



**2024-2026  
Strategic Framework**

Adopted September 2024

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**Vision**

*To be the best at making associations the best.*

**Mission**

*Association professionals: Connecting. Learning. Leading.*

**Primary Customer**

*Association professionals*



## **INTRODUCTION**

The Virginia Society of Association Executives (VSAE) is a dynamic and inclusive community for association professionals in Virginia and beyond, supporting individuals at every career stage. We cultivate a strong sense of belonging and focus on the present and future needs of our members. As the go-to resource for our industry, VSAE is dedicated to energizing and supporting both our members and their associations. Our commitment to continuous innovation, an evolving business model, and a respected brand ensures we drive progress and deliver exceptional value to our community.

## **STRATEGIC PILLARS**

The following pillars form the foundation of the 2024-2026 strategic plan:

### **1. Create an Engaged & Inclusive Community**

We strive to create opportunities for meaningful engagement by encouraging participation from all association staff and industry business partners.

### **2. Develop Leaders & Individual Growth**

VSAE develops better association leaders for today and the future by fostering a community of peers with space for all to learn and grow.

### **3. Elevate the Community & Profession**

VSAE elevates the visibility and influence of association professionals and industry partners, positioning itself as a leader in the field by showcasing the achievements and innovations of our community.

### **4. Innovate VSAE's Business Model**

VSAE is committed to continuous innovation and adaptation by embracing new technologies, developing cutting-edge programs, and exploring creative solutions to meet the evolving needs of our members.



## **CORE VALUES**

### **Deep Connections and Authentic Relationships**

VSAE prioritizes meaningful, enduring relationships among its members, fostering both personal and professional connections. By creating a supportive environment, we ensure every member feels a strong sense of belonging and community.

### **Excellence and Leadership in Industry Standards**

VSAE aspires to be the gold standard in association management, serving as a key resource for best practices and industry innovation. By continuously updating and refining our approaches, we position ourselves as the guiding north star for association professionals.

### **Engagement and Participation**

We encourage active member involvement through volunteering, mentorship, and participation in educational and developmental activities. VSAE is committed to offering and continually enhancing high-quality educational programs to meet the evolving needs of our members.

### **Inclusivity and Diverse Perspectives**

VSAE is dedicated to fostering an inclusive environment that values diversity and actively seeks to incorporate a wide range of perspectives. We strive to ensure that all members feel welcomed, understood, and respected.

### **Resilience and Continuous Learning**

Resilience is a core value at VSAE, reflected in our celebration of the organization's history and achievements. We promote a culture of continuous learning, encouraging members to embrace challenges and use foresight to navigate future obstacles. This approach ensures we remain adaptable and prepared for whatever the future holds.



Strategic Pillar #1

### **Create an Engaged & Inclusive Community**

We strive to create opportunities for meaningful engagement, encouraging participation from all association staff and industry partners.

#### **STRATEGY 1.1**

##### **Elevate the participation and profile of the Shared Interest Groups (SIGs).**

- a. Establish a path for sustainable SIG leadership by identifying emerging SIG leaders/co-chairs for each SIG.
- b. Support SIG leaders to sharpen the focus and structure of the SIGs.
- c. Expand avenues for participation to include more opportunities for peer exchange and authentic connections.

#### **STRATEGY 1.2**

##### **Enrich volunteer opportunities within VSAE.**

- a. Promote meaningful volunteer experiences and the benefits of continuous involvement for all levels of association professionals.
- b. Diversify and expand volunteer opportunities by creating micro-volunteering opportunities.
- c. Encourage sharing of diverse ideas, perspectives, and experiences.
- d. Recognize volunteers for their contributions and service.

#### **STRATEGY 1.3**

##### **Expand thought leadership and knowledge-sharing opportunities.**

- a. Encourage VSAE members to become content and thought leaders on key topics.
- b. Recognize thought leaders who contribute expertise to the association community.
- c. Increase board engagement with the membership and committees.

#### **STRATEGY 1.4**

##### **Promote community engagement and relationship building for members regardless of their location.**

- a. Continue to host in-person and virtual events for NOVA members and prospects.
- b. Expand networking and relationship-building opportunities for members in various regions throughout Virginia.



