



Nationalities Service Center Strategic Plan FY20-22



Nationalities
SERVICE CENTER

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Introduction

Mission and Vision

The agency's mission and vision came under review as part of strategic planning. Through discussions and workshops that involved the planning committee, agency staff, and the Board of Trustees, the team revised the mission and vision statements to align with the agency's priorities and focus areas.

Mission

NSC welcomes and empowers immigrants to thrive in our communities and pursue a just future.

Vision

Our vision is that all immigrants achieve a life of safety and stability, sustainable opportunities, and meaningful community connections.

Grounding Philosophy

Through discussions amongst the strategic planning committee and agency staff, several priorities began to emerge in reflecting on today's climate and discourse surrounding immigration and refugee resettlement. Below is the strategic plan's grounding philosophy, encompassing both the agency's commitment to resiliency and strategies to continue assisting clients through this tumultuous time.

*NSC will continue to survive and thrive through this troubling moment in the modern history of immigration in this country. We will **build our organizational resilience and infrastructural fortitude** to stand ready for the increasingly formidable challenges ahead.*

Working in communities and with strategic partners, we will deliver client-centered programs with data-driven precision, professionalism, and a cultural humility befitting the wide range of clients we serve.

We will celebrate our past, take inventory of our present and advocate for a future that posits NSC as an anchor of welcome for generations of immigrants to come.

Background

The world is experiencing an unprecedented humanitarian crisis, with a record-breaking 70 million persons displaced—26 million of whom are refugees. The state of refugee resettlement is dichotomous with the needs for safe refuge: with a record-breaking amount of people globally displaced, the United States has drastically cut its admissions numbers to historic lows. While nearly 85,000 refugees arrived to the United States in 2016, admissions plummeted to 53,716 in 2017 and fell further to 22,491 in 2018. There is serious concern that refugee admissions may be cut further and that the federal resettlement program entirely ended.

Declining numbers and threats to resettlement are just one facet of a grave reality: that within and at our borders, migrants and immigrants are targeted by institutional changes and efforts that have created a climate of fear. The Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) and Temporary Protected Status (TPS) programs are under threat, leaving roughly one million residents at-risk of deportation. The decades-long principle of family-based immigration, paramount to family reunification, is also in jeopardy. Proposed changes to the public charge rule have created widespread confusion and prompted many immigrants and lawful status holders from receiving public assistance for which they are eligible.

At the U.S. Southern Border, migrant apprehensions are at the highest level since 2012. U.S. Customs and Border Protection are overwhelmed, lacking both the facilities and staff capacity to adequately respond to the increase of migrants. Presently, an estimated 15,000 migrant children make up a total of 50,000 migrants held in detention centers across the country.

As U.S. refugee and immigration admissions numbers are slashed to all-time lows and funding for assistance programs are systemically cut, local immigrant communities are greatly affected. From 2017 to 2018, a quarter of resettlement agencies closed or received no refugees, forcing layoffs and closures. The implications are troubling: when agencies shutter, local immigrant communities are often losing their only partner in advocacy, employee-readiness, and healthcare and wellness access. While the reduction in admissions numbers and grants may be temperamental, nationwide agency closures have a long-term consequence for the capacity of local communities to facilitate resettlement and assist immigrant community members.

