

Conference of Interpreter Trainers, Inc.

**Proposal for
Five and Ten-Year Strategic Plan**

Presented to the Membership

September 2004

Conference of Interpreter Trainers, Inc.

Five and Ten Year Strategic Plan

Current Mission Statement

The Conference of Interpreter Trainers, Inc. (CIT) recognizes the minority status of D/deaf people and the long history of linguistic and cultural oppression that they have endured. We therefore publicly proclaim our respect and support for D/deaf people's right to self-determination and true communication access. The mission of the CIT is to promote quality education for interpreters working with American Sign Language and English (including English-influenced forms of signing).

As a professional association of interpreter educators, the CIT

- provides opportunities for the professional development of interpreter educators;
- serves as a vehicle for sharing information among interpreter educators;
- promotes high standards in institutions, faculties, programs and curricula for the education of interpreters;
- advocates for research relevant to the practice and instruction of interpretation; and
- encourages collegial relationships with professionals in other related disciplines and organizations.

The CIT welcomes participation by other educators of foreign signed languages, foreign spoken languages and other professionals who feel an affinity for our goals and an interest in our activities.

History

CIT has a long history of providing service to interpreter educators. Over the past 25 years, there has been tremendous growth in the profession of interpreting and interpreting education. There have been changes in both philosophy and pedagogy. Before we move in to the future, we must recognize and honor our past. It is not because the past has failed that we recommend change, but because we have learned from 25 years of combined successes. The strategic planning process should not be considered complete as this is a living document. It is with gratitude and respect to those who served CIT over the past 25 years that we recommend this strategic plan.

At the 2002 Convention, the members of CIT passed motion C02-10 based on recommendations from the 2002 CIT-ASLTA Task Force, which required that a five and ten year strategic plan be developed to be presented at the 2004 Convention. The plan that follows is a result of that motion.

It was also recommended by the CIT-ASLTA Task Force that the mission of CIT be revised to include ASL instruction as a precursor to instruction in interpreting. Since any strategic plan must adhere to the mission of the organization, a revised mission statement was used in developing this plan.

Revised Mission Statement

The Conference of Interpreter Trainers, Inc. (CIT) recognizes the minority status of D/deaf people and the long history of linguistic and cultural oppression that they have endured. We therefore publicly proclaim our respect and support for D/deaf people's right to self-determination and true communication access.

The mission of the Conference of Interpreter Trainers is to encourage interpreter educators, which includes American Sign Language and interpreting instructors, mentors, and presenters, to provide the highest quality instruction possible in ASL and interpreting courses, with the recognition that fluency in ASL is a critical precursor to interpreting education. The CIT promotes quality instruction by providing its membership with:

- Standards for interpreting programs and curricula
- Standards for interpreter educators
- Opportunities for professional development and mentoring
- Support for research relevant to the practice and instruction of interpretation and mentoring
- A mechanism for sharing information among interpreter educators
- Support of high quality sign language education
- Development and support of collegial relationships with professionals in other related disciplines and organizations

Purpose

This document is intended to serve as a guide to the leadership and membership of CIT. Over time, it is expected this document will change and evolve as the needs of the organization change. This should not be considered a final document, but as an ongoing method of prioritizing goals and measuring success.

Strategic Plan

There are two sections of the strategic plan. The first presents goals which support the revised mission of CIT. The second are goals which are intended to strengthen the structure of CIT and to strengthen CIT as an organization. Additionally, goals are often accompanied by suggestions for achieving them. The goals of this plan are both short and long term. Short term goals should be accomplished within five years, while long term goals should be accomplished within ten years, if resources allow.

I. Pursuing Our Mission

The mission of CIT is to provide direction and priorities to its members and leaders. The following portion of the strategic plan has been written to define the direction of the organization. Each section is an expansion of the goals identified in the CIT mission statement.

