

# isaac

International Society for  
Augmentative and Alternative Communicator

## **ISAAC Strategic Plan 2022 - 2025**

**Final draft as approved by Executive Board – March 24<sup>th</sup>, 2022**

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## Introduction

The International Society for Augmentative and Alternative Communication (ISAAC) is a membership organization working to improve the lives of children and adults with complex communication needs.

ISAAC's goal is to create worldwide awareness about how AAC can support individuals with no or limited functional speech. ISAAC accomplishes this by sharing information and promoting innovative approaches to research, technology and literacy through AAC.

**ISAAC's Vision** is that AAC will be recognized, valued and used throughout the world.

**ISAAC's Mission** is to promote the best possible communication for persons with complex communication needs.

# Strategic Objectives

## 1 AAC Awareness

- Goal 1:** Share information about AAC and communication access
- Goal 2:** Ensure information is accessible to persons worldwide
- Goal 3:** Interact and network with national and international organizations

## 2 Connection

- Goal 1:** Increase the use of all ISAAC communication channels among ISAAC members
- Goal 2:** Strengthen ISAAC International ties with chapters and local member groups
- Goal 3:** Build networks of collaborative partnerships

## 3 Leadership

- Goal 1:** Support AAC leaders to take leadership roles
- Goal 2:** Expand AAC awareness activities
- Goal 3:** Support collaboration, access, and resources for stakeholders
- Goal 4:** Support persons who use AAC to actively engage in social media platforms

## 4 Research

- Goal 1:** Ensure a high quality AAC research journal
- Goal 2:** Ensure a high quality AAC Research Stream as part of ISAAC Conference
- Goal 3:** Strengthen the development of research capacity in AAC

## 5 Organizational Capacity

- Goal 1:** Financial viability
- Goal 2:** Membership viability
- Goal 3:** Conference viability
- Goal 4:** Organizational viability
- Goal 5:** Governance and operations

## Strategic Objective 1

# AAC Awareness

**Increase awareness, knowledge and competence of communication access and the use of augmentative and alternative communication (AAC) strategies worldwide**

Strategic Objective 1

## AAC Awareness

Increase awareness, knowledge and competence of communication access and the use of AAC strategies worldwide



### Goal 1: Share information about AAC and communication access

- Share information about AAC and communication access as part of global outreach
- The ISAAC organization leverages
  - The ISAAC Biennial Conference
  - ISAAC website and social media
  - Other technology platforms such as eblasts and virtual events

#### Critical outcomes:

- Ensure all relevant social media platforms are streamlined for optimal accessibility and functionality
- Explore which social media platforms are being used by persons in various regions and seek volunteers to help communicate in the local/regional language

Strategic Objective 1

## AAC Awareness

Increase awareness, knowledge and competence of communication access and the use of AAC strategies worldwide



### Goal 1: Share information about AAC and communication access

#### Critical outcomes continued:

- Develop and implement strategies for building stronger relationships and engagement with ISAAC Chapters and within BUILD and LEAD communities using social media platforms
- Establish key communication access guidelines at ISAAC activities (e.g., communication access training for conference venues and surrounding businesses, communication access information for virtual events, communication access introduction before any meeting, etc.)
- Share information through social media about communication access and how members of the community can incorporate them into their services
- Maintain web presence about communication access to engage individuals on a worldwide scale (e.g., social media, website)
- Share materials developed by ISAAC or other organizations

Strategic Objective 1

## AAC Awareness

Increase awareness, knowledge and competence of communication access and the use of AAC strategies worldwide



### Goal 2: Ensure information is accessible to persons worldwide

- Share information about AAC and communication access in accessible Easy English formats

#### Critical outcomes:

- Develop additional resources making use of Easy English
- Publish videos in accessible formats (e.g., add closed captioning)
- Investigate selection of different screen reading software available on the open market to determine interaction with the ISAAC website
- Review and revise ISAAC website annually to ensure accessibility
- Investigate whether current social media platforms are accessible to individuals with complex communication needs
- Seek to create collaborative advocacy partnerships/strategic alliances within the worldwide software development/technology industries to promote the ongoing development of accessible technology platforms for persons with complex communication needs

## AAC Awareness

Increase awareness, knowledge and competence of communication access and the use AAC strategies worldwide

### Goal 3: Interact and network with national and international organizations

- Increase cooperation with national and international organizations to promote awareness of AAC, communication access and ISAAC

