JESUIT REFUGEE SERVICE (JRS) AUSTRALIA

STRATEGIC PLAN (2026-29)

Acknowledgement of Country

We acknowledge that we live and work on Aboriginal lands. We value and respect the knowledge and living culture that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people bring to our communities. Those we accompany come to these lands at the other 'bookend' of Australian history. We recognise the stewardship of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples for lands that have become places of refuge.

About the Strategic Plan

The JRS Australia Strategic Plan (2026-29) aligns with the apostolic preference of the Society of Jesus to "walk with the poor, the outcasts of the world, those whose dignity has been violated, in a mission of reconciliation and justice." It is the culmination of over 12 months of review, reflection and discernment on how JRS Australia can better meet the emerging needs of those under our mandate in a sustainable way.

About JRS Australia

Inspired by the generous love and example of Jesus Christ, the Jesuit Refugee Service (JRS) is an international Catholic organisation with a mission to accompany, serve, and advocate for the rights of people seeking asylum, refugees, and other forcibly displaced peoples. Here in Australia, we accompany refugees and asylum seekers as they find safety and a new home. Our primary focus is on those with the greatest need; typically, those on temporary visas seeking asylum in Australia who are marginalised on account of their visa status. We promote and foster their agency, dignified inclusion, and contribution to the Australian community.

JRS Australia is a social ministry of the Australian Province of the Society of Jesus (Jesuits). This province has its origins in the 1848 arrival of two Austrian Jesuits in South Australia, accompanying a group of German immigrants seeking freedom and safety. Called to work at the 'frontiers,' Australian Jesuits are now engaged in a range of pastoral, educational, communications, and social ministries, continuing their accompaniment of those at the margins. JRS Australia's unique approach to accompanying, serving and advocating for refugees and people seeking asylum aims to reduce the impact and risk of ongoing destitution, crisis, mental health episodes, violence and disengagement from the immigration system. As such, our work contributes to the common good of the broader Australian community.

Our Mission

We accompany, serve and advocate for all forcibly displaced people and support the Australian community to fulfill its responsibilities towards them, both globally and domestically.

Our Vision

A society in which the dignity and agency of refugees, people seeking asylum, and all forcibly displaced people are affirmed and promoted.

JRS JESUIT REFUGEE SERVICE | AUSTRALIA

Accompany | Serve | Advocate

Who we strive to be:

A welcoming organisation that empowers forcibly displaced people and calls the Australian community forward in hospitality and inclusion.

Our Commitment:

We remain with refugees, people seeking asylum and other forcibly displaced people to promote their dignity and flourishing.

Our Strategic Pillars



Policy, Advocacy, and Communications



Accompaniment and Service



Financial Sustainability



Governance and Management

We are guided by our Ignatian, Jesuit tradition in our discernment of needs, centred on the lived experience of those we accompany.

STRATEGIC PILLAR 1:
POLICY, ADVOCACY, COMMUNICATIONS

OUR GOAL

To influence policy and public discourse to uphold the rights and dignity of people seeking asylum, refugees, and other forcibly displaced people, globally and domestically, by engaging decision-makers, mobilising community support, and amplifying the voices of lived experience.

HOW WE WILL GET THERE

1

Amplify the impact of JRS Australia's policy and advocacy

- Setting advocacy priorities annually, based on client realities, frontline and sector insights, and regional/global alignment.
- Enhancing our research capacity for thoughtful, discerning, and constructive policy advocacy.
- Consistent, active participation in civil society and Catholic advocacy fora.
- Direct engagement with government and political networks.

2

Sustain our position as a trusted voice, building public awareness and action

- Growing in digital engagement (website, social media, newsletters etc).
- Increasing visibility and influence (informed by organisational expertise, insights and lived experience) in Catholic and mainstream media.
- All materials produced adhere to ethical storytelling principles, centring lived experience voices.
- Increasing public action and engagement, measured through campaign sign-ups, event participation and donor engagement (material aid and financial).

3

Lived experience leadership and meaningful participation

- All advocacy initiatives include lived experience voices.
- Empowering lived experience speakers to advocate and promoting their voice in media and events.

