

To: AIS Board

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From: AIS Strategic Planning Committee (Current members: Gary White, Jody Nolin, Bob Pries, Jim Morris, Cathy Egerer, Linda Wilkie, Nancy McDonald, Gerry Snyder, David Cupps, Wayne Messer, and Andi Rivarola)

Seven Comprehensive AIS Long Term Goals (5 years)* Presented by the AIS Strategic Planning Committee

1. AIS develops and implements plans to increase its membership.

PROJECT 1: Increase membership by 50% by 2022 (6,000 membership)

Short Term Goal #1: Add budget item to use paid photographers to publish top notch covers of IRISES.

Short Term Goal #2: Convene a group of leaders who have successfully grown their regions or clubs over time, and gather a set of best practices, along with ways that AIS could encourage or incentivize regions and clubs to use them.

Short Term Goal #3: Create a membership acquisition strategy that reaches out beyond current members.

PROJECT 2: AIS Publications Committee has a long term plan/program for publishing books and other material on a yearly basis and the list of items to develop is infinite.

Short Term Goal #1: AIS President selects members of the Publications Committee to set goals and publishing needs.

Short Term Goal #2: Publications Committee sets up a strategy for publishing books yearly.

PROJECT 3: Establish a pool of writers who serve the AIS needs of publishing books, the Iris Encyclopedia, online social media services, and the Bulletin

PROJECT 4: Establish a Membership Contest that include all clubs and regions within and outside the U.S.

PROJECT 5: Establish a month during the year to conduct a Membership Contest yearly (contest to be different every time).

PROJECT 6: Who can potentially become AIS members? What is the profile of our membership target audience? Create a survey for already existing AIS members to give input on this.

PROJECT 7: Establish a media campaign: use the results of Project 6 (above) to target this audience with media ads online and print, social media, direct mail, etc.

PROJECT 8: Develop stronger, active affiliates.

Short Term Goal #1. Publish a series of articles focusing on club recruitment and development.

Short Term Goal #2. Provide affiliates with ideas, methods of member involvement with AIS activities as well as club activities.

PROJECT 9: Conduct recruitment seminars at national and regional conventions, publicized to the gardening public and attend-able without paying registration fees.

Short Term Goal #1: Public Relations committee creates press releases for seminars. These could be fairly generic, with time/place/etc added by host.

Short Term Goal#2:. Create recruitment material, scripts and talking points for seminars. Or, if possible, send people to help staff seminars.

We will need some internal/external help to develop, or tap into other non-profits who do this.

Short Term Goal #3: Contact RVPs to encourage seminars at regional meetings. Provide them with the materials to hold seminars. (or personnel)

PROJECT 10: Offer a (60-180 day) money-back guarantee for new Emembers. This would give them the opportunity to see 1-2 issues of the Irises Bulletin and 2-6 issues of News & Notes at close to no-cost to AIS.

PROJECT 11: The AIS develops publicity programs to bring this offer (Project 10) to the gardening public.

2. Financial Stability: AIS has programs for financial growth and maintenance of its funds.

PROJECT 1: Diversify AIS income sourcing

Short Term Goal #1: Establish a Planned Giving Program that will start immediately.

Short Term Goal #2: Encourage members to include AIS in their wills and estate plans, especially people who have been deeply involved in AIS over many years, and/or hybridizers and growers.

PROJECT 2: ASSETS: AIS President establishes a committee to look into a suitable location, and financial requirements in order to obtain a property that would serve as a library, test garden, display garden and possibly a teaching site.

PROJECT 3: After Project 2 is completed, a fundraiser is developed to make this a reality.

PROJECT 4: Establish different levels of membership such as Supportive, Contributor, Affiliate, Benefactor, Society of Endowments, Corporate Sponsors.

PROJECT 5: Put together a committee that would develop and manage a yearly fundraiser (of any kind) to increase AIS funds.

PROJECT 6: Find experienced fund-raisers and discuss possible approaches to two techniques that are widely used in nonprofits but not in AIS: 1- Direct Mail Fundraising (including online); and 2- Major donor fundraising

3. The American Iris Society is seen by the public and by horticultural enthusiasts as one of the indispensable sources for information about the genus Iris.

