



Plain Language

STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK

— FOR THE FUTURE OF —

The Arc



The Arc[®]

*For people with intellectual
and developmental disabilities*

Words and Phrases to Know

(in order of appearance)

Board of Directors

A board is a group of leaders that oversee an organization.

The National Conference of Executives of The Arc (NCE)

NCE is a membership group. It includes staff leaders from The Arc's chapter network. NCE helps leaders exchange ideas. NCE provides training and mentorship.

The Arc Alumni Council

The Council is a group of former staff and board members from The Arc's network.

Goals

Goals guide The Arc's work. They help us make our Vision a reality.

Strategies

Strategies describe how we will reach our Goals.

Tactics

Tactics are activities that support each Strategy.

Inclusion/ Inclusive

Inclusion means people feel welcomed, respected, and valued for who they are.

Services

Services are activities that support a person. Services are available across many areas of life. They help support a person's independence.

Diverse

Diverse means that people come from different backgrounds. They are different races, ages, and genders. They have different abilities and disabilities. We want people who will bring different ideas and thoughts.

Center the Experiences

Center the experiences means that we put the needs of this group first.

Marginalized

Marginalized means that some groups are treated differently than others. The treatment is often negative. Some groups have been treated unfairly for a long time.

LBGTQ+

LBGTQ+ refers to people who identify as lesbian, bisexual, bigender, gay, transgender, queer, and other gender and sexual minorities.

Accessible

Accessible means that people can understand and participate in what we do.

Equitable

Equitable means we treat all groups fairly. It means we try to shift power from groups that have more to groups that have less.

Association

Associations are groups of people or organizations.



Dear Friends and Colleagues:

We are excited to present the new *Strategic Framework for the Future of The Arc*. The Arc's Board, Long-Range Strategic Planning Committee, and national staff helped create this Framework with input from many other people.

The Strategic Framework shares The Arc's vision for the future. It describes what we want for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) and their families.

We are committed to making this vision come true. We will do this by working with and for:

- People with IDD
- Their family members
- Their supporters

People with IDD are the heart and soul of everything The Arc does.

We want the Strategic Framework to guide everything we do, including:

- Advocacy
- Bringing new people into our movement
- Public education
- Programs and services

We do this work at the national, state, and local levels.

This Framework is the result of a two-year process. Thousands of people in The Arc's network worked together to make the document. The Arc's network includes people with IDD, family members and supporters, and chapters of The Arc.

We got input from people in the public and private sectors.

We did a nationwide survey. We got useful and important information from the people who responded.

We interviewed people and met in groups to get ideas, thoughts, and opinions. Many people and groups participated, including:

- [The Arc's Board of Directors](#)
- [The National Conference of Executives of The Arc \(NCE\)](#)
- [The National Council of Self-Advocates](#)

- [The National Sibling Council](#)
- The Arc Alumni Council
- Many committees and work groups
- Chapter leaders

We have a plan that represents the opinions and experiences of:

- Our community members
- Voluntary leadership
- Staff around the country

The Strategic Framework is a living document. It is flexible and visionary. It has no timeline. It will help us change direction to meet changes and challenges. The Goals, Strategies, and Tactics will help The Arc achieve its Vision.

We completed the Strategic Framework during the global COVID-19 pandemic. This pandemic shows how groups are treated unfairly. We have seen gaps in the health care system. These gaps affect people with IDD and others. We are trying to handle new and unexpected challenges during the pandemic. We want people with IDD to be treated fairly.

The Arc is committed to fighting injustice. We have done this work for a long time. We want to stand with others who do this work. We do this for communities that have been treated badly by society.

The Arc will use the Strategic Framework to fight injustice. It will help us address other issues in the future.

The Arc must build the disability rights movement into a more diverse and powerful force for change. The Arc must speak truth to anyone who will listen. The Arc will advocate and try new things.

The Arc will try to reach more people. This includes advocates and donors. We will ask anyone to participate if they believe in justice. Justice means that all groups are treated fairly. We want a nation that upholds the dignity and rights of all its peoples. This includes people with IDD.

Embrace the *Strategic Framework for the Future of the Arc* with us. We ask you to commit to working toward achieving our goals together.