A. Standards for Interpreting Programs and Curricula

- 1) Obtain copyright on present and future accreditation system materials. (Convention Motion C02-6)
- 2) In formal collaboration with ASLTA, identify all stakeholder organizations that will be represented in an autonomous organization charged with accreditation, as described in the Educational Standards Committee (ESC) Proposal (March, 1999) (Convention Motion C02-13)
- 3) In collaboration with all identified stakeholder organizations, establish a self-supporting autonomous body that will oversee and grant accreditation. (Convention Motion C02-13)
- 4) Follow the timeline for the implementation of formal accreditation as recommended by the CIT-ASLTA Task Force on Standards Report (October, 2002). (Convention Motion C02-13)
- 5) Provide funds to the Standards Committee for the establishment of the accreditation commission in the amounts recommended to CIT in the CIT-ASLTA Task Force on Standards report (October, 2002). (Convention Motion C02-13)
- 6) Publish a list of colleges and universities which have completed the Self Study Review process. This could happen in the newsletter each time a new program completes the process. A complete list could be published on the CIT website with a link to each program's website.
- 7) Promote the involvement of qualified Deaf faculty and mentors in interpreter education. This could happen by networking with stakeholders, drafting a position paper encouraging programs to hire qualified Deaf individuals as teachers of interpreting, having workshops related to this topic, making it possible for submission of conference abstracts to be submitted in sign language instead of written, having an ongoing feature in the newsletter, and publishing an ASL version of the CIT Proceedings.

- 8) Encourage the implementation of entry and exit standards for interpreting programs.
- 9) Long term goal: Provide effective outreach and marketing to interpreting programs regarding the accreditation process. CIT could identify interpreting programs and send information to deans and department chairs.

B. Standards for Interpreter Educators

- 1) Investigate with ASLTA the feasibility of expanding the current ASL teacher certification system to accommodate interpreter educators. (Conference Motion C02-7)
- 2) Long term goal: Provide portfolio evaluation for CIT members.
- 3) Long term goal: Establish a teacher certification system.

C. Opportunities for Professional Development and Mentoring

- 1) Promote the use of distance learning technology.
- 2) Continue to host conventions on a regular basis.
- 3) Long term goal: Provide professional development opportunities for interpreter educators. This could happen through pre-conference workshops, or workshops in each region during off convention years. Other ideas include providing scholarships, working with other organizations which provide related professional development opportunities, informing members about opportunities provided by other organizations about effective teaching and adult learning, sponsoring individuals who need an academic project and working with ASLTA local chapters.
- 4) Long term goal: Promote the establishment of graduate level teacher education programs. CIT could develop a list of related graduate programs (adult education, etc.) for the website.
- 5) Long term goal: Sponsor a regular teacher institute on effective teaching.

D. Support for Research Relevant to the Practice and Instruction of Interpretation and Mentoring

- 1) Publish a Journal of Teaching Interpretation. CIT could encourage individuals who have not published their research to contribute to the Journal.
- 2) Provide funding and information to those individuals researching the interpreting and teaching process. CIT could post a list of potential research questions on its members-only section of the website. CIT could also provide grants or scholarships for research projects.
- 3) Long term goal: Establish a publishing arm of CIT and a peer review committee.

E. A Mechanism for Sharing Information among Interpreter Educators and Mentors

- 1) Provide a resource link on the website describing portfolio assessment and offering suggestions on how to informally begin accruing documentation of teaching experience and professional development activities. (Conference Motion C02-8)
- 2) Include a synthesis of all the research related to accreditation options and teacher certification (including appropriate links) on the CIT website. (CIT-ASLTA Task Force Recommendation 5C)
- 3) Establish a mechanism to ensure superior communication with members.
- 4) Develop a members-only site on the web. This portion of the website would have current research, a discussion forum, and other members-only benefits.
- 5) Draft a position paper on interpreting programs for Deaf interpreters. An ad hoc committee could be established to research and develop the position paper. There could be workshops at the convention and articles in the proceedings. Investigate the possibility of a graduate student doing a dissertation on the topic. Investigate the current state of interpreting programs which include Deaf students.
- 6) Create a web clearinghouse for teaching tools and resources. This could include sample syllabi, course outlines, activity guides, etc. It could also include a place to discuss or post ideas for curricula including team interpreting, educating Deaf interpreters, video interpreting, service learning, etc. This would be in the members-only site.
- 7) Publish a list of interpreting programs on the website.
- 8) Encourage members to contribute to the CIT News in a variety of ways, such as having regular columns.
- 9) Include information on teaching and teaching interpreting in the CIT News. There are many documents which have already been developed and CIT could ask permission to print them. We could feature an interpreting program in each newsletter. Articles from previous proceedings could be included. Each CIT newsletter could focus on one particular topic announced in previous newsletters with a specific topic to write about. Each issue could also include an explanation of a Self Study Review standard.
- 10) Publish a directory on consultants as a searchable database on the website.
- 11) Continue to provide a newsletter, website, and convention proceedings.
- 12) Long term goal: Increase professional publications on effective teaching.
- 13) Long term goal: Publish a history of CIT. This effort could begin with the timeline that has already been developed. CIT could appoint a historian to gather and maintain the history of CIT. The wall of history should be continued at the convention.