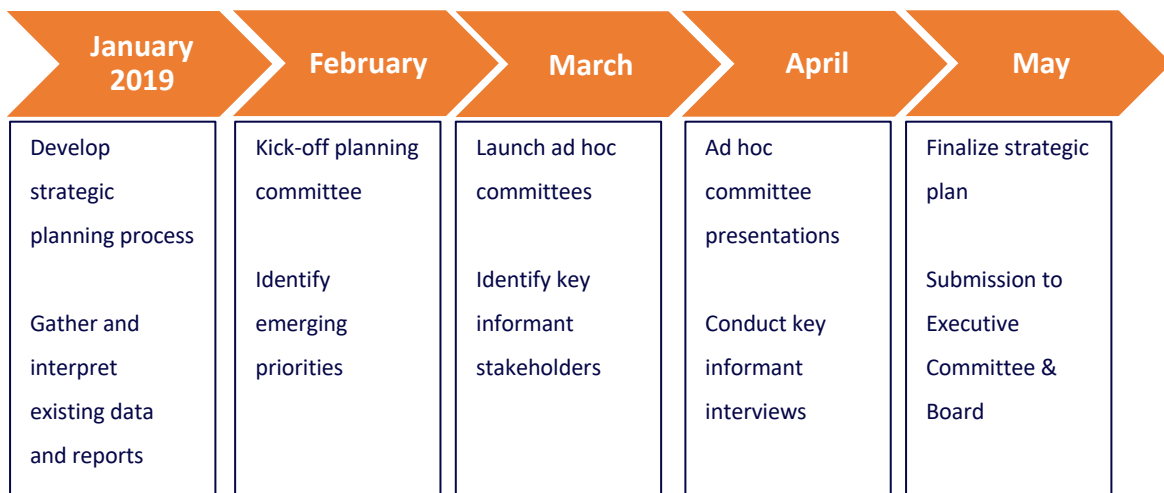
We are in a tumultuous time, in which refugees and immigrants are fervently targeted by public media and legislation and the long-term effectiveness of the non-profit network is in jeopardy. Within this moment, Nationalities Service Center will continue to survive and thrive by building organizational resilience and fortitude to stand ready for the formidable challenges ahead and continue walking alongside its clients.



Strategic Plan FY20-22

Process

With the FY16-19 plan, the agency achieved exciting milestones and outcomes. With collaborating partners, NSC established the Fund for Immigrant Justice—affording pro-bono legal services with immigrant who face financial barriers in the Greater Philadelphia. NSC also expanded its service offerings to clients, providing pro-bono health and mental-health services onsite. Notably, NSC also grew its philanthropic revenue by 150% over the plan’s tenure, enabling the agency to continue supporting clients and survive amidst nationwide closures of immigration and resettlement agencies.



The FY20-22 strategic planning process began in January 2019, with a focus on expanding the agency’s capacity to meet growing client demands and improve agency resiliency during a period of troubling changes to immigration and refugee policy and growing xenophobia. The planning process presented above, engaged 209 stakeholders, 113 of whom are clients engaged through a combination of workshops and surveys.

Strength Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats (SWOT) Analysis

Strengths

- Skilled and diverse workforce
- NSC Programs: diverse, comprehensive
- Established reputation among peers and clients
- Strong leadership and fiscal management
- Content matter expertise
- Longevity of agency
- Agency agility
- Outcome measurement competency
- Committed service partnerships
- Breadth, depth, commitment of donors

Weaknesses

- Variability of funding sources
- Physical space: security, trauma-informed, limited
- Brand identity
- Recruitment strategy for workforce
- Limited corporate support
- Website language access
- Language access, public services
- Available school placement type and quality
- Client food insecurity and housing