Sincerely,

Frederick J. Misilo, Jr.

PRESIDENT AND BOARD CHAIR

Kruti Acharya and Jose Velasco

CO-CHAIRS, LONG RANGE STRATEGIC PLANNING
COMMITTEE

Peter V. Berns

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER



MISSION

We promote and protect the human rights of people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD). We support their full inclusion and participation in the community. We do this for people in all stages of their life.



VISION

Everyone values people with IDD. Every person with IDD lives their best life. People with IDD know that their lives will be good in the future.

The Strategic Framework has 4 goals. Goals guide The Arc's work. They help us make our Vision a reality.

GOALS

To make this vision a reality, The Arc will work to achieve the following Goals.



HUMAN DIGNITY

Everyone respects people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD). No one treats people with IDD as less than people without IDD.



SELF-DETERMINATION

People with IDD make decisions about their lives and bodies. If needed, support is available to help them make decisions.



QUALITY SUPPORTS

People with IDD have access to the services they need to thrive. Their families have access to the supports they need. People have access to supports and services when they need them.



POWERFUL VOICE

The Arc is able to make change on issues important to people with IDD. We do this in local communities. We do this at state and national levels.

STRATEGIES

The Framework has 5 Strategies. Strategies describe how we will reach our Goals.





We Build the Movement.

This means we mobilize people to create change. The people we mobilize are diverse. We raise funds to support our work. We help people and our chapters become stronger advocates.



We Speak Truth.

This means we share stories of people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) and their families. We teach the public about barriers faced by people with IDD. We center the experiences of people with IDD who have other marginalized identities. Marginalized identities include:

- People of color
- People who are LGBTQ+
- Older adults
- Immigrants
- People living in poverty
- People with more than one disability



We Advocate.

This means we make change on issues important to people with IDD and their families. We help our chapters make change. We support self-advocate leaders. We make change through policy, legal, and program advocacy.



We Extend Our Reach.

This means we connect with every community with people with IDD. We expand and support our chapter network. We prioritize the needs of marginalized communities. We make everything we do more accessible, equitable, and inclusive.



We Innovate.

This means we find new ways of supporting the IDD community. We try new programs and services and test them. We do this in partnership with our chapters.



STRATEGY 1

WE BUILD THE MOVEMENT.

This means we mobilize people to create change. The people we mobilize are diverse. We raise funds to support our work. We help people and our chapters become stronger advocates.

Survey respondents* view The Arc's name as important for:

General advocacy for people with disabilities
77%

Lobbying for people with disabilities
81%

Getting money from foundations and corporations
72%

Getting donations from individuals
69%

Getting government funding
74%

Appealing to those who receive supports and their families
71%

Dealing with the media
71%

**Among those who have an opinion*

TACTICS

1. Get more people to join the disability rights movement. Encourage people to lead, take action, and donate.
2. Help people with IDD become leaders in their communities.
3. Work with people with IDD, their family members, and chapter leaders. Help them advocate at local, state, and national levels.
4. Engage people with different backgrounds to be leaders in the IDD community.
5. Test different ways to tell people about our movement and what people with IDD need. This will help us find the best way to get people's attention.
6. Take advantage of the opportunities in front of us. We will start with small ideas and learn how to improve. As we get more people in the movement, we will do bigger things.
7. Build and maintain the best technologies and systems. These will help us communicate with everyone who wants to be part of the movement.
8. Get businesses and other groups to be part of the movement.
9. Get more people and companies to give us money. We will work with our chapters to get more donations.
10. Advocate for people with disabilities in a way that respects all of their identities. People often have multiple identities. Identities describe who we are.
11. Help chapters of The Arc speak together in a powerful voice. We want all chapters to send similar messages.
12. Tell everyone about the success of our movement. Then they will see us as a leader in the IDD field.
13. Communicate in ways people can understand.

STRATEGY 2

WE SPEAK TRUTH.



This means we share stories of people with IDD and their families. We teach the public about barriers faced by people with IDD. We center the experiences of people with IDD who have other marginalized identities.



