



# 2030 Strategic Plan

Long-term sustainability is key to responding effectively to growing humanitarian crises. Join us in ensuring displaced families arriving in New England receive the right support to thrive and contribute to our communities.

A LETTER FROM OUR LEADERSHIP

For over a century, the International Institute of New England (IINE) has dedicated itself to welcoming and supporting refugees and immigrants who arrive in the region seeking a better life.



Jeff Thielman  
President & CEO

We do this by providing a continuum of services including resettlement, education, employment, and legal support — always guided by the goal of providing individuals and families with a strong foundation so that, over time, they can thrive, fulfill their dreams, and contribute to New England’s growth and prosperity.

We are excited to introduce our new Strategic Plan. Over the past few years, we have provided support to a record number of refugees and immigrants, increasing our numbers served annually between 2018 and 2023 by more than 450%. Our clients arrive after escaping persecution, violence, and instability in their home countries and turn to IINE for hope and support for a new start. Responding to a significant increase in need has required IINE to adapt and grow quickly. It has also taught us an important lesson: To be able to respond to growing humanitarian crises and shifting political priorities, we need to ensure our own long-term sustainability — and that is possible only with a strong infrastructure, deep institutional knowledge, and reliable and diverse revenue sources.

This learning has guided IINE’s new Strategic Plan, which defines the goals for the next phase of the work and focuses on how IINE can expand its impact over the next five years. We invite you to join us as we embark on this new chapter and another century of service. Your support will ensure that as the number of displaced people arriving in New England grows, each family is met with a warm welcome and given the tools needed to integrate and succeed. As we know, with a strong foundation, refugees and immigrants go on to give back so much more to our communities than they initially receive.

Sincerely,

OUR MISSION

The mission of the International Institute of New England is to create opportunities for refugees and immigrants to succeed through resettlement, education, career advancement, and pathways to citizenship.

OUR VISION

Refugees and immigrants are able to realize their dreams and contribute to New England’s growth and prosperity.

WHO WE SERVE

**Refugees**

Individuals who have crossed an international border and have a well-founded fear of persecution. Eligible for benefits and to be placed in housing by a resettlement agency.

**Asylum Seekers**

Individuals who leave their home countries with the hope of obtaining the same protections given to refugees once they arrive at their country of destination.

**Temporary Protected Status**

A status allowing designated residents, who were born outside of the U.S. and are not citizens, to remain in the U.S. while it is deemed unsafe to return to their country of origin.

**Humanitarian Parolees**

A status allowing individuals to come to the U.S. temporarily for urgent humanitarian reasons.

**Victims of Trafficking**

People who are subjected to force, fraud, or coercion for the purpose of commercial sex, debt bondage, or involuntary labor.

**Unaccompanied Children**

People younger than 18 years old who enter the U.S. independently of a parent or legal guardian, fleeing unlivable conditions in their home country, to reunite with family members in the U.S.



## Our Core Services

1.

### Resettlement and Case Management

Our team helps refugees find a home and a job, registers children for school, enrolls families in health plans, and helps newcomers transition from insecurity to a healthy new beginning.

2.

### Education and Workforce Preparation

Each year more than 1,500 immigrant adults enroll in our multi-level English-language classes, skills-training classes, and employment programs. We offer specialized vocational training programs that prepare people for entry-level jobs in healthcare and hospitality and a Nursing Assistant program to meet industry demand in Lowell and Manchester.

3.

### Legal Services

We provide trustworthy and affordable legal services to people seeking help with immigration forms and procedures, including work authorization, permanent resident status, citizenship, family reunification, and more.

4.

