

STRATEGIC PLAN

2016-2019



Introduction

The Co.As.It. Strategic Plan has been developed for the period 1 July 2016 to 30 June 2019. The Board has taken the view that the previous five (5) year horizon is too long for a plan to remain organisationally invigorating and relevant. It is expected that the shorter horizon will galvanise the organisation and its supporters to deliver on the key objectives outlined below.

The Co.As.It. Board is the owner of the strategic direction laid down in this plan. The Leadership Team is responsible for converting the strategic direction into viable and sustainable organisational solutions. The senior management group, staff and supporters are the key to instigating and maintaining organisational engagement and future success for the communities and groups Co.As.It. serves.

The Co.As.It. Strategic Plan 2016-19 represents the culmination of months of work and planning by our Board and Senior Management Teams. The plan brings together a considerable body of work which saw the involvement of all employees, volunteers, stakeholders and the general community.

Following the success of the previous Strategic Plan we are excited about the challenges and growth that we have set for ourselves for the coming three years and beyond. The Strategic Plan has set a blueprint for our future which focusses on the financial sustainability of the organisation moving forward. We have set ourselves ambitious targets in the growth of our private programs that will enable additional revenue to fund additional services for our community.

The plan also focusses on growth of business systems, technology and resources to enable Co.As.It. to meet its challenges moving forward. We believe that technology can aid us in our work and ultimately ensure greater quality in the provision of all of our services.

The 2016-2019 Strategic Plan will drive the organisation forward ensuring we always remain true to our Mission and Values. We are aware that a great deal of work will be required by our Board and Staff to ensure that we meet our objectives over the coming years, however, we are also confident that we will meet these challenges. We welcome continued Stakeholder feedback with respect to our objectives and look forward to reporting on the effective implementation of this plan.



Lorenzo Fazzini
President



Thomas Camporeale
General Manager

Linking our Past to the Future of Co.As.It.

The migration of the Italian community to Australia dates to the period of the gold rush in Victoria and NSW in the 1800's. The migration continued to grow in the post WWI period but ultimately it was WWII that saw mass migration of Italians to Australia. The period from 1950 -1970 saw tens of thousands of Italians arrive in the hope of a new life and new opportunities. By 1980 migration slowed significantly as the Italian economy improved. Interestingly, a more recent economic crisis in Italy and Europe has seen a new interest of young Italians arriving in search of an experience abroad. This 'new wave' started in 2010 has been steadily increasing since.

Co.As.It. was established in Sydney by the Italian Consul General of the time, Dott. Guido Natali during a meeting held on 28 May 1968. The function of Co.As.It. was to "coordinate, promote and develop the various activities of assistance for the Italian immigrants in NSW, in the social, legal, cultural, professional, educational and recreational fields". The establishment of Co.As.It. provided a valuable structure for the continuing provision of support to immigrants, both in the delivery of welfare and educational services.

In the post WWII period, the services provided by the Government to assist migrants to settle into their new country were very limited. It was left largely to the efforts of people who saw the need and gave of themselves freely and voluntarily to help their fellow countrymen in whatever way possible. It is the vision and commitment of these people, which is the story of Co.As.It.

The creation of Co.As.It. by the Italian Government offered two important advantages. Firstly, it provided the Italian community with an organisation which could be officially recognised by the Australian Government and secondly, by creating the various Co.As.It.s around the world, the Italian Government also committed itself to funding such Committees.

Italian migrants were able to receive assistance finding work, accommodation, food parcels and even having their utility bills paid to help them through difficult times.

Assistance was given to help people deal with government bureaucracy by helping them to fill in forms, attend interviews as interpreters and sometimes advocates, to ensure they received services and entitlements. Language assistance was also provided with doctors, solicitors and in a range of other situations faced by migrants.



