

# Strategic Framework

In February 2020, at the annual Road Ahead conference, BISC INC. and BISC Foundation unveiled our 5-year **“Tree of Life”** strategic framework to provide clarity on our vision, goals, and strategies for the progressive ecosystem and to move fully into a transformational leadership role.

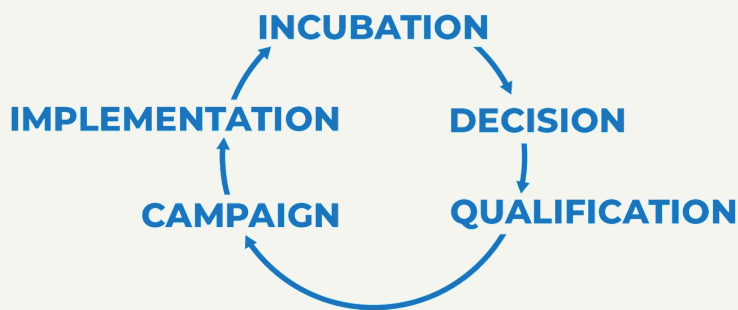


**Our Mission** remains the same: **to strengthen democracy by implementing a national progressive strategy for ballot measures rooted in building state-based power.**

Ultimately, **our vision** — the world we want to live in — **is a world where all people are fully liberated, live with dignity, and thrive so that equity and justice prevail.**

BISC is a multi-racial, multi-ethnic, nationwide movement-building infrastructure organization that **leverages ballot measures across the country to re-imagine our democracy and center the communities that have been historically excluded from power** in the United States. By centering Black, Indigenous, Latinx, Asian & Pacific Islander, queer, low-income, immigrant, people with disabilities, and young people (as well as the intersections between), we can **move towards equity, build and transform power, and galvanize a new progressive base.**

Critical to our strategic framework is our theory of change, which includes the **360 ballot measure lifecycle** and an **expanded definition of winning.**



We believe **to create transformational change and build something that lasts over and beyond a ballot measure win or loss, we must use every phase of the 360 lifecycle** (incubation, decision making, qualification, campaign, and implementation) to build capacity, bring people together around a common goal, center those most impacted, and shift the culture of how we do things. **It's how we win that helps us to build power.**

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**We must move beyond only defining success at the ballot by 50% + 1 of the vote.** To build a more equitable and just world, we must consider **who's** driving the change and whether it will have a transformational impact on the communities that have been excluded for too long.

Since we launched this framework, we continue to find ourselves, our movement, and our country in the middle of great political and generational change, which was amplified by the pandemic, racial reckoning, and 2020 election. As we move forward during this time of transition, there will be tension and challenges to these changes. **We have witnessed resistance to shifting power as more communities of color are using ballot measures and more progressive issues win at the ballot.** Our collective success since 2016 has led to a rise in the attacks on voter-approved progressive initiatives and the ballot measure process. **We now find ourselves needing to defend direct democracy and leading a national campaign along with our state partners** to ensure it is available as a tool for liberation led by the People.



The “**Tree of Life**” strategic framework reflects a resilient and holistic approach to achieving our mission and vision, as we see that our work (the strategies and tactics we deploy) is interwoven between our goals. We do not view this as a timestamped piece of paper, or a linear and mechanistic tool for productivity, but more like a tree — **rooted in our core values and goals and reaching toward our vision in ways that are organic, interwoven, living, breathing, and ever-growing and changing.**

**We ask you to be a partner with us in our vision and co-create what is needed to actualize our strategic framework.** Thank you for tending to the growth of liberty, democracy, dignity, and justice for all of us.



## Convening

We use our role as a convener to create collaborative spaces that contribute to building state-based power and strengthening civic engagement.

## Capacity Building for the Field

We provide and build ballot measure expertise and leadership in the progressive ecosystem.

## Our Goals



## Centering Impacted Communities

We model and foster the centering of racial equity and directly impacted communities in every aspect of the ballot measure lifecycle.

## Changing Culture

We serve as a leader on the national and state level strategy for transformational systemic change that will build and shift power to strengthen democracy and a new progressive base.

## Continuity and Growth

BISC maintains and deepens its organizational health to support our long-term leadership in the field.

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## We Know We're Successful When...

- BISC is the **recognized leader** in ballot measure expertise and strategy in the US.
- BISC **leads the field** and provides support for the use of ballot measures as a broader progressive national power-shifting strategy rooted in the states.
- States have the **capacity and infrastructure** to support long term strategy and planning.
- Ballot measures are increasingly recognized and used as a **tool to take on structural racism and other inequities**.
- **Meaningful engagement** of directly impacted communities in progressive ballot initiatives increases.
- Increased percentages of ballot measures are being **led by members of directly impacted communities**.
- Directly impacted community leaders **co-create** locally relevant ballot measure trainings and convenings with BISC.
- **Quality of life** for directly impacted communities improves in the states BISC works in as a result of the ballot measure passed.
- The field better **anticipates the opposition** and has a better understanding of how the ballot measure process works.
- BISC **raises the necessary revenue** to double the number of staff delivering program and services by 2025.
- BISC **scales systems to support growth and continuity** in our services and capacities.
- BISC's team **engages in ongoing learning**, assessment, adaptation, and accountability to this framework and BISC's values.