

MISSION

COSTI provides educational, social, and employment services to help all immigrants in the greater Toronto area attain self-sufficiency in Canadian society.

COSTI, founded by the Italian community to meet a shortage of services for immigrants in the post war era, is today a multicultural agency that works with all immigrant communities having a shortage of established services.

VISION

COSTI strives to be a leader in community service, using a client focused, proactive and innovative approach in planning, developing and delivering services. COSTI will meet the changing needs of a diverse ethno-cultural community while encouraging the full growth and development of its clients and staff.

ABOUT COSTI

With a staff of over 300 people, speaking more than 60 languages, COSTI strives to ensure that all individuals, regardless of language, cultural, or financial barriers, are given the opportunity to use their existing skills, learn new ones, and participate in all aspects of Canadian life.

Operating from 17 locations throughout the City of Toronto, York Region, and Peel, COSTI provides support through a wide variety of programs and services including:

- Youth and adult employment counselling and placement services
- Settlement services including counselling and cultural interpretation
- Reception services for government-sponsored refugees
- Family counselling and mental health services
- Housing support for families facing eviction or those marginally housed
- Language and skills training programs
- Rehabilitation services for mentally and physically disabled workers
- Women's programs including the Violence Against Women program



STRATEGIC PLAN 2012 - 2015



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VALUES

At COSTI, we are committed to:

- | ESTABLISHING A TRUSTING AND SUPPORTIVE WORK ENVIRONMENT WITH CLIENTS AND STAFF
- | ENCOURAGING CLIENT AND STAFF PARTICIPATION IN THE ORGANIZATION'S OPERATIONS
- | PROMOTING A SENSE OF COMMUNITY WITH CLIENTS, STAFF, AND SERVICE PARTNERS
- | ESTABLISHING STRONG ACCOUNTABILITY TO OUR STAKEHOLDERS IN THE COMMUNITY
- | FOSTERING THE ENRICHING VALUE OF CULTURAL DIVERSITY IN OUR WORK AND IN THE COMMUNITY



In 2011 COSTI's Board of Directors initiated a process to develop a new set of strategic priorities to guide the organization's work over the next three years.

The planning process included stakeholder input and an analysis of the current landscape (demographic, economic and client service aspects).

Strategic priorities were finalized at a Board Retreat held in November 2011 and implementation strategies discussed at subsequent Board meetings in 2012.

Achieving the objectives outlined in this document, ensures that COSTI makes significant progress toward its vision.

The identified objectives address the following strategic areas:

- Leadership
- Promoting Capacity and Operational Excellence
- Program Development
- Financial Stability
- Competitive Differentiation

COSTI will provide leadership on issues affecting the full settlement and integration of immigrants. COSTI will advise legislators and policy-makers on how their policies impact on the successful integration of immigrants and refugees.

Immigrants are valuable and contributing members of society. It is part of COSTI's vision to strive to be a leader in community service, using a client focused, proactive and innovative approach in planning, developing and delivering services.

Immigrants and refugees continue to face many challenges: skilled immigrants face barriers in connecting to employment that is commensurate with their qualifications; there is strong evidence that some Temporary Foreign Workers (TFW) are being exploited in the workplace; it is more difficult for parents and grandparents to reunite with their families under the Family Class provisions of the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act, and there is pressure on Canada's international obligations to provide asylum to Convention Refugees.

COSTI is committed to public policy that promotes the full integration of immigrants and refugees. COSTI will lend its expertise to policy-makers to promote policies and practices that further the successful integration of immigrants and refugees. COSTI will contribute to public discourse on the benefits of immigration and effective settlement strategies.

OBJECTIVES:

- Build an understanding of the economic benefit of public investment in newcomers.
- Propose solutions to current challenges in:
 - the Temporary Foreign Worker program, including their employment standards rights;
 - barriers to reunification for parents and grandparents under the Family Class; and
 - maintaining high level of commitment to providing protection for Convention Refugees.

COSTI will enhance its capacity and promote operational excellence by measuring the effectiveness of its services, developing efficient and sustainable programs and by investing in its employees through engagement and professional development practices.

COSTI is committed to innovation that supports sustainability and maintains a high level of service to clients. Measuring the positive impact of our services to make a business case and to communicate COSTI's story is key in securing government, corporate and foundation support. Continuous program evaluation and a robust client information system will allow us to effectively communicate our story with a focus on the impact our services have on the lives of clients. COSTI recognizes that its strength is based on the capacity and passion of its staff. Our human resources policies are grounded in healthy workplace practices. COSTI understands that the skills and commitment of its employees are essential to achieving our mission and delivering a high level of services to more than 39,000 clients every year. Given our current environment, creating and retaining dynamic and highly skilled employees remains a priority for COSTI.

OBJECTIVES:

- Engage Board, partners and staff in monitoring service results and trends, and evaluating program efficacy through the development of a performance measurement system tool for COSTI that communicates program performance and service outcomes to internal and external stakeholders, including funders, partners and donors.
- Continue to refine and track success measures through COSTI's Client Information System.
- Build capacity in service delivery through volunteer development and build on current employer volunteer resources to mentor clients accessing COSTI's employment and youth services.
- Invest in staff development to support Strategic Plan objectives and service delivery to clients.
- Achieve high levels of client satisfaction through excellent customer service and successful outcomes.

COSTI will develop innovative and effective service responses that address the changing needs of immigrants and refugees by improving existing programs and creating new responses.

COSTI's mandate provides for the development of opportunities in geographic communities in the greater Toronto region to better serve newcomers. Our history and expertise has enabled COSTI to develop service responses in a broad range of service areas such as housing, mental health, addictions, employment, etc. including opportunities for service delivery to specific populations including at-risk youth, women, seniors, the homeless, etc.

COSTI currently works with over 200 planning groups, community agencies, hospitals and school boards in the delivery of services. Collaborative and innovative approaches to service delivery will allow COSTI and key partners the opportunity to meet the needs of under-served communities and also develop internal capacity to build, enhance and sustain services.

OBJECTIVES:

- Develop key strategic alliances and expand existing partnerships with colleges, universities and hospitals to address new and emerging needs, utilizing an integrated and holistic service delivery approach.
- Work with non-traditional partners in the development of innovative service delivery models and trade experience and knowledge.
- Develop initiatives that support employment for newcomers, promote social inclusion, multiculturalism and citizenship.
- Explore service delivery opportunities outside of Toronto, including international opportunities.



COSTI will secure a sustainable future by diversifying its funding base, ensuring effective services and providing value for services rendered.

COSTI needs to continue to diversify funding and to build a stronger financial base for its services. This diversification is particularly important given the current uncertainty in the local and national economic environment. COSTI must become less reliant on any one source of funding and needs to transition its organizational culture to one of greater financial independence. Long-term reserves are critical to ensuring the stability and sustainability of COSTI.

OBJECTIVES:

- Diversify and expand revenue sources, particularly fee-based services, corporate partnerships, bequests and social enterprise opportunities.
- Seek and evaluate potential funding sources that support initiatives outlined in the Strategic Plan, are aligned with COSTI's mission and existing programs.
- Focus on under-developed service areas and explore non-traditional government and non-government sources of revenue for program and service delivery.
- Administer all programs and services on a cost-recovery basis and control operational costs.



COSTI will distinguish itself by communicating a clear set of values about its services and mission.

While COSTI continues to be recognized for its services and expertise, its competitive advantage is challenged as other organizations continue to develop similar approaches to service delivery.

By reviewing its core values, COSTI will effectively establish a branding distinctiveness that demonstrates and communicates its positive impact on the lives of immigrants, refugees and vulnerable populations.