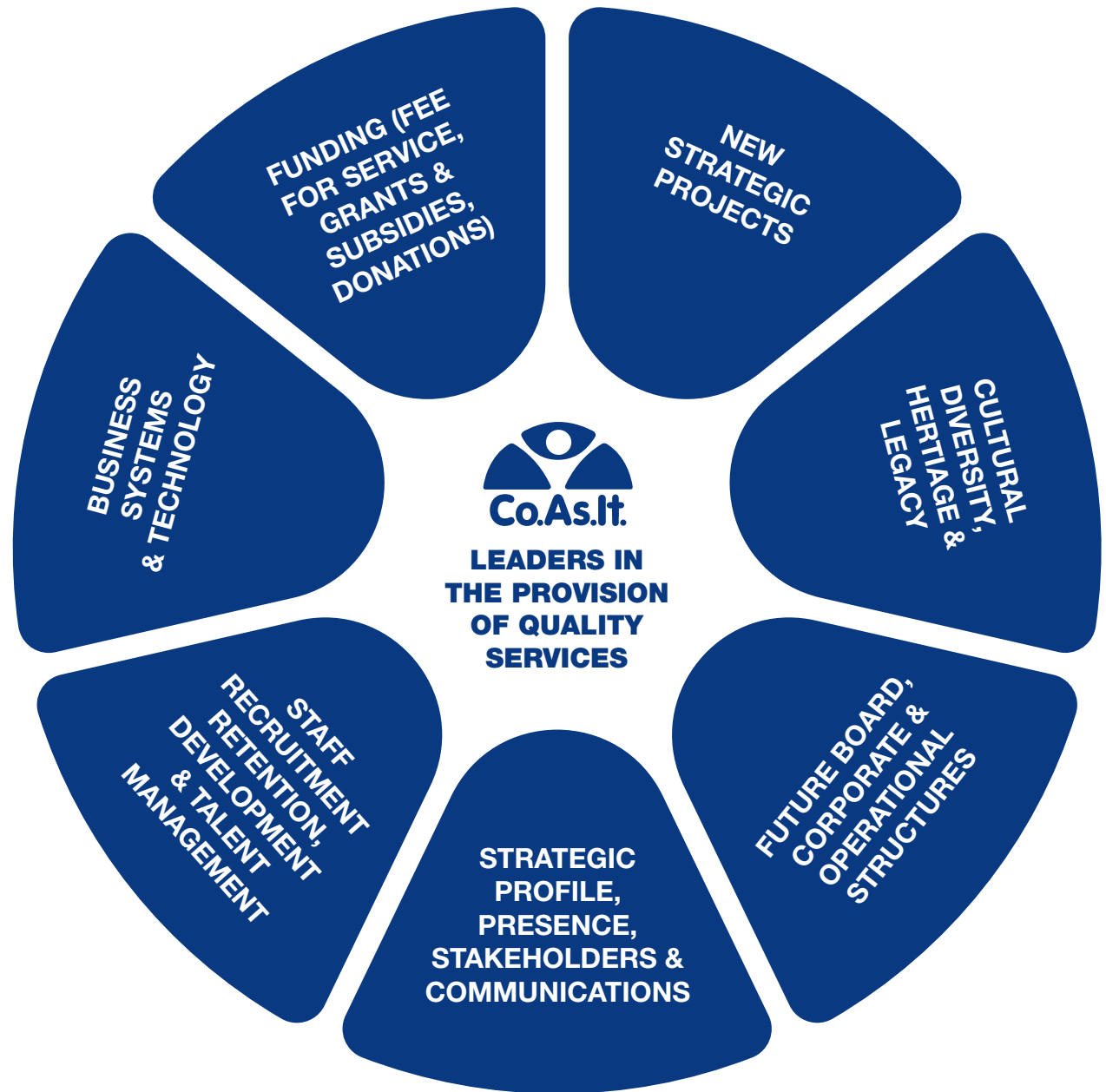
Volunteers were able to help link people with relatives and friends from their home towns and villages and to introduce them to new friends. Assistance was also provided to help migrants learn English at Co.As.It. It was also recognised that it was important to teach Italian to the children of Italian migrants growing up in Australia in order to preserve the language and culture of the Italian community.

The values established by these early pioneers paved the way for the organisation that exists today. Co.As.It. is the culmination of almost five decades of dedicated service where the best interests of the community have driven decisions, services and strategy. The heritage of Co.As.It. is not just embedded in Italian values and Italian culture but, more importantly, is embedded in the essence of volunteering and the recognition that we all have a right to access care and education.

As a well-established and respected community organisation, Co.As.It. is able to build on this history to continue to diversify and provide services, both community and educational, to the community at large.

METHODOLOGY UTILISED

The Board determined that this round of strategic planning build on the process established in the 2010 project. They specified that the previous findings should be utilised as a guide for conducting the feedback workshops with the Community and with Staff at all levels. The workshops were designed utilising independent Facilitators, ensuring that the conversations did not drive into the Operational side of the organisation. Accordingly, the focus was based around normal strategic planning principles - with the Core Clusters being:



Mission and Values... for the future

At the commencement of the project, the Board took the view that the Mission and Values did not need to be specifically reviewed. However, as the process unfolded, it became apparent that the strategic discussions and certain new objectives will, most likely, challenge the scope and wording of both. In this light, the Board and Leadership Team instigated a review of the Mission and Values across the organisation. Below is the accepted outcome of that consultation and review process.



