



2023–2027 Strategic Plan

Our mission: ILAO opens opportunities for justice by educating Illinoisans about their rights and connecting them to lawyers, solutions, and each other.

Our vision: A just society where all people have equitable access to opportunities.

Our core values drive our work:

1. Putting those we serve first.
2. Focusing with intention on equity.
3. Respecting and serving the diverse communities of Illinois.
4. Simplifying complicated concepts into actionable tools and resources.
5. Cultivating connections and activating partnerships.
6. Courageously trying new approaches and taking calculated risks.
7. Continuously learning and improving.

ILAO's three strategic pillars

REFINE AND GROW SERVICES

Goal: With input and partnership from those served, further simplify, enhance existing and create new, relevant tools and services to optimally, equitably, adaptively, and effectively meet their needs.

Strategies: Co-create improvements and innovations

- To serve people better, expand our understanding of our customers and their needs, and leverage their insights.
 - Revalidate who we aim to serve and our user personas
 - Create a tool and process to support constant input gathering/idea generation, with particular focus on families and communities who will benefit most by counteracting racist policies, Legal Information visitors, and legal aid advocates.
- Co-create with those we serve enhancements to existing services, supports, and tools and co-develop new ones.
 - Create co-design forums (virtual/in-person/surveying) for gathering and activating input, with a priority on engaging with individuals and communities for whom the legal system was not designed and has



been the least accessible.

- Explore interest in expanding website content and ILAO services to address quasi-legal and wraparound needs.
- Continue exploring and testing other technology platforms and providing complementary tools and services

Engage those we serve throughout their journey to solve legal and related problems

- Create a structure to take visitors step-by-step through a process, where access to specific information about their inquiry can occur across multiple engagements.
 - Develop structures to walk individuals through a legal process, simply and clearly.
 - Develop technologies to allow individuals to save their progress, get updates, and visualize their progress.
 - Create a dashboard to track website visitor experience.
 - Develop connections between Easy Forms and E-filing.
- Create supports (website content and other services) that offer additional useful info not available elsewhere.
 - Build out helpful information on the website and through other tools that is practical, useful and timely.
 - Leverage ILAO's position in the legal community and our expertise in simplifying complex laws and processes to fill information gaps.
 - Continue to develop and expand LiveHelp to meet the changing needs of users.

EXPAND VISIBILITY

Goal: Promote ILAO's visibility and equity focus with primary audiences to broaden brand awareness, strengthen marketing return on investment and grow revenue with an emphasis on diversifying and enhancing the donor base.

Strategies: Increase Brand Awareness

- Evaluate the ILAO brand (by awareness and/or relevance to expanded impact) and consider if a rebrand is needed.
 - Reaffirm/determine vision for the brand and the goals of a potential brand assessment/rebrand effort.
 - If a rebrand is needed, identify the stakeholders, experts, consultants, etc. needed to engage in the rebrand; set a timeline, budget and process for the rebrand.
- Develop and invest in a proactive marketing plan that encompasses primary audiences and expands visibility.



- Define or affirm ILAO's primary audiences and the best channels to reach those audiences.
- Refine marketing plan and create multi-year strategy.
- Ensure that marketing messaging and development messaging align.
- Develop metrics and reporting to better reflect ILAO's quantifiable impact.
 - Create a scorecard related to impact that ILAO's primary audiences can understand.

Grow Funding Dollars and Opportunities

- Develop concise message points that articulate and promote ILAO's unique value proposition to ILAO's primary audiences.
 - Define ILAO's unique value proposition and create refined messaging that demonstrates how philanthropic investments in ILAO make a difference.
 - Tailor messaging points for each donor audience (individuals, foundations, corporations, volunteers).
 - Prepare messaging tools (talking points, elevator speech, funder ask), aligned with marketing messaging, that all staff, Board and other volunteers are equipped with to share this consistent messaging in any forum.
- Expand development approach and infrastructure with the goal of diversifying donor streams and increasing the number, dollar-amount giving, and retention of donors through targeted engagement strategies.
 - Develop engagement strategies appropriate for each donor profile (individuals, corporations and foundations).
 - Build relationships intentionally with untapped potential donors (civic leaders, wealth advisors, private foundations and corporate social impact leaders).
 - Grow fundraising team to support increased relationship building and prospect research.
 - Develop new and enhance current fundraising metrics, including those that allow us to understand the diversity of our donors.
- Explore new earned and other non-donor revenue streams.
 - Assess fee-for-service opportunities and other funding-related partnership models.
 - Revisit risk tolerance for investment strategies, in addition to fund development strategies, focused on mission-fulfillment.

DEEPEN CONNECTIONS

Goal: Develop, strengthen and institutionalize community and internal organizational partnerships to equitably address the needs of those served and each other, particularly in communities with less access to the legal system.



Strategies: Strengthen Internal Connections

- Continue organizational development in service of all of ILAO's work.
 - Evaluate and build internal capacity and expertise to continue to fulfill our mission in the most effective ways possible.
 - Consider tools, resources and other operational structures that could aid our ability to do this work.
 - Deepen organizational development/continue to actively evaluate and implement ARDEI recommendations related to internal capacity and belonging.
- Encourage ILAO staff and Board to connect, learn from one another and deepen relationships to better work together towards achieving ILAO's mission.
 - Assess and define recommendations on how to build trust and belonging as a staff and board.
 - Coordinate regular meetings between staff and Board to dialogue about service data trends, emerging needs of those served, issues of the day and strategic opportunities.

Deepen and Grow External Connections

- Identify work of current community partners that ILAO might leverage towards shared interests with those partners.
 - Clearly define what a partner and partnership are for ILAO and how to evaluate the quality of a partnership.
 - Develop a partnership development approach and plan that is informed by ILAO's established relationships to identify/confirm shared interests, promote capacity building and maximize opportunities to leverage strengths of partners and collaborate, with a priority on engaging partners working with individuals and communities for whom the legal system was not designed.
 - Develop an asset map as a resource to identify key partnerships to strengthen and/or cultivate, with a priority on engaging partners working in Black and Brown communities.
- Continue to develop and enhance navigator programs.
 - Continue the implementation of recommendations from the ARDEI assessment specifically related to navigator programs.
 - Better integrate Community Navigator program into current and future work across the organization.
 - Leverage ILAO's community connector role by continuing to lead, pursue capacity building opportunities, and contribute to the defining of metrics around the statewide navigator efforts and other strategies.
- Build relationships with court and court-related organizations to support new



website content development and other avenues of partnership.

- Renew and reestablish relationships with court-based Legal Self-Help Centers.
- Deepen partnerships with IL Court Help and JusticeCorps to leverage their knowledge within ILAO's services.
- Reconnect and develop relationships with circuit clerks.
- Forge new and institutionalize partnerships with faith-based, community-based and civic organizations to further shared interests, high impact and support for those ILAO serves and communities at-large.
 - Develop and officially activate formal relationships (when appropriate) to set actionable goals and strategies, and measure and communicate successes.
 - Explore opportunities to be a convenor (in person/virtually) to align and activate partners around shared interests in service to the community.
 - Renew and reestablish relationships with Legal Self-Help Centers located in libraries and other community organizations.