- 14) Long term goal: Expand the task analysis of teaching interpreting in the 1984 CIT Proceedings and provide links to it on the website.

F. Support of High Quality Sign Language Education

- 1) Initiate a joint website endeavor between CIT and ASLTA. (CIT-ASLTA Recommendation 1C)
 - a. A joint website could be linked to CIT and ASLTA websites. This joint website would allow members the opportunity to dialogue and network.
 - b. Links to Professional Position Papers will be posted on each organization's individual website (CIT and ASLTA) for easy access.
- 2) Create a joint CIT-ASLTA Journal of Teaching. (CIT-ASLTA Task Force Recommendation 1D)
- 3) Exchange newsletters and articles with ASLTA on a regular basis. (CIT-ASLTA Task Force Recommendation 1E)
- 4) Long term goal: Sponsor a joint CIT-ASLTA conference.

G. Development and Support of Collegial Relationships with Professionals in Other Related Disciplines and Organizations

- 1) Develop a strong relationship between CIT, RID, and other stakeholders. This can happen through recognizing organizational representatives at conventions, offering a free convention registration to the presidents of other organizations, encouraging CIT members to join other organizations, and increasing the communication between CIT and its sister organizations.
- 2) Develop a strong partnership with ASLTA.
- 3) Develop working relationships with foreign language teachers such as the Joint National Committee for Languages (JNCL), National Council for Language and International Studies (NCLIS), the American Translators Association (ATA), and the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL).

II. Strengthening CIT

CIT is a member-run, volunteer organization which has traditionally focused solely on educators within academic settings. While this has been effective in the past, it is time to widen the focus of members we serve, provide more consistency in leadership, a secure and fiscally responsible organizational structure, a larger membership base, and improved public relations both inside and outside of CIT.

A. Leadership and Structure

- 1) Create a 5 and 10 year Strategic Plan that delineates the projected services, programs, and activities of the association and the projected costs. (Conference Motion C02-10)
 - a. The board could hire an association consultant to guide the planning process.
 - b. The next convention could focus on membership review and discussion of the strategic plan
 - c. Budget allocation needs to be tied to outcomes
 - d. Stakeholder review and discussion of the strategic plan could occur during the convention or other planned intervals
 - e. The membership could vote to adopt the strategic plan and proposed budget associated with the plan
- 2) Change the CIT Bylaws to allow for joint CIT-ASLTA Committee Chairs for the Convention Committee, Professional Development Committee, Editorial Committee focusing on a joint CIT-ASLTA “Journal of Teaching” and any other committees deemed appropriate by the Board of Directors. (CIT-ASLTA Task Force Recommendation 1B)
- 3) Review the CIT Mission Statement for the purpose of making recommendations of wording that would state the quality instruction of ASL is an important precursor to the onset of interpreter education. (CIT-ASLTA Task Force Recommendation 1B)
- 4) Establish an Ad Hoc Strategic Planning Committee charged with the task of jointly investigating and planning the direction of potential joint endeavors for both organizations projecting over the next five years. The CIT and ASLTA Presidents would appoint joint chairs and members of the committee. (CIT-ASLTA Task Force Recommendation 1B)
- 5) Hire professionals, when financially feasible, to work in positions where it is unreasonable to ask for volunteers. Positions could include grant writers, an executive director, conference planners, financial advisors, and editors.
- 6) Revise the organizational structure of CIT to facilitate more member involvement in committees, a more responsive leadership, and cost efficiency within the organization. This will require changes in the CIT Bylaws and/or the Policy and Procedure Manual. Possible outcomes could include replacing Region Representatives with Members At Large, giving committee chair responsibilities to board members, or adding/removing board positions. In addition, the committee structure could be revised so that technology and public relations have a stronger presence in CIT. Incentives could be developed to encourage and reward individuals who serve on committees.
- 7) Obtain appropriate liability insurance to protect the organization and decrease the personal liability of board and committee members.