Co.As.It. Mission

“Our Italian heritage enables us to meet the diverse and evolving needs of the community by enhancing quality of life and providing opportunities for lifelong learning.”



Loyalty

They encompass:

Aspiring to reach our organisational objectives by being faithful to and proud of, our pioneers, our heritage and our history.

Which means:

Maintaining our connectedness.
Shaping our Identity.
Bonding with those we care for.



Dignity

Maintaining a culture and working environment in which there is equal opportunity, profound respect, where staff, clients, learners and supporters are understood and appreciated.

Promoting collaboration.
Encouraging empathy.
Respecting diversity.
Passion for what we do.



Integrity

Acting with integrity in exercising Leadership and Governance while being responsible and accountable for our behaviour; ensuring our decisions are transparent and ethical.

Building trust.
Ensuring sustainability.
Instilling Confidence.



Wellbeing

Promoting initiatives and providing support that achieve physical, social and emotional well-being for our clients, staff, learners and volunteers.

Embracing the Individual.
Offering a sense of belonging.
Nurturing and care.



Responsiveness

Meeting our clients' changing needs by challenging the status quo, being innovative, adaptive, supportive and responsive.

Organisationally inquisitive.
Better community benefits.
Inventiveness, keeping us at the forefront of community focused organisations.
Utilising appropriate resources.

Stakeholder Consultation:

In developing the new strategic plan, Co.As.It. engaged with all key stakeholders to update our understanding of their needs and to establish strategically critical issues to be addressed by the organisation over the next three years.

Community

Consultation sessions were held for community members including learners, clients and their families, inviting them to have their say on the future direction of the organisation. Participants were able to present their needs and discuss what types of support would be needed in the future. They also contributed views on how services offered by Co.As.It. and other associated organisations, could cater for these needs.

Staff & Contractors

A two pronged approach was utilised. Firstly, a snapshot questionnaire was produced and circulated to all staff members and associated key contractors. 210 questionnaires were sent out and 82 people responded. Concurrently, there were six face-to-face facilitated workshops conducted with the full range of staff in Co.As.It. and IBS.

Emerging Organisational Risks and Challenges:

In the initial stages of this review, a high level PEST analysis (political, economic, social and technological factors) took place.

Based on the research and feedback collected during the last 12 months, Co.As.It. is facing a number of risks and challenges in order to maintain the organisation's presence, relevance and future long term sustainability. Some of the organisation's key indicators identified are:

A drive toward more commercially based Fee-for-Service offerings

Change in attitude and re-allocation and / or reduction of grants, funds and subsidies from Governments & related bodies

An increasing risk of losing our valuable, experienced and qualified staff to our competitors or other outside bodies

Equally, an increasing difficulty in recruiting high calibre skilled & qualified staff to meet our future needs

Ability to ensure our community, clients, learners and supporters understand our value proposition and what Co.As.It. as a whole brings to the community it serves

Capacity to strategically expand our horizons and scope of service offerings to ensure our continued relevance and sustainability in the long term

Utilisation of business systems, technology and social media to enhance our communications, our presence & profile at every available opportunity

Ability to leverage our skills, knowledge and experience with other like-minded organisations to maximise our standing in an evolving environment; be able to aid others who are less fortunate or lack our resources and skills.



Where are we today... and what is planned for the Future?

Based on the distillation of all the findings, feedback and commentary, the Board went through a process of evaluating the strategically critical issues which were raised. Through a facilitated discussion process, they identified four categories of objectives. Each objective has a defined endpoint to be achieved by 30th June 2019, along with a realistic milestone to be achieved between June and December 2017. The objectives set out below fall into the four categories:

The Board objectives are exclusively in the domain of the Board, which will be entirely responsible for ensuring they are delivered.

New Core Service objectives are aligned with the **existing** activities/offerings by the organisation. Their implementation will be dovetailed with current business activities and offerings.

Additional New Service objectives are precisely as described. They are **new** and **additional** to the organisation's current activities and offerings.

Organisational objectives. This plan does not mean that existing day to day activities / offerings stop or change. The new Organisational objectives are designed to support, develop, enhance and promote the existing activities and offerings, as well as aid the effective implementation of the new objectives.

Prioritisation and implementation

Initially, the Board will agree (with the Leadership Team) those objectives it considers to be organisationally critical. The selected objectives will either be allocated to the Leadership Team to design the implementation program or external providers will be sourced to run them as a project. Where an objective is considered completely new to the organisation, it will be placed in the Incubator.

