1. **ISTR’s Vision**

ISTR’s vision is to develop a global community of scholars, researchers and practitioners whose members celebrate diversity, non-profit and philanthropic commitment to society and rigorous interdisciplinary approaches in third sector research.

Our definition of the third sector is broadly defined to include civil society in all its forms, including non-profit organizations and NGOs, voluntary associations, social economy organizations, community organizations, self-help and mutual support organizations, foundations, endowments, as well as other manifestations of civil society globally and locally, such as social movements, formal and informal networks and social forums, unions, religious organizations, co-operatives, philanthropic practices and volunteering.

2. **ISTR’s Mission**

ISTR’s mission is to:

- Support the production of knowledge by the global third sector community, identify emerging trends, and advance effective dissemination of research findings.
- Nurture early career third sector researchers through targeted mentorship and investment in their development.
- Foster research in civil society, its relationships with state and market sector engagement and philanthropy that brings about positive social change and informs public policy.
- Recognise and support researchers in the Global South through promoting their voices and knowledge in all of our activities.
- Promote academic integrity and freedom as well as freedom of association and expression for civil society practitioners globally.

3. **ISTR Key Areas of Focus**

**Over the next five years ISTR will focus on five key areas of activity:**

1. **Serving members through:**
   - Convening of international and regional conferences: Montreal 2020; Antwerp 2022; Regional network conferences to be held in 2021 and 2023 in Latin America and the Asia Pacific
   - Knowledge production dissemination through Voluntas, book series, working papers and other outlets
   - Production of quarterly publication of ISTR and regional newsletters to keep our members informed and provide opportunities for networking
   - Exploring the creation of a public repository for members’ research
2. **Development and growth of the ISTR membership by:**
   - Continuing and expanding the mentorship program in supporting the development of early career research members.
   - Continuing to run PhD seminars at the international and all regional conferences and running an Africa PhD seminar in 2021 and 2023.
   - Expanding the cadre of faculty that will work with PhD students in all regions of the world.
   - Continuing to run professional development workshops within ISTR conferences and develop new resources to deliver such workshops (podcasts and webinars).
   - Enhancing the alumni network of the PhD seminars.

3. **Develop and implement an inclusive global research agenda through:**
   - Establishment of an international research project on shoring up and enlarging the space for civil society through the research on freedom of association, assembly and freedom of expression.
   - Convening a meeting at the Montreal of interested researchers to launch the above-said project.
   - Strengthening and developing regional hubs for each network as the key contact point in the region.
   - Strengthening the current Affinity Groups and inviting members to create new groups where there are common research interests. Current Affinity groups include: gender; law and regulation; volunteering; teaching and learning.

4. **Recognise and support researchers in the global South through:**
   - Engagement in regional level strategic planning with ISTR Board involvement. This will be done through research/fact finding, engaging local stakeholders, and building on local knowledge.
   - Improvement of communication and co-ordination between ISTR and the regions, through having Board meetings in the regions on alternate years to the International conferences, on a rotating basis.
   - Investment in the regions for administrative support where possible.

5. **Ensure the sustainability and good governance of the organization through:**
   - Maintaining the Society’s financial sustainability and secure adequate funding to ensure the achievement of its mission.
   - Consolidating ISTR, Inc.’s transformation, through the development of policies that support good governance.
   - Maintaining a strong governance ethic according to the by-laws.
   - Investing in people working in the organization.
   - Developing effective organizational systems.

*This plan will be reviewed annually by the Board of ISTR.*