



Association
of Registered
Interior Designers
of Ontario

Strategic Plan

March 2022-March 2023



Background

An annual strategic planning process has been a necessary governance practice for the Board and staff to identify a roadmap and guide ARIDO to its next destination as a vibrant, rejuvenated, professional organization. It has also served to keep the strategic focus and momentum of the Board and staff moving forward from year to year.

In 2021, ARIDO centred its focus on advancing diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility within the organization, profession, and the broader interior design community.

The journey related to this work reflects a transformation within the organization to evolve beyond our history as a membership association pursuing a regulatory future; to one that also thrives as a community which is diverse, inclusive, equitable, and accessible.

This plan was formulated during two half day workshops. The first session, facilitated by **Decanthropy**, a design equity consultancy, included a strategic planning studio focused on building better for the future with a values-based approach.

The second session focused on a human-led conversation facilitated by **Chief Dr. Robert Joseph**, a Hereditary Chief of the Gwawaenuk First Nation and Ambassador for Reconciliation Canada, with a focus on engaging non-Indigenous leaders in healing and reconciliation within Canada.



Contributors to this strategic plan include:

- + Nadia Kuhni (President)
- + Jennifer Warling (President-elect)
- + David Gibbons (Past-President)
- + Darryl Balaski (VP, Finance)
- + Adrian Berry (Director)
- + Joanne Chan (Director)
- + Karin Crawford (Director)
- + Jude Kamal (Director)
- + Golnar Raissi-Dehkordi (Director)
- + Tatiana Soldatova (Director)
- + Bryan Wiens (Director)
- + Neal Prabhu (Educator Director)
- + Jennifer Suljak (Intern Director)
- + Lucia De Biasio (BOG Chair)
- + Izabela Cawricz (SOC President)
- + Sharon Portelli, Executive Director/Registrar
- + Irma Kemp, Executive Assistant
- + Maya Vnukovsky, Membership Coordinator
- + Ali Moenck, Communications Coordinator
- + Jose Tanabe, Regulatory Coordinator
- + Sandra Noble, Manager, Membership
- + Harrison Zhang, Manager, Accounting



An illustration of a diverse community in a park. A large green path winds through a light green landscape. Various people are shown: a family with a child, a person in a wheelchair, a person on a bicycle, a person on a skateboard, and many others in different outfits and activities. The path is bordered by a reddish-brown area. The overall style is flat and colorful.

Bold Statement

ARIDO is committed to creating a welcoming and respectful community that is dedicated to building meaningful, progressive change towards diversity and belonging.

We will boldly advocate and champion the growth of our members and stakeholders during various stages of their professional and personal journeys.

We will honour our responsibility as an industry leader to forge a new pathway to advance equity and diverse representation through actionable programs and policies.

The Three Strategic Priorities

Our **Bold Statement** is supported by the following three areas of focus which will be essential priorities to our continued journey over the next year and beyond:

- + Community
- + Value
- + Engagement

It is important to note that all the above areas of focus are interrelated to each other and the Bold Statement.

They are all considered to be critical to ARIDO's journey and future as a leader. We also recognize that our genuine intent for progressive change requires a multi-year commitment and journey.

Lastly, ARIDO's mandate of regulating the interior design profession in Ontario for the betterment of the profession and in the best interest of the public continues, along with the goal of delivering value to its members and demonstrating the value of interior design to the public and stakeholders.

The Board of Management provides strategic direction and the staff are responsible for operational execution. The strategic plan was developed against S.M.A.R.T. Principles so that each goal and associated actions are Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Results-based, and Time-based.



Fostering Community

Goal: The ARIDO Community is a diverse, inclusive, and safe space for all existing members, new members, industry partners, and stakeholders to participate authentically.

1. We will foster community by:

- creating inclusive policies that embrace DEI learning and accountability with ARIDO.
- developing templates and best practices for inclusive policies for adoption by design firms and community organizations.
- providing mentorship and internship with a focus on opportunities for diverse and/or underrepresented individuals.
- engaging Chapters to offer value-based programming and initiatives for local members.
- increasing supplier diversity by creating and developing an online portal for diverse businesses and support the advancement of diversity and accessibility in the design industry.