Once allocated to the Incubator, a strategy champion will be appointed to run the project as a completely stand-alone exercise. The incubator may draw on the skills, knowledge and experience of the organisation but it will be quarantined, in terms of funding & direct resources, from the day-to-day operations of Co.As.It.

It is expected that strategy champions will be accountable to the GM / Senior Management, unless determined otherwise by the Board.

The Board

The Board recognises that it needs to continue to identify, attract and develop its member talent, skills, knowledge and experience to maintain the vigor and relevance of the organisation for the community and stakeholders it represents.

Between 2016 and 2019 the following strategies will be developed and implemented:

Board Recruitment and Development objectives to meet the diverse and challenging needs of the future.

Protect our History, our Heritage and our Culture for the benefit of future generations.

Co.As.It. specialises in the delivery of culturally appropriate care and is regarded as a leader in the provision of services to people of culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds. Building on our traditional offer of services to individuals who identify as Italian, we have broadened our service delivery to include individuals from other CALD groups. We pride ourselves in remaining attuned to the needs of our client group, adapting and expanding our services accordingly. True to our aim of remaining responsive to the needs of our clients, we are able to support individuals and families through events, stages and crises in their lives.

Our Social Workers provide a generalist support service to older Italians in the Inner West and South of Sydney. The services include ongoing case management, counselling, information and referral.



Our centre based day-care service is a structured weekly program of both socialisation and activity for older people. Co.As.It. manages 17 groups in the Inner West, South and North of Sydney both for the frail aged as well as those living with dementia. The participants are provided with socialisation, transport, activities, outings and meals whilst at the centre.

Our Home Care Packages program is a government subsidised in-home support program for older people which enables independent living in the community. Offered

on a consumer directed basis, these packages provide a range of direct services including personal care, transport, meal preparation, shopping, respite, cleaning and clinical care. The services are offered from levels 1 (basic needs) through to level 4 (complex needs).

On a user-pays basis, we offer a Home Help service which caters for all levels of care. These services are provided to individuals who can't access a Government subsidised program. As part of this offering we broker our staff to mainstream agencies who require Italian speaking staff.

Within our counselling services we provide support with drug and alcohol, gambling, mental health and youth and family. These programs provide direct counselling, community development and community education.

The community visitors scheme is a structured volunteer based program which matches community visitors with residents of nursing homes or individuals living in the community. The matches are monitored and supported by a Coordinator who ensures that the residents receive adequate support and friendship from the volunteer visitor.

The Welcome to Australia Program offers assistance and support to newly arrived Italians. Information is provided with relation to employment, settlement and education.

Between 2016 and 2019 the following strategies will be developed and put in place:

The Home Help program has been significantly ramped up to deliver in excess of \$2 million in revenue, passing through the \$1 million mark by September 2017.

With recent changes in Home Care Funding, Co.As.It. will significantly leverage its competitive standing in this area. In particular, by 2019, Co.As.It. will have grown its High Care package by over 50% of the levels achieved at July 2016.

We have consolidated our approach to Medicare funded Mental Health & Counselling services for Adults and Adolescents.

Our Cultural Centre is the centre piece to maintaining our defined Heritage, Cultural, Community and Financial obligations. The Centre is self-sustaining.

Co.As.It. is committed to promoting Italian language and culture in NSW through a variety of programs developed in the Language Services area and the Italian Bilingual School (IBS).

Language Services continues to promote Italian language and culture in NSW by teaching Italian through innovative language programs, which cater for both children and adults, to over 5000 students in State and Catholic primary schools, 400 students in Out of School Hour centres and 300 students in evening classes. The Language Services area continues to support Italian teachers in NSW through a dedicated program of professional learning and development activities and via an online portal which provides access to a multitude of teaching and learning resources to support the delivery of Italian to over 23,000 students studying Italian in NSW schools. Through the support of Co.As.It., Italian continues to be one of the most widely taught languages in NSW primary schools.

Language Services has expanded the range of Italian language and training programs to include Translating and Interpreting Services, Italian Certification programs (CELI), Language tours to Italy, Travelling Story time Program, Italian Language Assistant program, Blended Learning programs, Italian language courses for the health and aged care sectors, English courses for new arrivals, Italian Bilingual School Secondary language program, Out of School Hour Care program (OOSH), Professional learning programs (PLP) for teachers and the online delivery of services via a Learning Management System (LMS).

