

## Strategic Plan 2020-2023

The Strategic Plan of the Canadian Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators (CASFAA) is intended to help guide the Association as it makes resource decisions about research, training, advocacy and community support activities. This Plan is built on the guiding objectives laid out in CASFAA's Constitution and By-Laws and summarized in the Mission Statement. The Strategic Plan uses these concepts to articulate a vision and set of goals for the Association over the next three years. It is recommended that this plan be reviewed annually and amended as needed to reflect emerging circumstances.

### The Journey Ahead

This Plan is comprised of several key components, from broad to focused:

#### Foundational Competencies

The core competencies which will raise and sustain our association.

#### Vision Statement

Where we see ourselves in 3 years and beyond.

#### Mission Statement

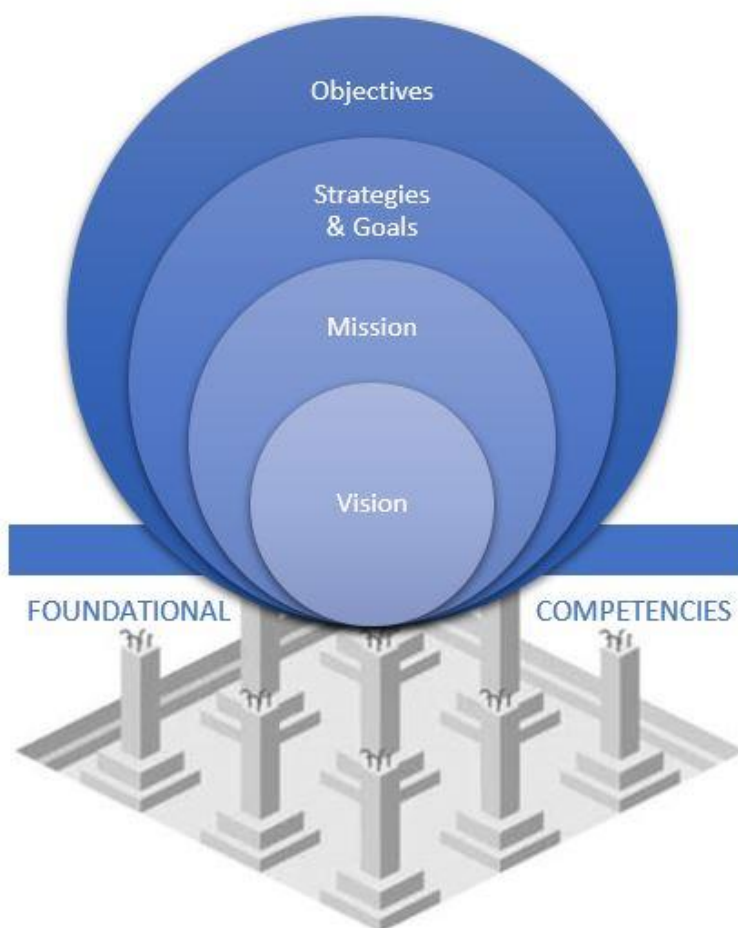
Who are we, what we do and how we do it.