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- f. promoting the design profession and industry to:
 - i. underrepresented communities, newcomers, and diverse professionals;
 - ii. high school student populations.
- g. reaching out to past and prospective members of ARIDO to engage their input into how to best bring about the recognition and professionalization of interior design in Ontario
- h. launching a community outreach campaign focused building relationships with diverse and underrepresented groups, specifically BIPOC communities, professionals and associations, and communities across Ontario.



- i. strengthening stakeholder relations and collaborate with other organizations to build awareness of the value of design.
- j. keeping relevant stakeholders informed and garner their support for regulation.
- k. collaborating with the other provinces and IDC to develop a unified, collective voice for the profession in all jurisdictions.

2. We will advocate for:

- a. accessibility and equity through the design industry: academia (school boards, institutions), government relations (provincial, federal); and
- b. accessibility and people with disabilities in the design industry.

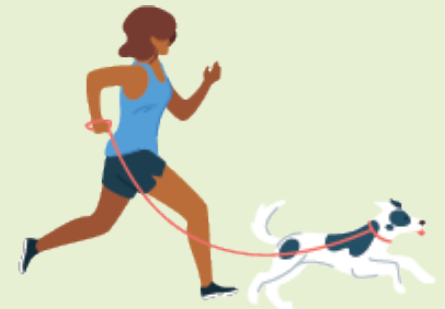


Reinforcing Value

Goal: Cultural betterment of the interior design industry with the end goal of increased value within the community, and increased awareness by the public and end users of the value of interior designers.

1. **We will focus on programs and initiatives that our members value, and prioritize the inclusion of underrepresented designers and companies, by:**
 - a. Expanding career path support in areas such as:
 - i. NCIDQ exam prep support,
 - ii. Connecting students to coop opportunities; and,
 - iii. Connecting mentors for Interns requiring qualified sign off for their supervised experience requirement.
 - b. Grow and expand the mentorship program to include:
 - i. students,
 - ii. peer to peer practice support; and,
 - iii. cross firm mentorship led and supported by principals/owners.

- c. Develop value-added tools such as:
 - i. Resource library, education workshops and lunch & learns focused on DE learning, knowledge, and experiences; and,
 - ii. Webinars and presentations on practice related matters, i.e., OBC, HR, financial management, succession planning, running a practice.
 - iii. Building Code Reference Guide;
 - iv. Guide to ethics and practice standards related to the practice of interior design; and
 - v. Interior design master class training programs.





2. Raising awareness on the value of design and qualified interior designers through:

- Education of interior designer's legal rights to submit for permit.
- Education of the benefits of businesses working with interior designers.
- Promotion of inclusive and fair procurement practices related to Requests for Proposals (RFPs).
- Educating industry stakeholders such as real estate brokers, facility managers, and project management groups.
- Showcasing what the profession does.
- Launching a province wide Interior Design Week, via head office and Chapters,

- Developing a marketing guide (elevator pitch) per sector.
- Advocating for the design of interior spaces that exceed minimum accessibility standards.





inclusive engagement

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1. **We will facilitate two-way communication between ARIDO and the members, and the members with each other by:**
 - a. Gathering and obtaining feedback from members, in a transparent way, on their needs and how they wish to be engaged; and,
 - b. Members informing ARIDO of issues facing them both individually and the profession.
2. **ARIDO will explore the development of a communication method either via an app or the website:**
 - a. For members to connect and discuss issues together.
 - b. To enable ARIDO to communicate directly and share valuable info to the membership; and,
 - c. To establish an online forum for members to post issues or questions for other members to help with.