The promotion of Italian language and culture remains the driving force behind Language Services and the area will continue to work towards the objective of sustainability by increasing the range of funding sources and developing user-pay services. The focus will be on developing further synergies both within and outside the organisation to ensure that programs remain relevant, viable and a realistic choice for school communities, parents and language learners of all ages.

Between 2016 and 2019 the following strategies will be developed and implemented:

We own and operate a Registered Training Organisation (RTO) which focuses on our Community Services and Educational Segments. The RTO is, year on year, delivering a significant amount of revenue to Co.As.It.

The RTO has secured significant income growth from training development in the Aged Care Sector.

We have established the NSW Learning Centre which is the leading independent provider of Language Services in Australia.

The IBS secondary program has been expanded to include in excess of 250 students.

The IBS High School has a defined model. The feasibility study has been conducted and the recommendations approved by the Board.





The Italian Bilingual School (IBS) provides a bilingual and bicultural education in English and Italian by combining elements of both the Australian and the Italian curriculum in the students' program of study. Equal immersion in both English and Italian enables students to learn two languages through an integrated curriculum. One half of the timetable is devoted to teaching through Italian and the other half through English, thereby ensuring balanced exposure to the two languages. A strong emphasis is placed on the development of literacy skills in both English and Italian.

The curriculum is organised to provide 12 hours' instruction in English and 12 hours in Italian per week thereby providing a balanced breakdown of the two languages. In keeping with the above model, the KLAs English and Maths are taught in English; all other KLAs in K – 6 are taught in Italian and consolidated in the English curriculum, with an equitable balance maintained throughout the various levels of schooling.

The Italian Bilingual School has consolidated its position as a strong player in the independent schools' sector. The school has a well-earned reputation for providing an engaging learning environment with a committed and highly skilled staff. The ability to offer a unique methodology with Italian and English as tools to deliver the local curriculum makes IBS an appealing choice for parents.

The new strategic plan will focus on growing the Primary school and developing a Secondary school model. A coordinated approach will also be given to the promotion and marketing of the school. This will be done by conducting research into the experiences of other bilingual schools and seeking input from industry experts. Professional development for all staff will be maintained to ensure that the school is at the forefront of quality education.

Between 2016 and 2019 the following strategies will be developed and implemented:

At the Board's direction, IBS is to conduct an Independent Review which centres on five main areas – Bilingualism, Curriculum, Teaching & Learning, Student Welfare, Parents and Partnerships.

Based on the findings of the Review, the Board will set a forward program of initiative directly aligned to the feedback provided.

New Services

This section represents new opportunities to be explored and developed by Co.As.It.

Between 2016 and 2019 the following strategies will be developed and implemented:

We have a Nursing Home Partner for the Yasmar site. The formal opening date has been agreed.

We are a significant NDIS (or equivalent) service provider in NSW.

There is a network of Before and After School Care Centres. They are providing significant additional revenue to Co.As.It.

Our Carers Support program is well established and self-sustaining. It encompasses targeted Education and Advocacy available to all members.

Enhanced talent management and organisational succession planning

An integrated Master Plan for strategic technology and business system requirements across all entities

Marketing, Communications, Profile, Presence, Funding and Support

An organisation wide Marketing Plan, looking out 3 years and updated annually.

Enhanced communications strategies – aligned to Co.As.It. service offerings, stakeholders and appropriate digital transformation.

Tactical lobbying, profiling and public relations objectives aligned to core / emerging offerings.

Dedicated specialist resources for fundraising, securing grants and subsidies across the spectrum.

The Organisation

The new Organisational objectives are designed to support, develop, enhance and promote the existing activities and offerings, as well as aid the implementation of the new objectives.

Between 2016 and 2019 the following strategies will be developed and implemented:

Staff Recruitment, Retention and Development

Continuous and tactical investment in training, developing, coaching and mentoring our staff

Enhanced performance development programs

Monitoring and Reporting

As strategies are activated by the Board, they will then have their own monitoring and reporting regimes for each monthly Board meeting.

The Board will provide Stakeholders with a Strategic Plan roll-out update – either quarterly or six-monthly. It is intended that this will become part of our digital / communications strategy to be invoked.

Head Office

Casa d'Italia
67 Norton Street
Leichhardt NSW 2040

Postal address:
PO Box 342,
Leichhardt NSW 2040

Tel: +61 (2) 9564 0744
Fax: +61 (2) 9569 6648
www.coasit.org.au

Italian Bilingual School

30-32 See Street
Meadowbank NSW 2114

Tel: +61 (2) 9807 2272
Fax: +61 (2) 9807 8020
www.ibs.nsw.edu.au

contact us

