

The AIESEC way

TOOLKIT 2008

Members' guide to better understanding AIESEC

*This is an internal document and it is intended just for education of AIESEC members.
Just the information contained in the Appendix 2 can be used by AIESEC entities for external purposes
such as Websites, marketing materials and annual reports.*

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THE AIESEC WAY *in a nutshell*

WHAT IS AIESEC?

AIESEC is a global, non-political, independent, not-for-profit organization run by students and recent graduates of institutions of higher education.

*Its members are interested in **world issues, leadership and management.***

AIESEC does not discriminate on the basis of race, colour, gender, sexual orientation, creed, religion, national, ethnic or social origin.

Peace &
fulfillment of
Humankind's Potential

WHAT WE ENVISION

OUR IMPACT

*Our international platform **enables** young people to explore and develop their **leadership** potential for them to have a **positive impact** in society.*

*AIESEC provides its members with an **integrated development experience** comprised of **leadership opportunities, international internships** and participation in a **global learning environment***

THE WAY WE DO IT

OUR VALUES

*Activating Leadership
Enjoying Participation
Striving for Excellence
Demonstrating Integrity
Living Diversity
Acting Sustainably*

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Section 1: What is THE AIESEC WAY?

Before we start looking into THE AIESEC WAY, it is important that we get the terminology right.

The description of a **‘Way’** is the explanation of what makes an organization distinct from others based on what it is and how it does things.

A dictionary definition of “WAY”

- ✓ **manner:** how something is done or how it happens.
- ✓ **road:** is an identifiable route between two or more places.

THE AIESEC WAY gives answers to questions like:

What is AIESEC?

What do we envision?

What is our impact?

In what way do we make that impact possible?



GOLDEN RULES ABOUT THE AIESEC WAY:

- ✓ In THE AIESEC WAY all parts are important and must be considered.
- ✓ It is more important to understand what our ideals – *reflected in The AIESEC Way* – mean in depth (and therefore being able to describe them with our own words) rather than memorizing it.
- ✓ THE AIESEC WAY is **NOT** a bunch of nice statements. It is **NOT** something to learn and then forget about. It tells us what to DO (as an LC, as a Team, as a person) and how to BEHAVE. Therefore it is not just a reading material; it gives direction to our actions.
- ✓ We should constantly remind ourselves of THE AIESEC WAY. It is important that we are able to link our daily work (whether this is matching, organizing an activity or receiving training) with AIESEC's ideals.

THE AIESEC WAY is not only a description of the **way** (manner) we aim to make a positive impact in society, but also describes the **way** (road) we are taking to achieve what we envision.

Section 2: Understanding THE AIESEC WAY

A. THE AIESEC WAY – A BRIEF EXPLANATION

When we think about **THE AIESEC WAY** we should consider all the different parts. Here is a brief explanation of each aspect and how they build a description of AIESEC and its ideals.

WHAT IS AIESEC?

AIESEC is a global, non-political, independent, not-for-profit organization run by students and recent graduates of institutions of higher education.

The answer to the question 'WHAT IS AIESEC?' describes the type of organisation we are such as non-political, student-run, non-discriminatory etc.

*Its members are interested in **world issues, leadership and management.***

AIESEC does not discriminate on the basis of race, colour, gender, sexual orientation, creed, religion, national, ethnic or social origin.

WHAT WE ENVISION

**Peace & fulfillment of
Humankind's
Potential**

Our vision for the world, reflected in the simple statement: 'PEACE AND FULFILMENT OF HUMANKIND'S POTENTIAL', unites and motivates us.

OUR IMPACT

Our international platform **enables** young people to explore and develop their **leadership** potential for them to have a **positive impact** in society.

OUR IMPACT clearly states that AIESEC as organization believes the main positive impact we make to society come as a result of the **leadership characteristics** our members develop through the AIESEC Experience.

THE WAY WE DO IT

THE WAY WE DO IT explains the **manner** in which AIESEC aims to make a positive impact in society.

It states that in AIESEC we focus our energy, activities and resources on our members.

AIESEC provides its members with an **integrated development experience** comprised of **leadership opportunities, international internships** and participation in a **global learning environment**

OUR VALUES

Activating Leadership
Enjoying Participation
Striving for Excellence
Demonstrating Integrity
Living Diversity
Acting Sustainably

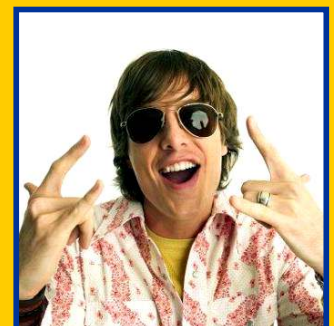
OUR VALUES define the acceptable standards which govern the behaviour of our members within the association. OUR VALUES guide our actions and operations.

Many organizations are working to make a positive impact in our society, as we do.

Each one of them has its own approach.

We also have our unique way to make that impact...

THE **AIESEC** WAY!



OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

In the [International Compendium](#), as part of THE AIESEC WAY there are three more elements that support us in describing AIESEC.

These three elements are

1. English is the sole official language of AIESEC¹.

As a global organization, English acts as the official language to facilitate communication among members. All international congresses as well as regional ones should use English as the official language of the meeting, this is to ensure equal opportunities for involvement for all international members present in each one of AIESEC events globally.

Materials to be used globally and delivered by AIESEC International should be in English for the same purposes mentioned above. Versions on other languages are allowed; however there should always be an English version.

2. The logo approved at Presidents Meeting 1990 (Hong Kong) is the official logo of AIESEC².



3. AIESEC adopts the AIESEC Code of Ethics along with its supportive structures mentioned³.

The external world message is clear: skills are just not enough. There is no leadership without ethics. AIESEC strives to provide leaders for a positive impact in society. The meaning of the positive impact that AIESEC wants to have in the world lies in AIESEC's ability to create, for each and every member, a steering wheel that will shape her/his actions ethically.