### Unaccompanied Children's Program

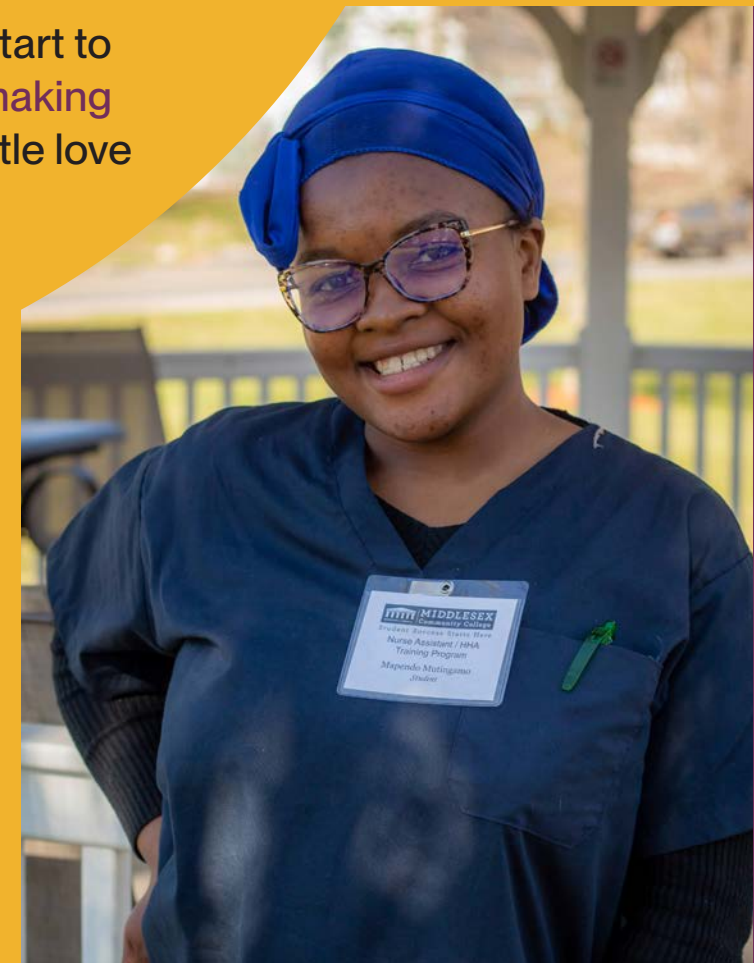
We help unaccompanied minor children, who have left their home country and crossed the U.S. border in search of safety, by providing the support and resources they need to reunify with loved ones in the United States.

“Becoming a CNA is going to be a great start to grow my career. I am passionate about making a difference in people’s lives...even the little love you show can lift a soul.”

## Meet Mapendo

Mapendo had a peaceful, comfortable childhood in her home country of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, until her father went missing. When her family eventually heard from him again, he instructed Mapendo’s mother, siblings, and her to flee the country for safety. After a harrowing journey, the family reunited with him in Uganda, where they spent 10 years as refugees.

In 2022, Mapendo and her family of eight were resettled in the Lowell area by IINE. Mapendo is determined to find success. She participates in our Lowell Youth Program and recently graduated from our Certified Nursing Assistant Program. Today, she is actively pursuing a role in healthcare.