TACTICS

1. Increase our relationships across media channels. This includes print media, social media, and radio.
2. Get better at messaging. Make a good impression outside of the disability community.
3. Create public awareness campaigns to change public opinions. A public awareness campaign helps the public learn more about a problem.
4. Get more attention from the national media. This helps more people learn about The Arc and issues that affect people with IDD.
5. Promote the things that people with IDD have to offer. Show what they are capable of as community members.
6. Help people with disabilities understand how segregation and isolation hurt people disabilities. Segregation means separating people with disabilities from people without disabilities. Isolation means excluding people from participating.
7. Raise the voices of people of color with IDD. Do the same for people with IDD from other marginalized communities.



STRATEGY 3

WE ADVOCATE.

This means we make change on issues important to people with IDD and their families. We help our chapters make change. We support self-advocate leaders. We make change through policy, legal, and program advocacy.

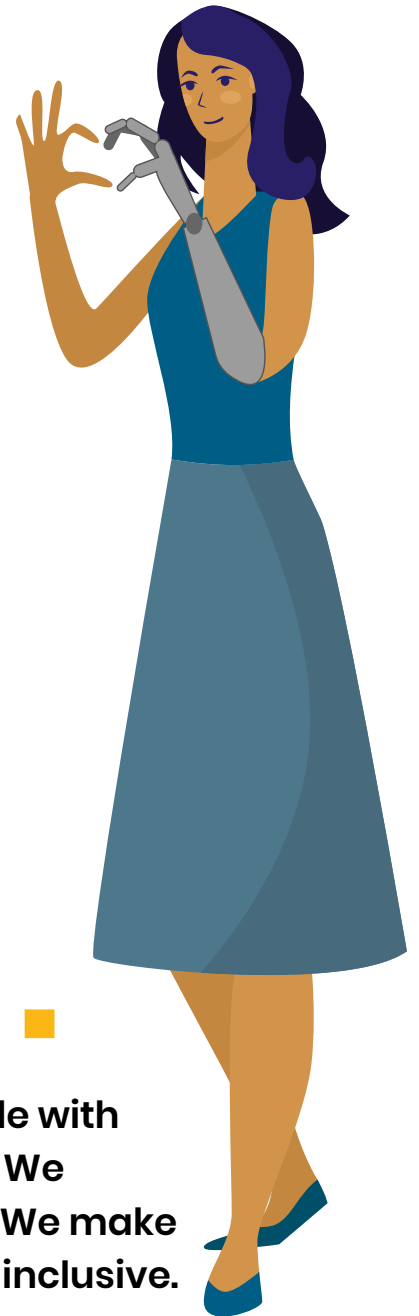




TACTICS

1. Support The Arc's chapter network to advocate. This includes individual and policy advocacy.
2. Recognize self-advocates as leaders. Support and promote the leadership of self-advocates.
3. Work with all groups in the IDD community to make more of an impact.
4. Work with elected officials.
5. Build our ability to advance rights of people with IDD in the legal system.
6. Expand relationships with professionals in the civil and criminal legal systems.
7. Expand our relationships with businesses and associations. Work toward shared goals.
8. Expand our relationships with:
 - Civil and human rights organizations
 - Social services and religious groups
 - UnionsAnd work toward shared goals with them.
9. Advance the rights of people with IDD in all stages of life.





STRATEGY 4

WE EXTEND OUR REACH.

This means we touch every community with people with IDD. We expand and support our chapter network. We prioritize the needs of marginalized communities. We make everything we do more accessible, equitable, and inclusive.

TACTICS

1. Help our existing chapters grow and become stronger. Help them succeed for many years.
2. Get new groups to become part of The Arc. Find ways to start chapters where we don't have them.
3. Provide new ways for people, companies, and other groups to interact with us.
4. Make it easy for people from different backgrounds to join our movement. Be fair to everyone. Make it easy for everyone to work with us. Help our chapters do the same.
5. Interact with people who are not treated fairly or are often left out. Find ways to work together for disability rights.