## Strategic Pillar #2

### **Develop Leaders & Individual Growth**

VSAE develops better association leaders for today and the future by fostering a community of peers with space for all to learn and grow.

#### **STRATEGY 2.1**

##### **Support both organizational and individual growth of professionals.**

- a. Develop and adapt professional development programs focusing on different elements of association management, and targeted to emerging leaders.
- b. Focus on inclusivity and belonging in VSAE, giving professionals a safe space to develop their skills and confidence, and share their learned expertise with others.

#### **STRATEGY 2.2**

##### **Foster an environment that encourages continuous professional development.**

- a. Strengthen awareness about the CAE and other industry designations and encourage participation in those credentialing programs.
- b. Encourage association professionals toward lifelong learning at all stages, through both formal and informal learning vehicles.

#### **STRATEGY 2.3**

##### **Continue and encourage leadership development through the lens of leading regardless of title or position.**

- a. Develop programs and resources designed to meet professionals where they are in their career and encourage leadership skills from any position.
- b. Establish a mentoring program that helps prepare association professionals for success.
- c. Support experienced leaders with managing change through learning and engagement opportunities.

#### **STRATEGY 2.4**

##### **Optimize the development of board and committee leadership for VSAE.**

- a. Utilize Board liaisons with each committee and SIG to encourage information sharing back and forth to the Board.
- b. Develop leadership pipeline and provide support and training to board and committee leaders.
- c. Maintain communication and engagement with past volunteers and leaders to ensure their continued involvement.



### Strategic Pillar #3

#### **Elevate the Association Community**

VSAE enhances the visibility and influence of association professionals and industry vendors, positioning VSAE as a leader in the field by showcasing the achievements and innovations of our community.

#### **STRATEGY 3.1**

##### **Communicate the value and relevance of VSAE as a membership organization**

- a. Create and promote opportunities to share the value statement of VSAE.
- b. Share members' success stories.
- c. Promote VSAE activities to all association professionals who live or work in Virginia.

#### **STRATEGY 3.2**

##### **Engage subject matter experts from within and outside of the industry**

- a. Create programming and communication resources utilizing the knowledge and talent of industry experts.
- b. Showcase VSAE members as industry experts.
- c. Identify best practices from other industries to provide education and resources for members.

#### **STRATEGY 3.3**

##### **Engage and promote all levels of association management**

- a. Develop programming and tools targeted to various roles and positions.
- b. Evaluate and further enhance the ALV program.
- c. Clearly define engagement opportunities within VSAE.
- d. Communicate career path opportunities within association management.

#### **STRATEGY 3.4**

##### **Collaborate with other associations and community partners to raise awareness of the profession**

- a. Identify, create, and promote community partnerships.
- b. Create additional opportunities to partner with other SAEs.
- c. Develop relationships with local college and university hospitality practitioners to promote the association management profession and VSAE as a resource.



Strategic Pillar #4

### **Innovate VSAE's Business Model**

Prepare VSAE for a sustainable and financially healthy future while serving as an industry model.

#### **Strategy 4.1**

##### **Ensure VSAE's programs, services, and membership model are aligned with future trends and member needs**

- a. Assess and update current programs, services, and related revenues within the context of the strategic objectives.
- b. Assess and update membership dues and benefits structure to ensure VSAE remains relevant to current and prospective members.
- c. Evaluate and optimize internal processes to ensure they are scalable and adaptable to future growth.

#### **Strategy 4.2**

##### **Focus association activities and communication on resiliency, risk management, and business continuity**

- a. Position the association as a go-to resource in disruptions.
- b. Ensure business continuity in the case of disaster or emergency by maintaining a Continuation of Operations Plan (COOP) or similar plan for VSAE.
- c. Regularly evaluate and update VSAE policies, including financial policies, to ensure association sustainability during disruption.
- d. Enhance the website and online community to function as the primary source of information for members.

#### **Strategy 4.3**

##### **Serve as an industry leader, model, and resource for the members**

- a. Engage with other associations and industry leaders to stay at the forefront of emerging trends and best practices.
- b. Establish VSAE as a thought leader by sharing innovative practices and success stories with the wider industry.
- c. Promote VSAE procedures, policies, and resources as industry examples for our members.