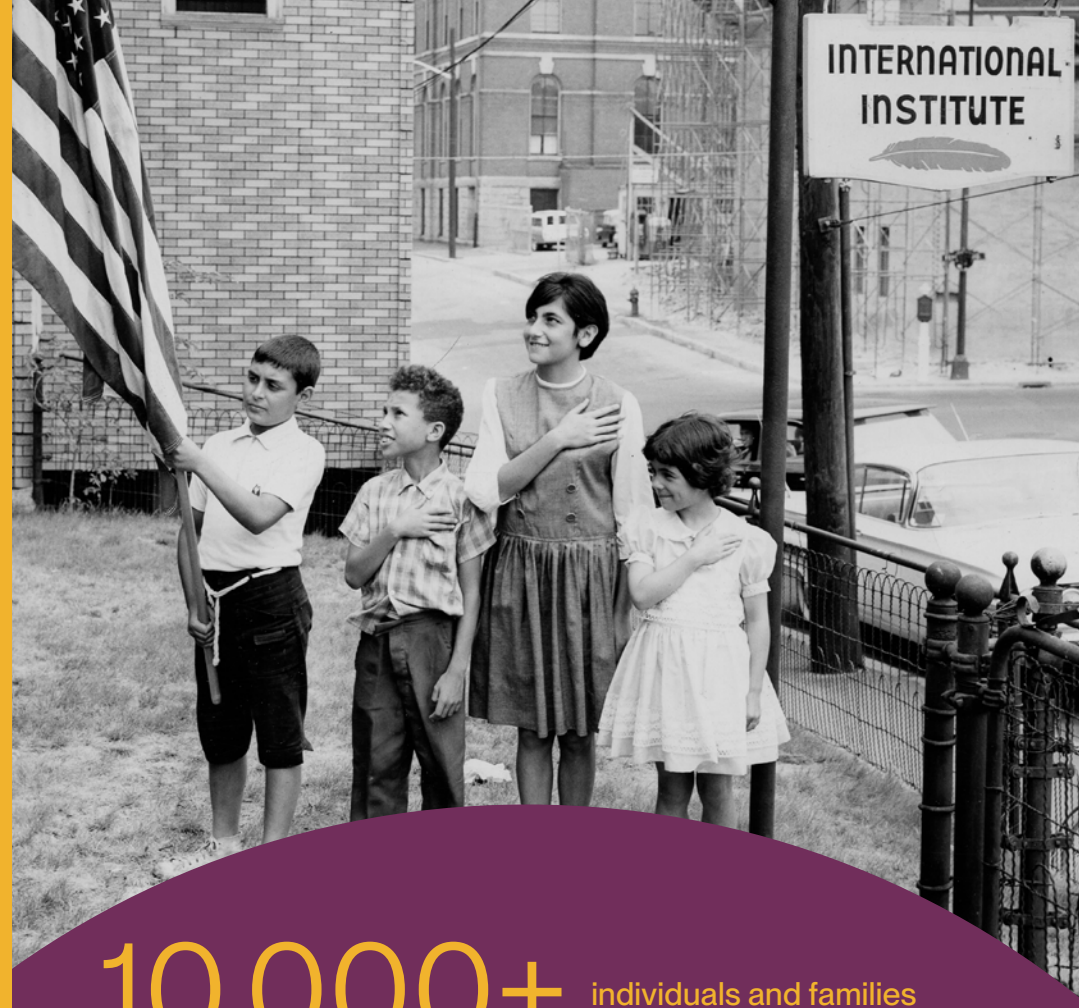




# Welcoming Refugees for Over a Century

In 1918, the International Institute opened in Lowell and a few years later in Boston in 1924. Both chapters were founded by a group of dedicated women to ease the hardships immigrants faced in trying to navigate an unfamiliar country alone and to help stabilize and support impoverished new arrivals. A century later, combined with our office in Manchester, New Hampshire, these chapters make up the IINE we know today. The organization has grown to serve over 10,000 individuals and families annually across the three sites.

Today, our services support a diverse population of vulnerable newcomers whose common experience is persecution and forced migration.



**10,000+** individuals and families served across three sites

# Theory of Change



## Civic Engagement

Immigration legal assistance empowers refugees and immigrants to build roots, contribute to their communities, and support their families.



## Career Advancement

Job placement and the development of hard and soft skills through targeted training enables refugees and immigrants to earn a steady income while building pathways to careers.



## Vision

Refugees and immigrants start strong so that over time they can thrive, fulfill their dreams, and contribute to New England's growth and prosperity.



## Welcome

Newly arrived refugees fleeing conflict and persecution are offered housing, basic services, and a warm welcome to help them adjust to their new community.



## Education

English-language classes and financial-literacy courses create a foundation for future social, civic, and economic success.



## A Decade of Change

After decades of growth, in 2016 a dramatic shift in U.S. immigration policy suddenly and almost entirely dismantled the federal refugee admissions and resettlement program; the number of newcomers dropped significantly as a result. In response, IINE pivoted programming to deepen and strengthen support for existing immigrant communities, established a legal immigration services program to support legal protections and permanent status for persecuted immigrants, and began to grow family reunification programming in response to the swelling numbers of separated families and unaccompanied children crossing the U.S. southern border and entering federal detention facilities. With federal funding significantly lessened during this period, IINE turned to private philanthropy as a critical resource to sustain the vital, stabilizing programs on which refugees and immigrants in deep poverty had come to rely.

**By 2020, a welcome change in immigration policy under a new administration reinvigorated the federal refugee program and new innovations began to broaden legal pathways into U.S. communities. IINE began rebuilding our service infrastructure stronger than ever before. And just in time!**

### THE EVACUATION OF AFGHANISTAN

When Kabul, the capital of Afghanistan, fell to Taliban forces in 2021, IINE quickly adapted to respond. In an unprecedented effort, IINE welcomed and provided immediate housing, food, and stabilization services to 544 Afghans within four months, while also establishing new English-language classes to meet the wide range of skill levels and creating opportunities for Afghan women to connect in a new culture.

### THE INVASION OF UKRAINE

By 2022, IINE had restored its resettlement infrastructure and reestablished community networks —fortunately, in time to respond to the refugee crisis created by the Russian invasion of Ukraine. We mobilized again to support hundreds of Ukrainian refugees joining sponsors in New England.

