IMPACT

APA AND APA SERVICES, INC. STRATEGIC PLAN

AMERICAN PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION

AMERICAN PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION SERVICES, INC.






















I am very proud to be a psychologist. Most in psychology chose this field for the pursuit of knowledge and to make an impact, and I've seen firsthand how psychology affects practically every aspect of our society. We live in a world that is constantly changing, and psychology is at the heart of solving some of the world's most seemingly intractable problems. How will psychology impact the future? And how will the future impact psychology?

As the leading scientific and professional organization representing psychology in the United States, the American Psychological Association is positioning our field to play a leading role in addressing the grand challenges of today and the future. Approved by APA's Council of Representatives, this new strategic plan enables us to focus the association's efforts toward maximizing the impact we can have on complex issues facing the field of psychology and broader society.

The plan was built on a strong belief that a new vision for the association should be co-created. Our more than 118,000 members were invited to provide input into a transformative path forward that addresses the needs and interests of the different segments that make up the field. For example, applied psychologists expressed a need for outreach that helps people understand their contributions to a variety of settings. Educators and trainers cited the need to strengthen support for graduate education and diversify the psychology pipeline. Clinical practitioners voiced their needs related to reimbursement and scope of practice. Scientists highlighted their need for more research funding and effective channels for disseminating their findings. And many psychologists across work settings emphasized the need to apply psychological knowledge to address large societal challenges, like the opioid crisis.

I am immensely proud of the new strategic plan that our APA/APA Services, Inc. has co-created and believe that APA is positioned to have a truly significant impact in benefiting society and improving lives. Our implementation of the plan will be transformational for APA, with the association realigning itself and refocusing its work in concert with its companion organization and the new strategic priorities. Working together, we can ensure that psychology realizes its true potential as a force for a better world.



Arthur C. Evans Jr., PhD
Chief Executive Officer and Executive Vice President
American Psychological Association and APA Services, Inc.











VISION

The change APA aspires to create in the world.

A strong, diverse, and unified psychology that enhances knowledge and improves the human condition.











MISSION

APA's unique role in creating that change.

To promote the advancement, communication, and application of psychological science and knowledge to benefit society and improve lives.






















GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The core values that must inform and infuse everything APA does. They apply equally across all areas of psychology including practice, basic and applied research, applied psychology, and education and training.

- **Build on a foundation of science.** Ensure that the best available psychological science informs policies, programs, products, and services.
- **Advocate for psychology and psychologists.** Demonstrate an unwavering commitment to promoting the field while supporting and unifying those who make it their profession.
- **Champion diversity and inclusion.** Further the understanding and appreciation of differences and be inclusive in everything we do.
- **Respect and promote human rights.** Focus on human rights, fairness, and dignity for all segments of society.
- **Engage with and deliver value to members.** Provide resources, opportunities, and networks that help all members at every stage of their careers.
- **Lead by example.** Serve others, model integrity, and demonstrate the highest ethical standards in all our actions.

OPERATING PRINCIPLES

How all parts of APA will work together to execute the plan.

- **Make an impact.** Focus on efforts with the scale and scope to significantly advance the interests of the public, the field, and psychology professionals.
- **Embrace a global perspective.** Advance psychology globally through international engagement, association efforts, and meaningful collaborations.
- **Build a stronger association.** Collaborate across APA to align resources, decision-making, and the contributions of governance, advisory groups, staff, and the broader membership with the strategic plan.
- **Increase organizational effectiveness.** Focus on the future, make data-informed decisions, invest in strategic priorities, create capacity for new initiatives, and emphasize outcomes.

STRATEGIC GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Goals are the high-level descriptions of what APA must achieve to be successful. To some degree, they are aspirational in that they are wide-ranging, complex, and ongoing. Objectives are more specific and address the component pieces of each goal.

Utilize psychology to make a positive impact on critical societal issues.

- Employ psychology to improve population health, increase access to services, and reduce disparities.
- Promote the application of psychological science to the development and adaptive use of new technologies that affect people's lives.
- Use psychology to improve the functioning of public and private institutions, organizations, systems, and communities.
- Increase the influence of psychology on policy decisions at the international, national, state, and local levels.
- Foster the advancement of human rights, fairness, diversity, and inclusion through the application of psychological science.

Elevate the public's understanding of, regard for, and use of psychology.