4

Mobilising solidarity and support within the community

- Engage with schools and communities to promote action, advocacy and support for the work of JRS Australia.
- Promoting fundraising initiatives through school and community groups.

STRATEGIC PILLAR 2:
ACCOMPANIMENT AND SERVICE

OUR GOAL

To foster community and welcome for refugees and asylum seekers in Australian society by providing holistic accompaniment, practical support, and capacity-building that enables people seeking asylum, refugees, and other forcibly displaced people to meet basic needs, restore dignity, exercise self-agency, and locate pathways to safety, stability, and self-reliance.

HOW WE WILL GET THERE

1

Offer our clients access to basic needs to sustain their human dignity

- Maintain an adaptive Foodbank program that can readily respond to changing client needs for food and other material aid while drawing on the goodwill of community groups with capacity to support.
- Maintain our capacity for emergency case work to respond to clients facing homelessness and other complex needs.

2

Community and capacity-building activities

- Offer regular community-building events, including shared meals and common activities, that can provide clients with a sense of community and participation, fostering social inclusion among our network of supporters.
- Provide regular capacity-building opportunities to promote clients' self-agency and community engagement.

3

Enhanced pathways to employment and economic independence

- Maintain an adaptive skills development program that is responsive to client needs and available training opportunities.
- Expand our engagement with employer networks in order to match client needs.

4

Strengthened safety and wellbeing for people experiencing gender-based violence

- Maintain the availability of in-house psychosocial supports, as well as specialised legal or health services to meet the needs of all clients.
- Provide all SGBV Casework clients with a tailored safety plan in a timely manner.

STRATEGIC PILLAR 3:
FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY

OUR GOAL

To solidify JRS Australia's long-term financial sustainability by cultivating hearts and minds, building genuine donor and community engagement, diversifying income streams, and deepening partnerships. This will ensure our continued impact, organisational resilience, and a growing understanding of justice and compassion for refugees and people seeking asylum.

HOW WE WILL GET THERE

1

Proactive donor engagement

- Sustain and develop relationships with donors, increasing our active donor engagement.
- Nurture supporters by demonstrating good stewardship, personalised care, and communications on client outcomes.

2

Revenue growth

- Attract a wider donor base and pursue a broader range of grant opportunities.
- Diversify income streams through philanthropic foundations, bequests, and strategic partnerships.

3

Self-sustaining community engagement programs

- Work towards community engagement activities that raise self-sustaining revenue.

4

Data-driven fundraising excellence

- Improve the tracking and reporting of data on our work to demonstrate the value and impact of donations and grants.
- Produce quarterly fundraising dashboards shared across teams to drive accountability and progress.

STRATEGIC PILLAR 4:
GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

OUR GOAL

To foster a common sense of JRS Australia's mission and identity in its governance structure and among staff and volunteers, while promoting our long-term sustainability and impact.

HOW WE WILL GET THERE

1

Support client, staff, and volunteer wellbeing and organisational alignment

- Promote mission and identity formation for all staff and volunteers in the vision of JRS and its Ignatian ethos.
- Ensure staff have annual professional development, training opportunities, access to external supervision and regular work-plan reviews.
- Conduct regular staff, volunteer, and client feedback surveys to drive improvement.

2

Strengthened risk management and compliance

- Quarterly risk reviews conducted by management and reported to the Board
- Full compliance with regulatory requirements and annual external audits.
- Review and update risk management framework and policies.

3

Leadership formation

- Regular review and updating of the Board and Executive governance charter
- Board members and senior staff participate in regular mission formation opportunities.

4

Active volunteer and pro-bono base

- Maintain sufficient active volunteer numbers to support accompaniment and service programs.
- Pursue pro bono partnerships (e.g., legal, communications, HR, IT) to supplement administration and services.

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We are grateful to the JRS Australia Board Members, Staff Members, Volunteers and Stakeholders who were directly involved in the development, or who were consulted in the review of the plan.



Visit jrs.org.au to learn more.

JRS AUSTRALIA
JESUIT REFUGEE SERVICE