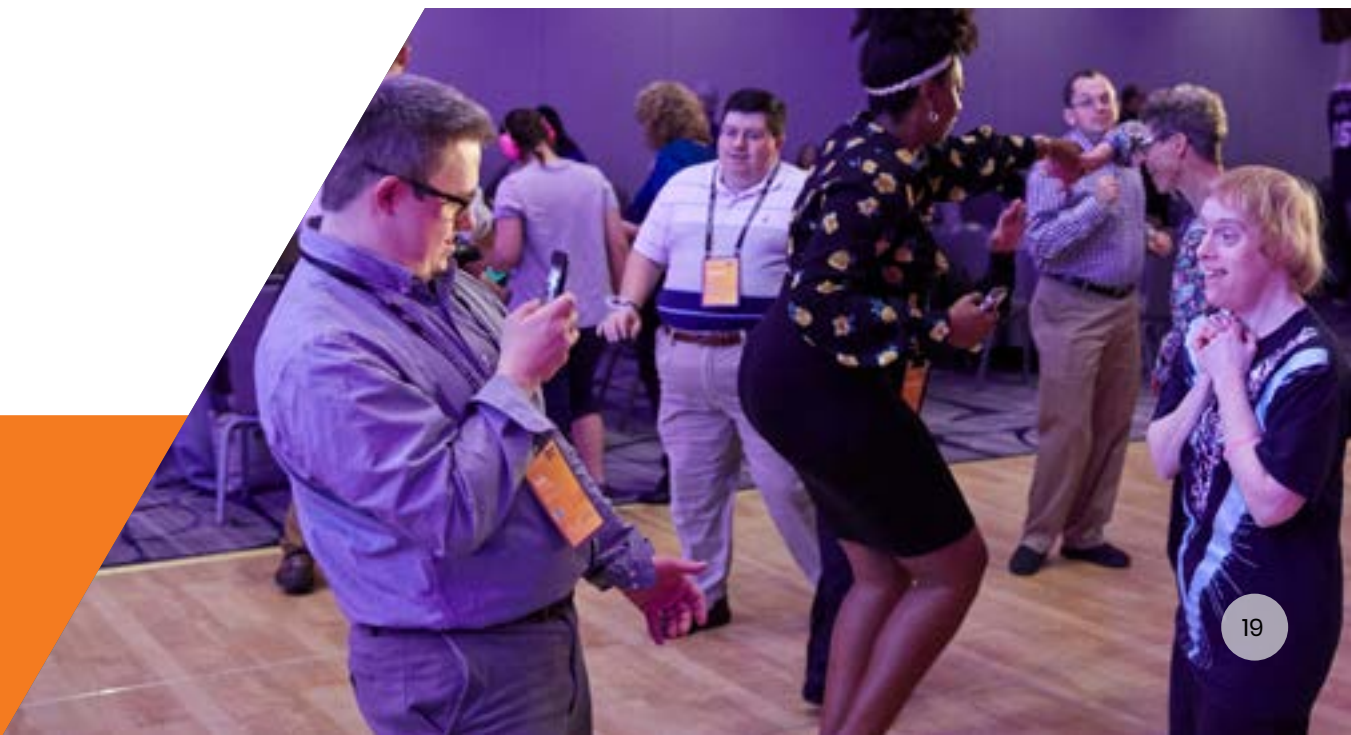
STRATEGY 5

WE INNOVATE.

This means we find new ways of supporting the IDD community. We try new programs and services and test them. We do this in partnership with our chapters.

TACTICS

1. Improve opportunities for people with IDD. Do this in all stages and areas of life. This includes:
 - Education
 - Employment
 - Health
 - Housing
 - Individual and family support
2. Help employers hire, support, and keep employees with IDD.
3. Help employers meet the needs of employees who are caregivers.
4. Look for and spread successful programs. We will focus on programs supported by evidence.
5. Find, make, and spread new ideas and promising practices. These practices will support people with IDD.
6. Explore existing and new technologies to create impact.
7. Share knowledge widely by bringing people and communities together.
8. Provide high quality and affordable:
 - Training
 - Networking opportunities
 - Online resources to support our chapters





**Thanks to members of
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Strategic Planning
Committee, 2019-2020,
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thearc.org



The Arc[®]

*For people with intellectual
and developmental disabilities*

The Arc promotes and protects the human rights of people with intellectual and developmental disabilities and actively supports their full inclusion and participation in the community throughout their lifetimes.