- 8) Increase CIT revenue. This could happen through a variety of strategies including increasing membership, improved attendance at conventions, grant writing, increasing the number of products CIT offers, allowing members to purchase goods and register for conventions on the CIT website, and investing current funds.
- 9) Long term goal: Ensure that mentoring has a strong presence in all aspects of CIT. Possible strategies include: Establish an ad hoc committee, provide a mentoring forum at each convention, investigate what is occurring with mentoring in each region, and emphasize the in-service track as a mentoring track at the convention to include mentoring for educators, interpreters, Deaf interpreters, etc.
- 10) Long term goal: Establish a home office with a paid staff. Possible strategies include: Explore the possibility of having a joint office with ASLTA and investigate the possibility of having an office housed at a college or university campus.
- 11) Long term goal: Secure grant money to fund a mentor program for new teachers. Possible strategies include: Hire a grant writer to investigate the possibility of receiving funding and to write the proposal.

B. Membership

- 1) Establish an ad hoc committee to work with the Membership Coordinator to develop a membership services program and membership recruitment program. (Conference Motion C02-9)
 - a. Using the data collected from the various membership surveys, the ad hoc committee would work with the membership coordinator to define a membership services program and delineate priorities and costs.
 - b. The membership coordinator would present this plan and resource allocation directly to the board for approval.
 - c. The current procedure is that the membership coordinator functions in an advisory capacity to the board on membership issues. In this capacity the membership coordinator should regularly participate in CIT board meetings.
- 2) Increase membership by providing member-only benefits. Benefits could include a members-only area on the website containing current research, tools for effective teaching, and portfolio assessment. Members would have a reduced rate for convention registration.
- 3) Increase the number of institutional members by defining the benefits of that category of membership. Potential benefits could include a recognition plaque, free or discounted advertisement space in the newsletter, etc.

C. Internal and External Public Relations

- 1) The official language of CIT biennial conferences and other official events will be American Sign Language. (Conference Motion C02-5) This will be accomplished through changing the CIT bylaws and revising the Policy and Procedure Manual.
- 2) Commission the design of several possible logos for CIT. These logos as well as the current logo will be presented to the CIT membership for a vote.
- 3) Develop more public relations contacts and materials. Materials could be developed targeting college and university administrators and faculty, pre-service and in-service presenters, mentors, former CIT members, and sister organizations.
- 4) Establish a teacher/mentor recognition program. This could be done through a recognition event at CIT conventions and/or as an educator spotlight in each newsletter.
- 5) Increase the diversity among CIT members and interpreter educators. This could occur by providing outside organizations the opportunity to participate and be recognized in CIT conferences and other activities.
- 6) Ensure that all interpreter educators know that referring to CIT for support in teaching and mentoring will be beneficial. Possible strategies include: Explore and make available resources for teachers and mentors to use while educating interpreters. Ensure that teachers and mentors are aware of these resources.
- 7) Long term goal: Increase attendance at the CIT Convention. Possible strategies could include: Creation of a comprehensive membership benefits package and increased awareness about CIT among interpreter educators and mentors.
- 8) Long term goal: Increase international outreach so that it is an integral part of CIT. Possible strategies include: For people attending the convention from other countries, provide a reduced registration rate. Invite international representatives for a panel discussion at a convention. Provide a free one-year organizational membership for international organizations.
- 9) Long term goal: Provide information to students of interpreting, mentors and working interpreters about the path to becoming an interpreter educator and CIT's role in supporting interpreter education. Possible strategies include: Develop materials that could be distributed to interpreting students and increase awareness about the opportunities to become student representatives at conventions.

The Future of Interpreter Education

The development of this strategic plan resulted in the above objectives. It is our goal that the implementation of the plan has an impact on the field of interpreter education. We hope to reach 1,000 members in CIT, with 85% of all faculty and interpreting programs as members.

We would like to see over 30 accredited interpreting programs and certification for interpreter educators by a national accreditation organization. It is our aim that certification of interpreter educators is recognized by the Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf to the point where it is required by presenters who teach workshops in interpreter education.

A multi-tiered curriculum for interpreting programs is part of our vision for the field of interpreting. This would consist of different curriculum at each degree level (Associate's, Bachelor's and Master's), so that students may progress in their education by taking progressively more advanced courses as they move on to higher degrees.