#### Critical outcomes:

- Consolidate ISAAC-related Facebook pages into one page (ISAAC International), with Chairs of BUILD, LEAD, having access to post on the ISAAC International page for a broader reach to other national and international organizations
- Connect formally with UN Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, to promote AAC and communication access within the international human rights community on social media
- Maintain open discussions with communication access organizations (e.g., SCOPE, CDAC)
- Partner with interested Chapters on an international project using social media to promote awareness of AAC, communication access and ISAAC
- Investigate feasibility and related strategies of supporting worldwide advocacy efforts related to AAC and communication access within national/regional contexts



## Strategic Objective 2

# Connection

**Increase opportunities for members  
worldwide to communicate, interact and  
support one another**

## Connection

Increase opportunities for members worldwide to communicate, interact and support one another

### Goal 1: Increase the use of all ISAAC communication channels among ISAAC members

- Spread information about all ISAAC communication channels among Chapters and members
- Encourage use of communications tools such as virtual meeting platforms and social media to promote AAC awareness and international partnerships
- Evaluate the efficiency of ISAAC communication media use
- Update ISAAC's website to make information appealing, to promote accessibility and to enhance ease of use

## Connection

Increase opportunities for members worldwide to communicate, interact and support one another



### Goal 1: Increase the use of all ISAAC communication channels among ISAAC members

#### Critical outcomes:

- Publish information about communication methods used in ISAAC on ISAAC website (The ISAAC Communicator newsletter, CSWN newsletter, Facebook, Twitter, etc.)
- Seek opportunities for two-way interaction modes such as website interactive directory and social activities during virtual events
- Develop an information package for new members to highlight membership benefits. This can include a brochure, video, email signature, etc.
- Provide information to members on how to become involved with an ISAAC Committee (ensure information includes key Governance Handbook requirements such as member length of service, background, etc.)
- Develop an onboarding checklist for new Executive Board and Council members

## Connection

Increase opportunities for members worldwide to communicate, interact and support one another

## Goal 2: Strengthen ISAAC International ties with Chapters and local member groups

- Improve understanding of ISAAC as an international organization
- Increase focus of Chapters/members interest on international level
- Increase member involvement and representation on standing committees and working groups
- Increase Chapters/members initiatives in taking action to support development of ISAAC as a strong membership organization
- Publish clear, appealing information about ISAAC member benefits, committees, Executive Board, Council, etc.

## Connection

Increase opportunities for members worldwide to communicate, interact and support one another

## Goal 2: Strengthen ISAAC International ties with Chapters and local member groups

### Critical outcomes:

- Ensure ISAAC International representation at local AAC events, conferences and meetings
- Publish ISAAC leaflet to download from the website
- Share regular information about activities worldwide via the website, social media, eblasts, newsletters, etc.
- Respond to local needs by providing support from ISAAC International
- Make ISAAC media/platforms available for members activities (webinars, Zoom, social media)
- Embrace non-Chapter groups (e.g., ISAAC-Español, Eastern-Europe group, etc.)

## Connection

Increase opportunities for members worldwide to communicate, interact and support one another

### Goal 3: Build networks of collaborative partnerships

- Start new international groups of interest or/and working groups
- Strengthen international collaboration among Chapters
- Encourage the sharing of experience, knowledge and resources among ISAAC Chapters and emerging national groups. Create a “Global AAC Resource Hub” on the website
- Strengthen communication between AAC researchers, companies, and persons who use AAC

#### Critical outcomes:

- Collect information about local needs for collaboration/support
- Solicit and receive regular submission of short reports from Chapters and members about international collaboration
- Share information about international projects worldwide and find additional ways to share the information
- Connect groups conducting projects in AAC emerging nations with ISAAC International so that ISAAC can provide support in various ways (e.g., volunteers)

## Strategic Objective 3

# Leadership

**Increase AAC leadership opportunities  
for persons who use AAC and  
community stakeholders**

## Leadership

Increase AAC leadership opportunities for persons who use AAC and community stakeholders

### Goal 1: Support AAC leaders to take leadership roles

- Support persons who use AAC to take leadership roles in ISAAC and ISAAC Chapters
- Support persons who use AAC to explore leadership opportunities in associated organizations (e.g., ASHA, RESNA, ATIA)

#### Critical outcomes:

- Present a number of Pathways to Leadership webinars to give more opportunities to build leadership skills
- Develop partnerships with associated organizations as a means of creating persons who use AAC leadership opportunities
- Track and showcase persons who use AAC in leadership roles



