



## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT IFSAC'S PROPOSED STRATEGIC PLAN

### ***Why is IFSAC doing a strategic plan now?***

IFSAC's last strategic plan was adopted in September 2017. When that plan was updated in 2022 but not approved by membership, the Council of Governors decided to engage a consultant who could help facilitate the process.

### ***How was this plan developed?***

At the April 2023 conference, the IFSAC members charged the Council of Governors with taking the lead in creating a strategic plan for membership approval in April 2024. Guided by the consultant, the COG met every other week, from September 2023 through January 2024, to determine which strategies would best advance IFSAC's work as a peer-driven, international accrediting body.

### ***What are the most pressing trends or issues with which IFSAC is dealing?***

The three most pressing trends or issues confronting IFSAC are lack of member engagement; low market penetration, particularly for degree programs in the U.S. and Canada; and international expansion.

### ***Given those issues, what are IFSAC's strategic objectives?***

We have three strategic objectives: 1) increase member engagement; 2) increase market share; and 3) grow the international market in an intentional way.

### ***How does IFSAC plan to achieve those objectives?***

We believe we can increase member engagement by introducing a tiered fee structure that would incentivize those organizations and entities that allow their representatives to play an active role in IFSAC's work. We can increase market share in both the certificate and degree programs by developing a targeted, relationship-based marketing program to increase certificate and degree program memberships. Finally, recognizing that our growth in the international market has been organic, rather than strategic, we believe we should consider a branch-based operational model that is more responsive to the needs and requirements of our international members.

### ***Why is IFSAC considering a tiered fee structure? Aren't there other ways to engage members?***

We will be making a concerted effort in the months ahead to reach out to institutions and entities that are not involved. But simply building awareness of the need is not enough. We're at a critical juncture. Our ability to remain a peer-driven organization depends on having enough members who are willing to do the work. We believe that a tiered fee structure can help incentivize member engagement.

To give you an example of the extent of the problem: In 2022, there were 76 Certificate Assembly member entities. However, only one-third of these entities (25) provided personnel for site visits. Given that site visits require three people per site team, on average, the 18 site visits conducted in 2022 could have used personnel from at least 20 more CA member entities. In 2023, there were 78 CA member entities, only 23 of which provided site visit personnel. Yet, the 17 site visits that were conducted required at least 51 team members.

IFSAC must increase member engagement if it wants to remain peer-driven, grow membership, fulfill members' expectations, and maintain its brand.

***Will the membership be able to share their thoughts about the fee structure?***

Yes. Once the membership approves the strategic plan, the COG will establish several ad hoc task groups of members to help inform how each of the strategies might be implemented. One of those task groups will be asked to review the proposed fee structure and recommend a final structure for consideration by the COG and the Certificate and Degree Assembly Boards. Keep in mind that it is the responsibility of the Certificate and Degree Assembly Boards to recommend for the COG's approval any changes to the fee structure.

***How will the new fee structure impact my organization?***

If your organization or entity allows representatives to participate in site visit teams, attend the semi-annual conferences, and actively participate on an IFSAC committee or task group, there will be no change in the fees that currently are being paid. Membership fees would increase, however, depending on the degree of member engagement.

***When would the new fee structure take effect?***

If recommended by the Certificate and Degree Assembly Boards and approved by the COG, a new fee structure would take effect in July 2026.

***What will be expected of membership moving forward?***

Once the plan is approved, the COG will form several ad hoc task groups that will be charged with determining how best to implement the strategies. We encourage members who are interested to consider serving on one of these task groups.

***Have we prioritized these strategies?***

Yes. Assuming the membership approves the plan, our priority for the remainder of 2024 through 2025 will be to increase member engagement. Without the support of our members, it will be more challenging to meet current obligations, much less pursue any new objectives.

***How can I learn more?***

We encourage you to attend the 2024 conference in April in Oklahoma City where we will be hosting a special open forum on April 4 prior to presenting the strategic plan for a vote by the IFSAC membership on April 6.