# Presentation of the National Strategic Plan

At the June 2026 ANF in Halifax, the National Strategic Planning Committee presented the strategic plan to members during a plenary session. So that all Vincentians can have the same information, for their awareness and understanding, we will publish a series of articles that include key elements of the strategic plan.

Each article explains one part of the national strategic plan:

In the 1st article, "**The National Strategic Planning Process and Its Principal Outcome**" (Article 1 out of 5)", we describe that the national strategic plan is structured around one main outcome and four pillars, each associated with specific outcomes.

The pillars are:

- Our relationship with values
- Organizational structure
- Leadership
- Membership

In the second article, "**Our Relationship with Values**" (the 2nd of 5), we explain that the SSVP's core values remain central and influential among its members.

In the 3rd article, we explain the pillar "**Organizational Structure**" (3rd article out of 5).

This article focuses on the pillar "Leadership".

## Pillar: Leadership (Article 4 out of 5)

Our survey and Listening Sessions clearly demonstrated that leadership is both essential for our organization's success and a current area of vulnerability. We depend on strong leaders to sustain cohesion and advance our Mission, yet there is limited support for recruitment, retention and leadership development. This pillar is therefore important for the present and future of the SSVP.

Results stemming from this pillar:

**Recognize leadership as both a strength and a vulnerability within SSVP**

It was acknowledged that leadership is essential to the success of SSVP at every level. At the same time, leadership was identified as an area of real vulnerability.

While conferences are independent by design, the lack of leadership training and structured support has, in some cases, resulted in groups operating with minimal connection to the broader SSVP structure without guidance or clarity around expectations.

By recognizing that tension, we create the foundation for addressing it constructively.

**Create a skills template to identify and recruit leaders appropriate to each level**

We also heard clearly how difficult it can be to fill leadership roles — especially President and Treasurer.

There's a perception of heavy workload, unclear expectations, the administrative burden alone can deter participation, especially for those who simply want to serve directly.

The Treasurer role can feel intimidating, given the financial, legal, and compliance responsibilities involved.

We propose the development of a skills-based template that clearly outlines what is required for a role at each leadership level. The goal is to match people with the right roles — rather than stretching individuals beyond what they can reasonably sustain.

**Develop onboarding and annual training programs to support leaders and promote cohesion**

Another common experience was that leadership transitions are often informal and inconsistent. Often, roles aren't clearly defined.

You expressed the need for clear documentation, role descriptions, and guidance on how groups should function effectively together.

This outcome focuses on building structured onboarding and ongoing training — Not just as a one-time introduction — but as an ongoing process that helps leaders feel confident, supported, and connected

**Encourage leadership recruitment beyond current members to diversify perspectives and avoid burnout**

We heard a lot about burnout.

In many places, the same small group of people are always asked to step up again and again.

And as responsibilities have grown — to include things like staffing, properties, and compliance — the level of expertise needed has grown too.

So, this outcome encourages looking beyond current membership — bringing in external advisors or new voices where needed.

Because sharing responsibility strengthens the mission — it doesn't weaken it.

**Address workload challenges by exploring and supporting emerging leadership models**

Workload itself came up again and again.

Some leaders described their roles as feeling almost constant — with unclear boundaries and high pressure, particularly during unexpected transitions, such as illness or sudden vacancies.

Encouragingly, new models are already emerging.

Co-leadership, shared structures, administrative support, external expertise, approaches that make leadership more manageable.

It is important to embrace these emerging models, and supporting them as real, sustainable ways to move forward.

**The key message for this pillar is:** We need competent leaders, supported by their conference and the higher councils. Our organization must learn to identify volunteers and members who demonstrate leadership potential, provide them with the necessary training and support them in their roles.

In the next edition of Chez Vincent, we will explore the "Membership" Pillar.

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