## Leadership

Increase AAC leadership opportunities for persons who use AAC and community stakeholders

### Goal 2: Expand AAC awareness activities

- Continue to support and promote AAC Awareness month

#### Critical outcomes:

- Announce the theme of AAC awareness month in the first quarter of each year
- ISAAC LEAD committee will offer AAC awareness challenge(s) related to the theme for persons to complete
- Communicate with Chapters to gather local efforts with AAC awareness
- Highlight AAC awareness activities from Chapters on social media, the website and in The ISAAC Communicator

## Leadership

Increase AAC leadership opportunities for persons who use AAC and community stakeholders

### Goal 3: Support collaboration and resources for stakeholders

- Develop and implement mentoring opportunities for and by members who use AAC and their families
- Develop and implement opportunities and partnerships for persons who use AAC to participate in other community groups

#### Critical outcomes:

- Connect persons who use AAC with existing mentorship opportunities (e.g., BUILD, Bridge school, etc.)
- Develop materials for community leaders to facilitate inclusive communication protocols for their organizations

## Leadership

Increase AAC leadership opportunities for persons who use AAC and community stakeholders

### Goal 4: Help persons who use AAC to actively engage in social media platforms

- Encourage collaboration between practitioners and persons who use AAC on social media content creation
- Facilitate first-hand perspectives from persons who use AAC through ISAAC social media accounts

#### Critical outcomes:

- Use the ISAAC Cam on Wheels to assist persons who use AAC members to incorporate video messages in their communication
- Use webinars, online events and/or in-person conferences to facilitate first-hand perspectives from persons who use AAC
- Build partnerships with service providers to assist persons who use AAC members to expand their content creation skills

# Strategic Objective 4

## Research

Promote research and  
development in AAC

## Research

Promote research and development in AAC

### Goal 1: Ensure a high quality AAC research journal

- Maximize efficiency and effectiveness of editors and editorial assistants (e.g., provide support, include editorials, strengthen relationship with publisher, improve article flow)
- Transform publication committee to AAC journal committee and add roles descriptions for editors and editorial assistants to ISAAC's Governance Handbook
- Add implementation of a knowledge management system for editors and editorial assistants
- Internationalize by promoting work in non-English/non-North American countries
- Publish abstracts in different languages

## Research

Promote research and development in AAC

### Goal 1: Ensure a high quality AAC research journal

#### Critical outcomes:

- Employ metrics to benchmark the journal with global competitors (e.g., impact factor, Altmetric, Clarivate)
- Investigate the support offered by Taylor and Francis to support editorial staff
- Publish “Easy English“ abstracts on ISAAC website and share in social media to increase the journal’s readership with the help of the research committee
- Present a webinar, by editors, on “publishing in the AAC journal” for prospective contributors
- Add abstracts in international languages in the AAC journal (e.g. Spanish, Mandarin, French, etc.)

## Research

Promote research and development in AAC

### Goal 2: Ensure high quality AAC research content as part of ISAAC Conference

- Attract top researchers to take charge of research seminars and to attend
- Develop a process to support persons who use AAC to participate in research and in research strands
- Develop systems to ensure easy flow of organizational processes
- Assist the conference committee to plan high quality AAC research seminars
- Review option to invite a research committee member to sit on the Executive Board

## Research

Promote research and development in AAC

### Goal 2: Ensure high quality AAC research content as part of ISAAC Conference

#### Critical outcomes:

- Facilitate closer collaboration between the conference planning committee and research committee (e.g., research committee to help with reviewing abstracts for papers/posters/ePosters)
- Develop guidelines for ePosters
- Host four research-related webinars per year to support early career researchers with a focus on how to involve persons who use AAC as co-researchers



## Research

### Promote research and development in AAC

## Goal 3: Strengthen development and research capacity in AAC

- Identify ways for ISAAC to support/provide infrastructure for early career researchers
- Identify ways for ISAAC to support/provide infrastructure for researchers and research institutions
- Promote getting persons who use AAC involved in research and as participants for post-graduate research
- Support early career travel awards:
  - Executive Director to continue assisting the Executive Board with the call and application form for early career travel awards
  - Evaluate applications and provide a ranking to the Executive Board
  - Organize an early career researcher meeting at the ISAAC International Conference

## Research

### Promote research and development in AAC

## Goal 3: Strengthen development and research capacity in AAC

### Critical outcomes:

- Collaborate with conference planning committee and research committee to support early career researchers
- Develop procedures to ensure ethical standards and application processes (e.g., when ISAAC is approached by researchers to recruit from the membership)
- Establish an ISAAC student committee
- Compile a list of early doctorates (e.g., obtained PhD in past 5 years) and post on the website with area of specialization to increase research awareness
- Request companies to sponsor student membership