### A GROWING CRISIS IN HAITI

A devastating combination of factors — including relentless natural disasters, the assassination of the country's president, and rampant gang violence — have led more than 500,000 Haitians to flee their home in recent years. In 2023, IINE played a leading role in supporting an influx of Haitian immigrants to Massachusetts, providing services to a record 5,000+ Haitians. Our staff ensured these new arrivals accessed food, healthcare, and cash assistance; enrolled their children in school; and received support applying for the documents needed to get jobs. Because there is a delay between arrival and receiving work authorization, the federal support that Haitians receive is limited, and Massachusetts has an affordable housing crisis, many Haitian immigrants face homelessness. As families entered the emergency shelter system — and then, once the shelters became full, joined waitlists — IINE stepped up to work directly within the shelter system. We continue to advocate for additional funding and more long-term solutions to ensure that families who enter the shelter system leave sooner, and that fewer enter the system at all.





With more than 50% of our funding coming from federal and state contracts, shifts in U.S. immigration policy can have a significant impact on IINE's programming and infrastructure. The cost of being unprepared is too great, and we have learned from the recent waves of newcomers that our model is being proven time and again. Establishing a secure foundation for all new arrivals is a key to their eventual self-sufficiency.



## Preparing for a Changing World

As the number of forcibly displaced people grows worldwide, due to conflicts, human rights violations, and the climate crisis, IINE is prepared to meet the need. In 2023, after seeing an increase in both the demand and resources available for refugee and immigrant support and integration services, IINE prioritized a strategy for lasting sustainability that would allow the organization to continue to deliver high-quality professional services to refugees and immigrants in New England. Worldwide, war, climate change, and persecution have combined to displace over 100 million people. We are now serving more than 10,000 people a year, with many more in need of support.

**As we prepare for the next century of service, we are centering our work with the hard-won knowledge of the human fallout from forced migration.**

# Planning for the Next 100 Years

From December 2022 to June 2023, IINE engaged in a strategic planning process focused on maintaining its role as a regional leader in refugee resettlement and immigrant integration services, evolving its impact, and strengthening its infrastructure through private support.



**Ensure all clients receive the support they need to achieve the same success milestones.**

Restrictive federal funding directly tied to country of origin or arrival method severely limits the resources for some populations while providing modest support to others. IINE is committed to providing all clients with a basic level of support regardless of their status or country of origin.



**Support our clients to develop stronger relationships with fellow community members.**

We learned with the sudden arrival of nearly 600 Afghans that community connections are vital to a refugee's success. Families that were connected to their communities built an inherently stronger foundation.



**Pursue public and private financial support for refugees and immigrants by growing our public profile and fundraising.**

A diversified base of support will allow IINE to build a reserve of funds from which to draw in times of need, regardless of political wind. By raising the profile of IINE, we will amplify our clients' stories, in turn effecting change in policy and increasing funding.



**Continue to develop best practices and the infrastructure needed to respond to refugee and immigrant crises.**

Recent years of growth and adaptation have positioned IINE as a regional leader. Strategic investments in departments and vital infrastructure are key to keeping the organization at the top of its field.



**Increase our focus, cohesion, and financial resilience to weather events beyond our control.**

We know that shifting immigration policies, political instability, and climate change will continue to push millions of individuals from their homes each year. Many will find their way to New England, and IINE will be ready to serve them with the same commitment to excellence and equity of service.



# Investing in New England's Future

Though delivering our mission for another century is full of opportunities, our bar and the stakes are high. We anticipate that highly restricted public funding will cover only a portion of our expenses. This leaves behind many immigrants in need and creates inequities in support for each arrival. Short-term and unpredictable funding also destabilizes the retention of our staff and, through it, organizational expertise.

The past few years have taught us that, despite chaotic U.S. immigration policies, multiplying geopolitical crises, and erratic government funding, the flow of displaced persons will continue into our communities, and without support, individuals, families, and the communities they join will suffer rather than thrive.

## \$123.8 Billion

The net positive fiscal impact of refugees and asylees from 2005 to 2019, according to a federal study. Federal governments gained \$31.5 billion, while state and local governments gained \$92.3 billion.

## \$7 Trillion

How much greater the nation's Gross Domestic Product will be over the next 10 years, thanks to immigration.

## 22%

The percentage of entrepreneurs nationwide who are immigrants. In addition, immigrants fill much-needed roles in healthcare, STEM, construction, beauty services, cleaning services, and more, strengthening our workforce and economies.

That's why we need **you**.

Your generous support can make all the difference in the lives of our newest community members.