#### Strategic Planning

**GOALS** are the statement we want to make about our business and direction we want to go.

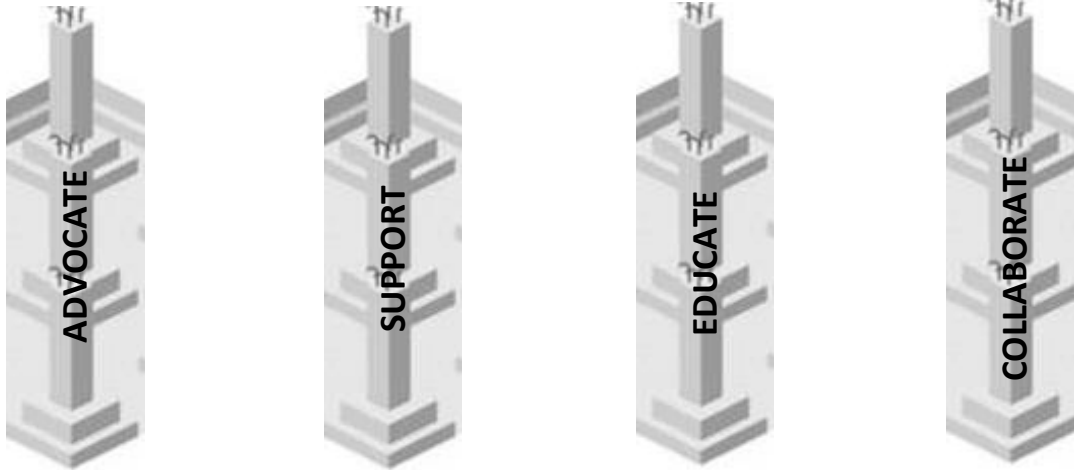
**OBJECTIVES** are the specific outcomes expressed in measurable terms.

**ACTIVITIES** are the planned actions to achieve the objectives.



## CASFAA's Foundational Competencies

The four foundational competencies **ADVOCATE**, **SUPPORT**, **EDUCATE** and **COLLABORATE** are defined as our core competencies to be leveraged for and fortified by all that we do.



Publicly support or recommend to/for:	Give assistance to/for:	Provide instruction to/ or create awareness for:	Find opportunities and work jointly with:
<p><b>STAKEHOLDERS</b>  <b>CASFAA members</b>  <b>PSE institutional leadership</b>  <b>Government, federal and provincial/territorial</b>  <b>Students and under-represented groups</b>  <b>National student associations</b>  <b>Provincial financial aid administrator associations</b>  <b>Financial Literacy subject matter experts</b>  <b>Other PSE partners, agencies, councils and groups</b></p>			

## CASFAA's Vision Statements

To be regarded as:

- A valued partner to inform and influence the direction of student funding for post-secondary education, the primary means by which include student financial aid and awards.
- A contributor and champion in Financial Literacy, promoting student academic success through financial wellness.
- Agent to enhance and strengthen partnerships in policy development, research, best practices and service delivery relating to government student financial assistance.
- Responsive and supportive to our membership, providing a strong community of practice with valuable opportunities for professional development and collaboration.

## CASFAA's Mission and Purpose

CASFAA represents Financial Aid Administrators and Awards Officers in post-secondary institutions who are dedicated advocates in helping Canadian students achieve financial wellness and success. CASFAA promotes the professional development of its members, and maintains a national profile with educational institutions, federal and provincial governments, financial institutions, and national PSE organizations.

As a respected player in the educational arena, CASFAA, on behalf of its members, takes an active role towards ensuring government financial aid policy removes financial barriers and focuses on student welfare.

This is further elaborated by the **five statements of purpose included in the Constitution**. While our goals may change from time to time, these principles should remain as originally written.

1. To promote the professional and education development of its members.
2. To foster communication among student financial aid and awards personnel at post-secondary institutions in Canada in regard to need-based programs and scholarship programs.
3. To review all government financial assistance policies and administrative processes and, on behalf of our members, make recommendations for appropriate changes in student assistance programs to promote accessibility and affordability, support retention and encourage scholarship.
4. To initiate or conduct and/or support studies/research on financial aid and financial literacy as required.
5. To cooperate with other agencies, councils, and/or groups as appropriate.

### Values

Our mission and purpose shall be executed **collaboratively** and **transparently**, with **integrity** and **student centeredness**, and in a **sustainable** manner.

### **Strategic Goals, Objectives and Activities**

Table 1 outlines CASFAA's five strategic goals, which are the 'big picture' statements about our organization and the direction we collectively wish to take. The objectives identify specific desired outcomes. The activities are the planned actions to accomplish these. Each year the CASFAA Board will reflect on these to assign priorities and timelines. Considerations will include resource availability and any environmental trends or current events (e.g. policy shifts relating to government programs) which impact the ability to fulfill our mandate. Additionally, the Board will provide progress reports to the membership based on this format.