PROJECT 1: AIS membership is surveyed in order to find out what membership needs are, and what is the level of service satisfaction.

PROJECT 2: AIS membership is regularly surveyed and 80% positive feedback is the norm.

PROJECT 3: AIS Board: a Board composed of a variety of dedicated individuals that are intelligent, diverse and where each member takes its responsibilities seriously, and with clear intentions.

PROJECT 4: Executive Officers that are visible, vocal, outgoing and all are effective vehicles to expand the organization and make it flourish.

PROJECT 5: The entire organization is focused and driven to attain goals set by the Strategic Planning Committee and their focus is the AIS Mission Statement.

PROJECT 6: Continue to create and maintain online resources of the highest quality about the genus *iris*

SHORT TERM GOAL #1: Survey other sources of horticultural and gardening information and determine:

- What are others doing that we're not?
- What attracts people to other resources, and what can we learn and implement from that study?
- Taking nothing away from others, what would we need to do to exceed the success of others who provide iris information?

PROJECT 7: Statistics on the use of all offered resources should be tracked and should show a marked increase above and beyond the growth in the market in general.

PROJECT 8:

Archival resources:

1. By 2022 The contents of the AIS Library should be online
2. By 2022 The Encyclopedia should list all cultivars and have a procedure for accessing new cultivars
3. By 2022 All nurseries have cultivars linked to catalogs of introduction
4. By 2022 Awards listed for all awarded cultivars
5. Pedigrees on Iris cultivars

PROJECT 9:

Immediate sources

1. A bulletin board created on the website for various topic areas
2. An "answerman" for Iris questions
3. A cadre of garden writers producing iris articles

4. Consulting Irisarians similar to the Rose Societies consulting rosarians
5. Identification Key on Iris Encyclopedia

PROJECT 10

Printed Publications

1. An illustrated R & I
2. Books on Iris or specific Iris topics
3. Magazines on specific Iris topics

PROJECT 11

Videos

1. Wide variety of YouTube videos celebrating Iris
2. Embedded videos in the website on various topics, transplanting, etc.

PROJECT 12

Webinars

1. Recorded library of noted Hybridizers
2. Live programs available by subscription

PROJECT 13

Judges trainings

1. It should be possible to access online judges trainings on all topics of the judges handbook
2. It should be possible to have background online information about the history, biology, genetics, etc of Irises
3. It should be possible to maintain one's judgeship online

PROJECT 14

Broadcasts; Radio & TV

1. Consulting Irisarians should be available to be interviewed on garden shows.

PROJECT 15

Observations & Research

1. Irisarians should be involved in citizen science projects
2. AIS should develop new information by the observations of its members
 - a. Test Garden reports
 - b. Challenges for specific types of data; rebloom, Purple-based foliage
 - c. Improved descriptions of cultivars.
 - d. Research sponsored by AIS printed in its bulletin and/or the bulletins of its sections.

4. AIS promotes itself as a useful and interesting resource for general gardening enthusiasts (not just iris specialists), and promotes its membership to all gardeners.

PROJECT 1: Education Programs: for members, affiliates, clubs, JTs are developed and used on a regular basis.

PROJECT 2: The Strategic Planning Committee continues to develop plans for growth and to create an organizational structure that is measurable and attainable.

PROJECT 3: A committee is introduced to continue to assess the success of the organization, including reviews of the different components that make up the whole.

PROJECT 4: AIS should conduct a survey of gardening-related resources and popular media to determine what we can learn from other successful groups / sites / resources.

PROJECT 5: A committee should implement outreach and member acquisition strategies from related (but not competing) groups with gardening interest.

SHORT TERM GOAL #1: AIS publications and resources should be designed with this population in mind, in addition to “hard core” irisarians – what would a gardening enthusiast want or need to know to increase the use of irises in their gardening practices, and to cultivate those irises in a healthy way?

SHORT TERM GOAL #2: AIS resources that address general gardening interests (with irises) should grow in popularity and use. A benchmark should be set once a survey of similar groups and resources is done.

PROJECT 5: General gardening outreach: Create a series of YouTube videos on iris culture and landscaping.