Opportunities

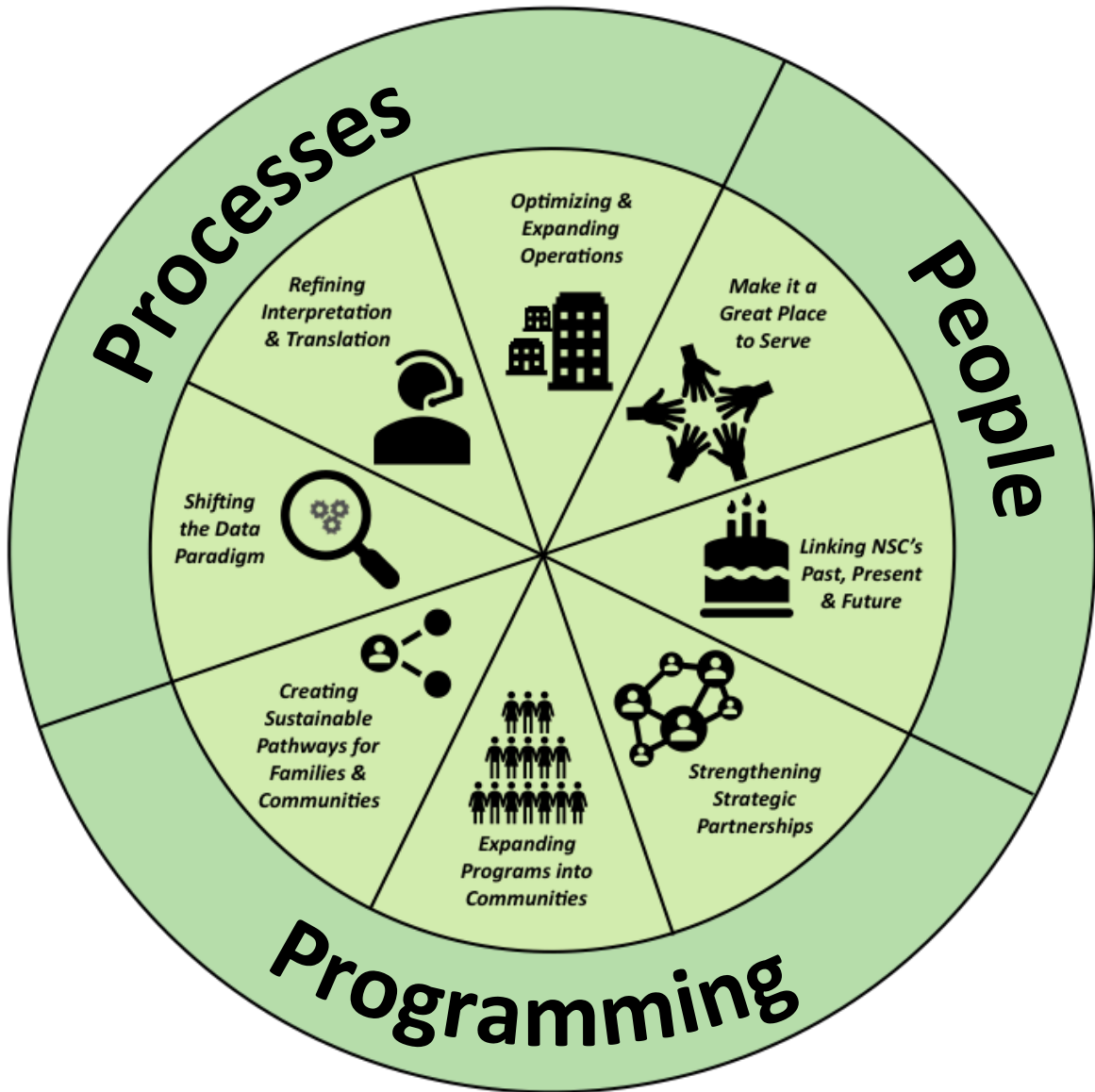
- 100th Anniversary
- Strategic Partnerships
- Engaging NSC Alumni
- Creating staff ascension pathways
- Investing in volunteers
- Enhancing workforce development
- Expanding beyond Philadelphia
- Procurement: leveraging buying power
- Strengthening outcome measurements
- Building financial sustainability
- Donor engagement strategy

Threats

- Growing xenophobic climate
- Global nationalism; climate of fear
- Possibility of further VOLAG reductions
- Over-reliance on VOCA funding
- Staff & volunteer burnout leading to turnover
- Donor fatigue
- Likely recession
- Climate Change



FY20-22 Strategic Priorities



People



Make it a Great Place to Serve

Goals

1. Launch HR department for staff and skilled professionals.
2. Ensure continuity of high-caliber leadership.
3. Facilitate experiences that build camaraderie and shared sense of purpose.
4. Ensure staff have access to development tools to grow, thrive, and ascend.

Strategies

- Establish Human Resources Department and hire Human Resources Manager.
- Create Professional Development Fund for staff to access relevant external trainings and opportunities.
- Hire Volunteer Coordinator to establish comprehensive volunteer engagement plan.
- Engage Senior Leadership and Board in a succession planning process.
- Invest in planning committee to develop experiences that build staff cohesion.



Linking NSC's Past, Present, & Future

Goals

Initiate year-long celebration of NSC's 100th Anniversary.

Strategies

- Secure pro-bono archivist to uncover NSC's past through research at Temple University Archives.
- Hire rebranding consultant and convene a committee that includes staff and Board to pursue total agency rebranding.
- Develop a communications plan to tell the agency's centennial story.
- Executive series of "friend"-raisers and fundraisers during anniversary year and explore larger fundraising campaign.



Processes



Shifting the Data Paradigm

Goals

Develop data driven precision to:

1. Transform agency data use from funder-driven to outcomes-driven.
2. Ensure high-quality and consistent service delivery across programs.
3. Inform program and agency decision-making and development.