### **Conclusion**

This Strategic Plan is a living document which shall be adapted as the need and opportunity arises. It is not intended to be prescriptive but rather to create an occasion for dialogue and a common direction toward which our communal efforts will be placed.

The Strategic Plan will be tabled at each Annual General Meeting to provide members with a progress report and to solicit feedback on future direction. Members may write to [president@casfaa.ca](mailto:president@casfaa.ca) anytime to share comments and ideas.

**Table 1: Strategic Goals and Objectives (spanning three years to 2023)**

Goal	Objectives	Activities	Advocate	Support	Educate	Collaborate	Planned timeframe	Status Report as of June 1, 2021
<p>Build a strong and sustainable association</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Expand membership to grow resources.</li> <li>Increase member engagement to amplify activities and impact.</li> <li>Enhance links with province-based financial aid administrator associations, to leverage mutual interests.</li> <li>Ensure web and communications are current, relevant, and engaging.</li> <li>Ensure transparent and sustainable governance.</li> <li>Continue to be a valued organization to external stakeholders.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Annual membership drive with publication outlining benefits and value-proposition.</li> <li>Form Working Groups and Standing Committees for members to participate in.</li> <li>Leverage National Data Benchmarking data and reports.</li> <li>Undertake 3<sup>rd</sup> National Data Benchmarking survey</li> <li>Portion of AGM dedicated to presentation and feedback on priorities and outcomes.</li> <li>Modernize CASFAA website layout and functionality.</li> </ul>	<p>✓  ✓  ✓</p>	<p>✓  ✓  ✓  ✓</p>	<p> ✓  ✓  ✓  ✓</p>	<p> ✓  ✓  ✓  ✓</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ongoing</li> <li>ongoing</li> <li>ongoing</li> <li>no later than fall 2022</li> <li>2021 AGM</li> <li>ongoing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Additional schools joined to participate in Benchmarking survey</li> <li>Standing Committee on Benchmarking in place for 2 years.</li> <li>1<sup>st</sup> round of web platform improvements completed; larger rebranding and extra functionality in progress.</li> <li>COVID-related government aid tracker</li> <li>Replaced traditional semi-annual newsletter with improved communications with more frequent bit-sized distribution.</li> </ul>

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Professional and Education Development of Members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide timely and cost-effective training.</li> <li>• Provide timely, strong and effective communications.</li> <li>• Foster a strong community of practitioners.</li> <li>• Elevate the strategic role of Financial Aid &amp; Award Offices within educational institutions with respect to recruitment and retention, as well as policy.</li> <li>• Increase collaboration opportunities.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue to offer an outstanding annual conference that provides training and a forum for the exchange of ideas.</li> <li>• Create and deliver a series of webinars</li> <li>• Create robust training curriculum for members.</li> <li>• Create a Strategic Communications Plan.</li> <li>• Form Working Groups for members to participate in.</li> <li>• Redesign CASFAA website</li> </ul>	<p>✓</p> <p>✓</p> <p>✓</p> <p>✓</p> <p>✓</p> <p>✓</p>	<p>✓</p> <p>✓</p> <p>✓</p> <p>✓</p> <p>✓</p> <p>✓</p>	<p>✓</p> <p>✓</p> <p>✓</p> <p>✓</p> <p>✓</p> <p>✓</p>	<p>✓</p> <p>✓</p> <p>✓</p> <p>✓</p> <p>✓</p> <p>✓</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Annually</li> <li>• first training module offered March 2021</li> <li>• 2020/ 21</li> <li>• Underway</li> <li>• Conference committee struck</li> <li>• Commencing early 2021</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Foundations in Student Financial Assistance in Canada” piloted in Feb 2021.</li> <li>• Two CASFAA Community Coffee Hour sessions to date (Summer Gov Aid, Awards Management &amp; Vendor Solutions)</li> <li>• Session for members interested in CASFAA Research Grant cycle.</li> <li>• CASFAA Website redesign underway.</li> <li>• Virtual annual conference 2021.</li> </ul>