## Strategic Objective 5

# Organizational Capacity

**Strengthen organizational capacity to support  
ISAAC goals and activities**

Strategic Objective 5

## Organizational Capacity

Strengthen organizational capacity to support ISAAC goals and activities



### Goal 1: Financial viability 2022 - 2025

- Provide ongoing efficient and effective financial management to ensure sufficient linkage between budget requirements and revenue streams
- Examine opportunities for new revenue generation
- Examine opportunities for continued cost rationalizations
- Develop financial plan for pandemic recovery and future risk mitigation

Strategic Objective 5

## Organizational Capacity

Strengthen organizational capacity to support ISAAC goals and activities



### Goal 1: Financial viability 2022 - 2025

#### Critical outcomes:

- Ensure Executive Board approval of realistic post-pandemic recovery financial plan
- Promote, through growth of ISAAC International membership management, additional revenue generation for ISAAC International
- Work with Executive Board to promote growth of existing ISAAC Chapters and creation of new Chapters (i.e., Spanish-speaking Chapter)
- Seek, through the use of information technology tools, opportunities to monetize existing service provision and/or expense reductions

Strategic Objective 5

## Organizational Capacity

Strengthen organizational capacity to support ISAAC goals and activities



### Goal 2: Membership viability 2022 - 2025

- Ensure membership growth and sustainability year-over-year
- Continue efforts on securing sufficient members to facilitate new Chapter formation
- Improve positioning of ISAAC Biennial Conference with key stakeholder groups (persons who use AAC, families, professionals, exhibitors, sponsors, etc.)
- Seek new opportunities to strategically leverage UN NGO status
- Increase “value proposition” for ISAAC membership amongst key stakeholders, particularly as it relates to webinars as a membership benefit

Strategic Objective 5

## Organizational Capacity

Strengthen organizational capacity to support ISAAC goals and activities



### Goal 2: Membership viability 2022 - 2025

#### Critical outcomes:

- Develop and employ specifically targeted activities to support new Chapter membership, such as membership administrative support
- Develop and implement improvements in membership processing and database technology to support growth in Chapter membership management
- Increase member only opportunities with additional product/service providers that also focus on “win-win” value propositions

## Organizational Capacity

Strengthen organizational capacity to support ISAAC goals and activities



### Goal 3: Conference viability - 2022-2025

- Mitigate financial risks as a result of pandemic delays for Conference Cancún (cost overruns, reduced registration, etc.)
- Budget for positive net revenues for North American (NA) conferences and at least break-even for outside of NA conferences. Budget for at least break-even for all virtual events
- Promote conferences as vehicles to support ongoing financial, membership, and organizational viability
- Engage with sponsors and exhibitors by providing them with value-add marketing opportunities at both in-person and virtual events
- Drive stakeholder involvement in conferences and events through the use of both in-person and virtual opportunities

#### Critical outcomes:

- Ensure paid registration targets of 1,200+ for North American conferences and 700+ for outside North America conferences



Strategic Objective 5

## Organizational Capacity

Strengthen organizational capacity to support ISAAC goals and activities



### Goal 4: Organizational viability 2022 - 2025

- Ensure strategic linkage between efforts of ISAAC Executive Board, Chair and Chair-Elect of the ISAAC Council, and Executive Director
- Continue to improve relationship between ISAAC International and Chapters and amongst Chapters by providing support, lobbying, and advocacy
- Ensure support is tailored for the specific needs of each Chapter
- Promote establishment of individual Chapter goals, recognizing unique national realities between Chapters, within framework of current financial model
- Ensure above goals are collaboratively set, with clear outcomes and expectations for both Chapters and ISAAC International

Strategic Objective 5

## Organizational Capacity

Strengthen organizational capacity to support ISAAC goals and activities



### Goal 5: Governance and operations 2022-2025

- Biennial review of the ISAAC Governance Handbook to include key management activities, timelines, and templates
- Identify opportunities for effective and efficient management of ISAAC International office

#### Critical outcomes:

- Review of current Executive Board governance processes to ensure consistency with by-laws
- Maintain reduced operational costs and achieve other identified outcomes
- Continue Executive Director's focus on future transition planning and supporting staff and skills development
- Redesign of ISAAC website including business re-engineering of membership processing