Short Term Goal #1: Create a video on planting and dividing TBs.

PROJECT 6: Actively partner with Master Gardener and other general gardening organization such as the Garden Clubs of America and OAGC.

Short Term Goal #1: Publicize the currently available media to these organizations

Short Term Goal #2: Share the speakers list with these organizations.

Short Term Goal #3: Poll the AIS membership to see how many are also members of these organizations.

Short Term Goal 4: Request AIS members to attend meetings of these organizations to share AIS information.

PROJECT 7: Market Research - Identify current activities, capabilities, and their effectiveness.

(Possible Questions: Where are we now? How much does the gardening public hear about irises and AIS? Where do they currently obtain such information? How frequently do they hear? What do they know about irises?)

PROJECT 8: Quick Experiments - Offer updated presentation materials to everyone who has speaking engagements.

PROJECT 9: Develop a group of speakers to reach the gardening public.

Short Term Goal #1: Do the activity reports of judges include their speaking and topics.

Short Term Goal #2: Require/encourage each Board Member to do at least one presentation annually.

PROJECT 10: Provide presentation materials for speakers to draw from.

Short Term Goal #1: Select from our current digital slides programs, either some of the programs or selected slides from a number of them. Collect and make easily available programs and individual slides previously prepared by members. Identify additional materials that would be useful and develop them.

PROJECT 11: Identify venues and groups where speakers may be effective in reaching the gardening public.

Short Term Goal #1: Create a database/clearinghouse that everyone can contribute to of home and garden shows, master gardener meetings, and other locations where speakers might have an audience.

PROJECT 12: Provide presentation materials to all members, possibly as a membership benefit.

Short Term Goal #1: Create and regularly update iris presentations, presentations about AIS, and general gardening presentations featuring irises.

5. AIS fosters and funds **research about wild and cultivated irises**, and it promotes the results of that research in ways that lead to improvements in preservation and widespread cultivation of all types of irises.

PROJECT 1: AIS should work with academics, researchers, and scientifically-minded hybridizers/growers to identify gaps in knowledge about the genus *iris*.

PROJECT 2: Once the gaps are identified, a series of small grants and/or competitions should be designed to fill these gaps over the next 5 years.

PROJECT 3: As the plan is developed, AIS should approach people in its membership with an interest in science and research, to see who might be willing to fund those grants or competitions.

PROJECT 4: With the publication of new research findings, editors of AIS' publications (online and off) should work to spread this new knowledge.

PROJECT 5: Goals can be measured once gaps are identified; at that point, we would count the gaps and work to fill a certain number of them in each time period.

PROJECT 6: Research and promotion of species: Conduct programs at conventions on preservation of all types of irises.

Short Term Goal #1: Ensure a speaker on iris preservation attends each Section convention

PROJECT 7: Promote use of species and species crosses in landscape plantings.

Short Term Goal #1: Develop media presentation on species gardening and range of habitat.

Short Term Goal #2: Create YouTube video on species.

6. AIS helps local clubs and regions fulfill their mission by

developing a comprehensive set of effective methods and tools for their work, and AIS is proactive in helping to implement them.

PROJECT 1: AIS should work with regions and clubs who have been seen as successful, and gather a beginning set of methods and tools.

PROJECT 2: AIS should also seek best practices from similar groups outside of its membership, along with marketing advice from professionals.

SHORT TERM GOAL #1: Once these methods and tools are gathered, they should be prioritized, and budgets should be proposed where national funds would be useful in implementation.

PROJECT 3: Established committees and national positions (like marketing, RVPs and club liaisons) should develop plans to connect with clubs and regions about ways that AIS could help them with implementation.

SHORT TERM GOAL #1: To start with, an initial set of methods and tools should be gathered and added to by the end of the first year of the new strategic plan, and available for board review.

7. AIS supports and encourages everyone to share their iris enthusiasm!

PROJECT 1: AIS creates a member contest with the goal of creating content for its use in publicizing irises and AIS. Such content would be available to all members, clubs, Regions, and Sections to use and build on.

*All seven goals are listed in nonspecific order, followed by projects. Some of these projects include suggested short term goals.