- Expand the public's perception of psychology to accurately reflect the full breadth of the field.
- Influence educational systems to foster lifelong appreciation and application of psychology.
- Make psychological science accessible and understandable to the public and key decision makers.
- Distinguish psychology's unique contributions in health, health care, and human welfare.
- Become a go-to organization for the public regarding the quality and effectiveness of psychology-related products and services.

Prepare the discipline and profession of psychology for the future.

- Attract, diversify, develop, and support the next generation of psychology professionals.
- Protect and increase funding for applied psychology, education, practice, basic, applied, and clinical research, and training.
- Facilitate greater alignment between the science and practice of psychology.
- Promote the adoption of new technologies and methodologies in psychology and guide their integration into the discipline and profession.
- Ensure that psychology functions as a hub of interdisciplinary collaboration.

Strengthen APA's standing as an authoritative voice for psychology.

- Expand APA's position as a premier provider of science, practice, education, and career resources for psychology.
- Establish, uphold, and embody the ethical standards for the profession and discipline nationally.
- Increase the impact of APA's legislative, regulatory, marketplace, and social welfare advocacy.
- Serve as a leading resource for standards and evidence-based guidelines for the field.



8 focus groups

EVERY APA MEMBER **was invited to take the strategic plan survey**

425 invited for interviews

COMPLETED 195 phone interviews
WITH GOVERNANCE MEMBERS

20+ *hours spent* **engaging major boards and select committees**

10K surveys received from members and nonmembers

700 responses received during public comment period

DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

As an organization that represents the entire field of psychology, APA must focus on overarching issues that affect the discipline and profession and engage in activities that have broad impact.

APA's new strategic plan—only the second in the association's 126-year history—is a three-to-five-year blueprint that reflects the best thinking of its governance, members, collaborators, and staff on how to succeed in the current environment and thrive in the coming years.

It is intended to be a living document that is flexible and responsive to the emerging needs of society, as well as APA's diverse constituencies. Rather than being an endpoint, the plan is the first step in a process designed to ensure that APA becomes an even more relevant, effective, and sustainable voice for psychology.

From the outset, the development of APA's new strategic plan has been driven by the idea that, in order for the association to be successful, the plan itself must be co-created by its members and staff, with input from the broader psychological community. To achieve this dynamic, APA intentionally sought the input of every member of the association.

In practice, this meant that APA invited every member of Council and its Board of Directors, as well as all division presidents, board and committee chairs, APA past presidents, and presidents and executive directors of affiliated state, provincial, and territorial psychological associations to participate in phone interviews to discuss the key issues and opportunities facing the organization.

APA also conducted eight focus groups with APA/APA Services, Inc. members and non-members and conducted a survey completed by over 10,000 members and non-members. APA solicited staff input through focus groups, surveys, and town hall meetings.

In addition to gathering information from stakeholders, APA interviewed leaders of nonprofit and commercial organizations to glean insight into how these organizations handle a variety of issues ranging from strategic planning to diversity and inclusion. APA also analyzed trends across key areas including research funding, health policy, and emerging technologies, to better understand the environment the association will be operating in over the life of the plan.

Based on this feedback, APA developed draft versions of the strategic plan, which were shared with the APA/APA Services, Inc. Board of Directors, Board of Scientific Affairs, Board for the Advancement of Psychology in the Public Interest, Board of Educational Affairs, Board of Professional Affairs, Membership Board, Policy and Planning Board, Council Leadership Team and an ad-hoc advisory group made up of members from across the association. Feedback from these groups was also incorporated into the plan.

APA staff then presented the plan to members and governance groups, including the Council, through a series of webinars. Further adjustments were made to the plan to reflect their comments.

APA posted the plan for public comment from December 19, 2018, through January 19, 2019. APA received more than 700 responses, the clear majority of which supported the plan as written.

The plan was adopted by the APA Council of Representatives on February 15, 2019, with an overwhelming 96.3 percent supporting the motion. This vote marks the start of a new chapter in APA's history.

The implementation process of the plan will be transformative and comprehensive, with the association realigning itself and refocusing its work in concert with the new strategic priorities. During the implementation stage, APA will again seek input and feedback from APA members and stakeholders on defining the programs and activities the association undertakes, as well as concrete outcomes within each set of goals and objectives.



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