Strategies

- Define, track, and utilize Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) across the individual, department, and program levels to facilitate continuous quality improvement.
 - Institute comprehensive case review and financial management processes to ensure audit readiness, contract compliance, and highest level of consistent service delivery.
 - Continuously improve services and programs based on ongoing feedback loop and maintain engagement with clients over the long term.
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Optimizing & Expanding Operations

Goals

1. Acquire satellite office space in two locations.
2. Continuously safeguarding client and donor information.
3. Build a safer environment for staff and clients.
4. Improve upon capital asset.

Strategies

- Conduct an assessment on our risk vulnerabilities and compliance needs to mitigate risks.
- Develop a building security plan that consists of safety procedures that maximize property and occupancy protection.
- Continue to enhance building via maintenance, capital improvements, and completion of existing upgrades.



Refining Interpretation & Translation

Goals

Ensure operational efficiencies for high-quality service delivery for clients.

Strategies

- Pilot and implement CRM scheduling software to improve client satisfaction and deliver greater efficiency in everyday business operations.
- Expand and refine service line offerings to attract new clients and to meet the needs of current clients.
- Develop marketing strategy to target communities of greatest need for NSC's translation capabilities and better establish NSC's interpretation and translation services brand.
- Engage in advocacy for language access among public services and institutions as mandated.



Programming



Creating Sustainable Pathways for Families and Communities

Goal

Become a hub of ongoing support for immigrant families and communities.

Strategies

- Expand supports for youth and children, ensuring that *all* family members have the information, tools, and resources for a solid and self-sustaining future.
 - Transform English instruction and employment programming to support economic self-sufficiency through enhanced technology, partnerships, and corporate engagement.
 - Provide a wide range of legal services that includes helping families change, obtain, or maintain lawful status, naturalize, and offer deportation defense.
 - Enhance family engagement during enrollment and following case closure.
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Expanding Programs into Communities

Goal

Expand the range of high-quality, tailored supports to provide a full set of accessible, client-centered services in resource-limited communities including Northeast Philadelphia and Norristown.

Strategies

- Provide targeted services within the neighborhoods where our clients live.
- Facilitate client connections with local communities to promote successful welcome.
- Expand housing, food, and emergency support options to meet diverse client needs.
- Ensure programs and services meet unique needs of particularly vulnerable groups.
- Deliver trauma-informed services that are fully responsive to client needs.
- Expand health access to promote wellness regardless of status or geography.



Strengthening Strategic Partnerships

Goals

1. Identify advocacy priorities to guide development of partnerships.
2. Assess current partnerships and relevancy to organizational priorities.
3. Create mechanisms to formalize partnerships.
4. Develop legislative action plan.

Strategies

- Create and develop partnerships committee to identify advocacy priorities and service-related priorities.
- Track and manage information about current partnerships.
- Develop processes to better formalize and standardize our partnerships.
- Identify and develop cross-training opportunities with current and new partners.
- Participate in joint advocacy campaigns and events.



Moving Forward

Funding the Plan

As part of the planning process, the planning committee and Board of Trustees undertook a thorough review of the agency's finances and operations, focusing on reserve funds, building organizational capacity, and the prospect for an endowment. The FY20-22 agency plan will secure funds through a range of strategies, including:

- Build upon financial sustainability research conducted through the planning process, with a focus on resiliency and preparation in navigating an uncertain funding environment and fuel future growth.
- Launch a Strategic Initiative Fund.
- Design and execution of 100th Anniversary Campaign.
- Program-specific fundraising and grants.

Acknowledgements

The strategic planning process took place from January 2019 to May 2019, led by a committed team of Board and staff leadership. Committee staff members included Margaret O'Sullivan, Gretchen Shanfeld, Steven Larín, Pamela Jones-Burnley, Akbar Ahmadazi, Caitlin Gordon, Caitlin Floyd, Brenda Gorski, Anh Hu, Danielle McGrogran, and Matt Ferry. Board members who contributed to the plan included Chair Nan Feyler, Alicia Karr, Brian Kim, Pat Ma, Lisa Calvano, Mitchell Bach, Kate Lang Rivera, Alina Ispas Montbriand, Leo Li, and Anne Wilms. The priority areas formed and evolved through discussions and workshops among the Survivor Services, Health and Wellness, Legal Services, and Interpretation and Translation departments.

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