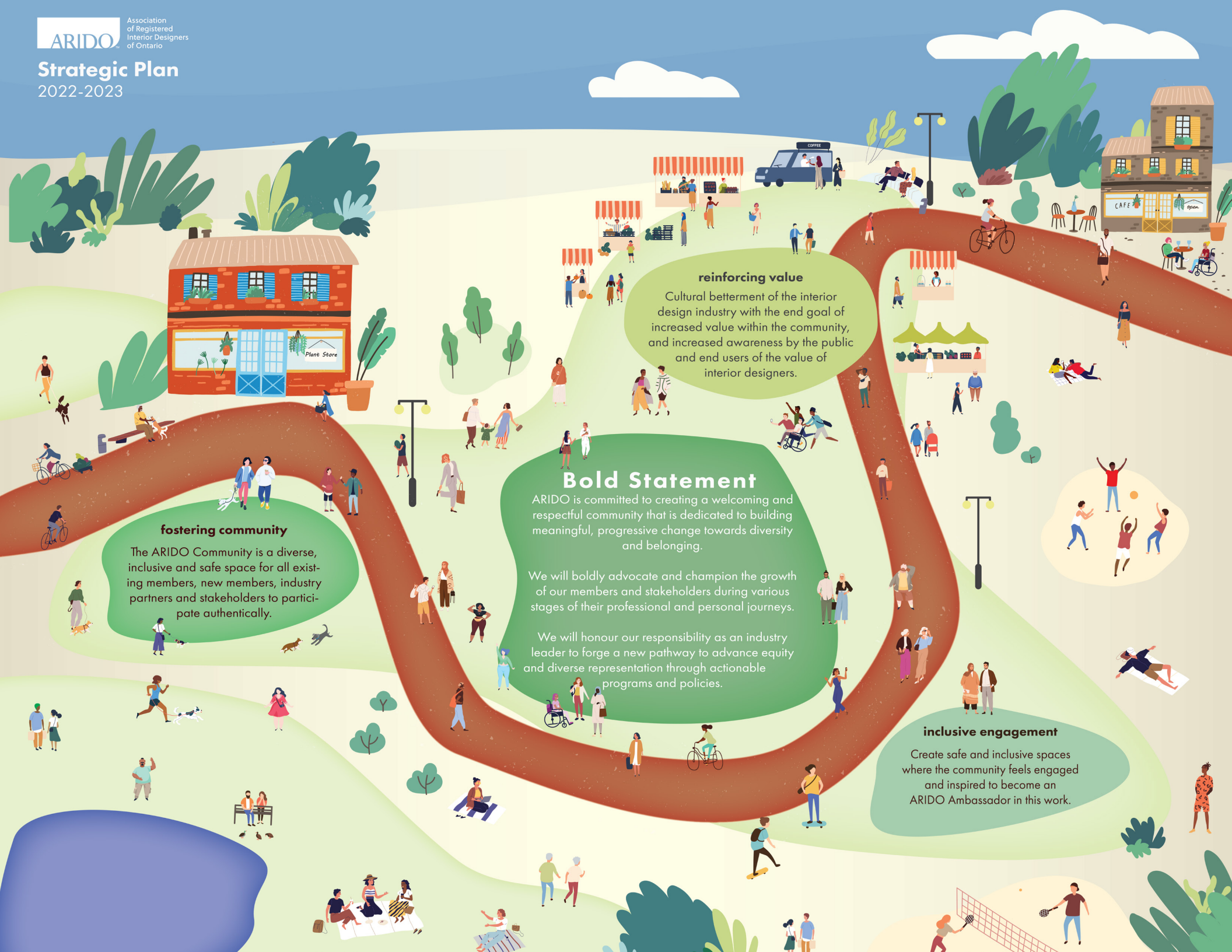
3. We will increase engagement within our community by:

- a. Finding ways to further connect and engage with:
 - i. BIPOC, underrepresented and diverse members,
 - ii. students enrolled in an ARIDO-recognized education program,
 - iii. Career Xpress Committee Ambassadors within the interior design programs; and
 - iv. faculty and Educator members of ARIDO.
- b. hold ARIDO volunteer sessions for all members of our community to understand how they can contribute.
- c. connecting different generations with one another.
- d. Empowering our community members to be advocates.
- e. Holding:
 - i. member story telling town halls; and
 - ii. Round table discussions with all levels of membership.
- f. Collecting real life experiences and sharing client stories from an end user of space and human experience perspective.
- g. Sharing member knowledge and journeys with each other; and
- h. Creating emotional story connections and facilitate discussion about real life experiences in the firms.

4. Collaborate with Ontario Association of Architects to develop a series of resources to assist in educating and engaging ARIDO members, Provincial government, and stakeholders on the future of regulation.
5. Engage Chapters in a strategic exercise to identify ways to better align their activities with ARIDO priorities.



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