in all we do
4. Promoting belonging among staff, volunteers, and clients
5. Advancing diversity, equity, and multiculturalism within the organization and throughout our community

## RISSE

### STRATEGIC GOALS – 2024 THROUGH 2026

As stewards of our mission – *to support refugees and immigrants to build new lives and thrive in the Capital Region* – the following six (6) priorities will inform our decision-making over the next three years:

#### People

- We will value and support the staff, Board, volunteers, donors, clients, and community partners who build and strengthen us through their dedication to RISSE.

#### Services

- We will provide a range of culturally competent programs and resources that best meet the current and evolving needs of our clients and community partners.

#### Governance

- We will bring the Board’s diverse skills and life experiences to better understand the needs of our clients and staff, establish policies to serve our community, and carry RISSE into the future through long-range planning.

#### Marketing

- We will tell our story throughout the Capital Region so that the community is knowledgeable about RISSE and understands the importance and value of our work in embracing and supporting our refugee and immigrant neighbors.

#### Development

- We will attract and retain a diverse mix of funding sources, including government contracts, corporate and foundation support, individual giving, and fee-for-service programming to ensure long-term sustainability.

#### Facilities

- We will manage, maintain, and enhance facilities that support programming excellence and are financially sustainable.

## GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

<b>People</b>
<b>We will value and support the staff, Board, volunteers, donors, clients, and community partners who build and strengthen us through their dedication to RISSE.</b>
The following objectives will help us achieve our goal:
1. Benchmark regional peer nonprofits biennially in even-ending years to include (but not limited to) staffing, salary, and benefits to make and keep RISSE competitive in recruiting and retaining staff.
2. Develop a director-level employee succession plan, to include cross-training of knowledge and skills, to ensure that work continues in the event of a temporary absence or departure of any employee, and review annually; mid-level in year 2025 and emerging and/or new in year 2026.
3. Develop a performance management process to include expectations like goal setting, self-evaluations, professional development, etc. by end of Q2 2025.
4. Create and implement an alumni network outreach program including former and graduating clients, by the end of Q3 2024.
5. Explore the creation of an Advisory Board (or Boards) by end of Q1 2025 (e.g., past board members, skill sets, etc.).
6. Enhance existing volunteer management program to ensure that volunteers are put to their highest and best use, by matching volunteer professional skills, acquired knowledge, or special interests with RISSE’s needs, ensuring volunteer satisfaction and the most impact from time spent by volunteers by end of Q1 2025.

<b>Services</b>
<b>We will provide a range of culturally relevant programs and resources that best meet the current and evolving needs of our clients and community partners.</b>
The following objectives will help us achieve our goal:
1. Develop an annual evaluation tool to assess prospective and existing partnership opportunities in order to leverage each other’s strengths to secure funding, and eliminate duplicative services (inventory, evaluation metric for partnership, etc.).
2. Identify creative solutions/processes for improving the efficiency and effectiveness of current programs (e.g., improve non-reimbursable costs, reducing wait times, etc.).
3. Broaden the footprint by identifying opportunities for expansion outside of the City of Albany by Q2 2026.
4. Conduct an annual services’ needs assessment to determine the highest client demand, and set priorities for what services to provide, based on client demand, staff capacity and available financial resources.
5. Explore a business development strategy for new fee-based and social entrepreneurship services that can be provided (along with which clients are able to pay for these services) by end of Q4 2026.

## **Governance**

**We will bring the Board’s diverse skills and life experiences to better understand the needs of our clients and staff, establish policies to serve our community, and carry RISSE into the future through long-range planning.**

The following objectives will help us achieve our goal:

1. Create a succession planning strategy to include conducting board matrix between June and September annually, considering the makeup of the board based on the needs of RISSE at the time, and aspiring to a representative “ideal” board. (Q3 annually).
2. Evaluate the Board’s committee structure, responsibilities, and processes by Q4 in odd-ending years, to ensure that existing committees align with the strategic plan’s priorities and continue to meet the needs of the organization.
3. Develop and implement an Agency-wide communications process between and among the Executive Director, staff, and Board (to free up time for policy discussions during board meetings) by end of Q4 2025.
4. Develop and implement personal action plans, and review annually, to encourage board development (to include discussion about working vs. oversight board) by end of Q4 2025.
5. Conduct a review of foundational documents by end of Q3 2025 and then every five years thereafter.

## **Marketing**

**We will tell our story throughout the Capital Region so that the community is knowledgeable about RISSE and understands the importance and value of our work in embracing and supporting our refugee and immigrant neighbors.**

The following objectives will help us achieve our goal:

1. Develop and implement a comprehensive marketing and communications plan (website, social media, messaging, etc.) by end of Q3 2025.

## **Development**

**We will attract and retain a diverse mix of funding sources, including government contracts, corporate and foundation support, individual giving, and fee-for-service programming to ensure long-term sustainability.**

The following objective will help us achieve our goal:

1. Create and implement a comprehensive annual development plan including constituent-based strategies by end of Q3 (including revenue, donor stewardship/thank you calls, events, etc.).
2. Write and distribute an annual impact report by end of Q2.

## **Facilities**

**We will manage, maintain, and enhance facilities that support programming excellence and are financially sustainable.**

The following objective will help us achieve our goal:

1. Complete a facilities evaluation and action plan to determine what to do with ownership of the RISSE properties, including how the continued use, sale, rental and/or rehabilitation of the properties best serves the mission and long-term financial security of the organization, considers renovation and rehabilitation costs, and provides realistic grant opportunities and capital fund projections by the end of Q4 2024.
2. Develop a comprehensive infrastructure plan (phones, computers, vehicles, security system, cyber security insurance, etc.) by Q1 2025.