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Goal	Objectives	Activities	Advocate	Support	Educate	Collaborate	Planned timeframe	Status Report as of June 1, 2021
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Working groups on specialized topics: Indigenous funding, disability funding and mental health links to financial wellness to inform the Board.</li> <li>• Transform mandate of Standing Committee on Benchmarking to include ongoing data analysis and environmental trends</li> <li>• Explore the creation of repository of relevant research studies and literature reviews to keep members current.</li> </ul>	✓	✓	✓	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2021/22</li> <li>• 2021/22</li> <li>• 2021/22</li> </ul>	



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Goal	Objectives	Activities	Advocate	Support	Educate	Collaborate	Planned timeframe	Status Report as of Jun 1, 2021
<p>Be a valued stakeholder in Canada Student Loan Program service delivery</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue to Co-chair and member of CSLP National Advisory Group on Student Financial Assistance (NAGSFA).</li> <li>Maintain good relations with CSLP, NSLSC, provincial programs and student/PSE stakeholders.</li> <li>Leverage CASFAA expertise in the realm of Student Financial Assistance ensuring an EI voice is represented in operational conversations.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Participate in discussions and presentations to create awareness about CASFAA and the EI role in gov't aid</li> <li>Participation in requirements development of the NSLSC portal and testing/focus group</li> <li>Engage with ICCSFA</li> <li>Report back to membership</li> </ul>	<p>✓ ✓ ✓ ✓</p>	<p>✓ ✓ ✓ ✓</p>	<p>✓ ✓ ✓ ✓</p>	<p>✓ ✓ ✓ ✓</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ongoing</li> <li>ongoing</li> <li>ongoing</li> <li>ongoing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Co-Chaired NAGSFA, bringing finlit as a facilitated topic.</li> <li>Regular meetings with CSLP, continued test group for NSLSC EI Portal</li> <li>Successfully navigated change in CSLP leadership, monthly meetings with new DG.</li> </ul>

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<p>Inform and influence the direction of Canada Student Loan Program policy and impact.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continued co-Chair and member of CSLP National Advisory Group on Student Financial Aid (NAGSFA)</li> <li>Use evidence-based orientation to strengthen policy positions.</li> <li>Initiate and support research projects.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Update of Policy Positions document- Compendium and Brief.</li> <li>Annual Pre-Budget submission to Standing Finance Committee.</li> <li>CASFAA Research Grant program</li> <li>Engage with ICCSFA</li> <li>Continue to host CSLP leadership at CASFAA Board retreat, key Board meetings and conference activities</li> </ul>	<p>✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓</p>	<p>✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓</p>	<p>✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓</p>	<p>✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Annually</li> <li>As opportunity arises</li> <li>Bi-annually</li> <li>ongoing</li> <li>ongoing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Annual submission to Standing Finance Committee.</li> <li>Publication of Policy Positions, with many addressed in latest Federal Budget.</li> </ul>
<p>Champion Financial Literacy</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Encourage focus on PSE student-specific financial wellness.</li> <li>Deploy financial wellness workshops across the country.</li> <li>Increase financial wellness content and membership engagement on website and in newsletter</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Dedicated financial literacy sessions and discussions at annual conference.</li> <li>Encourage best practice sharing amongst members.</li> <li>Engage with CSLP on financial literacy and entrance counseling opportunities</li> <li>CASFAA Research Grant program</li> <li>Foster collaborations with FCAC</li> <li>Explore and procure technologies delivering online conferences and workshops</li> </ul>	<p>✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓</p>	<p>✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓</p>	<p>✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓</p>	<p>✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ongoing</li> <li>Ongoing</li> <li>Starting early 2021</li> <li>Ongoing starting 2021</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Participated in Auditor General review of CSLP, with finlit being an important outcome.</li> <li>CASFAA Research Grant adjudicated in 2021.</li> </ul>

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