AIESEC ethical process is a deep and steady move to make the AIESEC Experience the gateway to the values-driven leadership the world needs, thus getting AIESEC closer to its organizational description and ideals. The Code of Ethics adopted by the global plenary at IPM 2007 in Egypt was a key event in [THE AIESEC WAY](#) to develop ethical leaders.

The purpose of the AIESEC CODE OF ETHICS is to:

- ✓ Provide the ability for AIESEC to consciously develop ethically sensitive leaders. The Code brings Ethics to our attention and puts the organization on a virtuous track.
- ✓ Acts as a compelling reference point for every single member of the organization.
- ✓ Open the gateway for what is needed for impact on the individuals that live an AIESEC EXPERIENCE.

The [AIESEC CODE OF ETHICS](#) is about the ethical principles we all adhere to, and the enforcement mechanisms to align them with [OUR VALUES](#).

The [AIESEC CODE OF ETHICS](#) can be found in the [International Compendium](#).

¹ Please note that 'the foundation' term as stated in the International Compendium has been changed to "AIESEC" to simplify understanding by members.

² Same as above.

³ Please note that the text 'as described in Appendix 13' has been deleted from the sentence to simplify understanding by members.

B. THE AIESEC WAY – DETAILED EXPLANATION

The following notes are meant to support your understanding of each part of **THE AIESEC WAY**, and the meaning that each part has to guide our activities globally.

WHAT IS AIESEC?

Looking at each part of **WHAT IS AIESEC?**:

- ✓ **Global** – AIESEC has a global scope and is represented in all continents of the world. One of the most valuable and unique aspects that our organisation has is its global network. AIESEC should make the best use of this global network to enhance the understanding between cultures by running activities that foster participation and co-operation among different countries in the network. Without any doubt our exchange programs create the best conditions for this.
- ✓ **Non-political** - AIESEC does not have a pre-defined or officially accepted political tendency or subscription.
- ✓ **Independent** - AIESEC is not a subsidiary or dependent entity of any other bodies in its work, sustainability or decisions.
- ✓ **Non-for-profit** - AIESEC is not an organization that exists to generate profit for shareholders. The bottom-line for AIESEC is not money but people that are developing themselves as leaders. It is important of course to have enough resources and be sustainable to ensure we are having the desired impact in society and invest in further improvements for the organization. However, we are guided by the ways to generate more impact and have maximum financial sustainability rather than to simply generate more money.
- ✓ **Run by students and recent graduates of institutions of higher education** – Students of higher education students and recent graduates manage and run all the activities of the organization. The members of AIESEC are current (includes the ones who have given a break to their studies to dedicate themselves to AIESEC work) or recently graduated students of institutions of higher education.

AIESEC is a global, non-political, independent, not-for-profit organization run by students and recent graduates of institutions of higher education.

Its members are interested in world issues, leadership and management.

AIESEC does not discriminate on the basis of race, colour, gender, sexual orientation, creed, religion, national, ethnic or social origin.

*Globally our membership comes from student volunteers that join AIESEC to be part of the organization and take part in the **AIESEC Experience**. They are also our stakeholders and the future leaders of AIESEC. That is why we need to work very hard to provide them with enough and high quality leadership opportunities, international internships and ensure that there is a global learning environment in place that offers them a powerful life-changing experience.*

We must also understand that in today's world, there are more and more organizations like AIESEC that are also attracting student volunteers. Therefore more than ever before, we need to strive to attract and retain highly talented members better than other organisations and ensure that being a member of AIESEC is a very powerful, enriching, exciting opportunity.

We must provide learning platforms that allow our members to develop in such a way that while they are running AIESEC's activities, they learn and develop themselves through interacting with each other and other stakeholders. As a result of their AIESEC EXPERIENCE, our members will have a positive impact in society!

- ✓ **Its members are interested in world issues, leadership and management** – Today AIESEC has expanded its reach to a wide range of student backgrounds. Our membership base has expanded to university students that are interested in more than just economics.

By world issues we mean relevant topics of our current society/communities or also future challenges. Issues are seen as 'relevant' based on the interest of our members.

World Issues can represent debate or controversy on which different parties take various positions. We want our members to be exposed to these alternative positions, and decide to make a positive impact in society. Our Global Learning Networks allow young people with similar interests to connect and develop themselves to make a positive impact in society in their areas of interest.

It is imperative that our members are interested in developing themselves as leaders. That is why AIESEC encourages members to take on leadership positions as a main tool of developing the skill, and aims to deliver leadership for a positive impact in society..

In order to generate that positive impact in society, our members are expected to develop management skills. Management writer, Mary Parker Follett defined management as "the art of getting things done through people". So, management is not only related to business environment- leaders in different sectors of society (non-corporate, government, etc) need management skills to make things happen.

- ✓ **AIESEC does not discriminate on the basis of race, colour, gender, sexual orientation, creed, religion, national, ethnic or social origin** - AIESEC is an organisation that enjoys and lives diversity, and will not reject participation or contact with people for any of the reasons mentioned above.

WHAT WE ENVISION



What does "Peace and Fulfilment of Humankind's Potential" symbolize to us in today's world?

When trying to understand AIESEC's ideals, we must be able to look at it in the context of today's world because the conditions of our world today are completely different than in 1948, 1960s or even 1990s.

AIESEC started as an organisation after the Second World War, willing to promote and work for world peace. AIESEC was deeply influenced by the social, economical and political climate of the world in that period of history. Naturally, the fundamentals of our organisation were shaped based on that reality.

The social, economic, and political state of the world has changed since then and is now changing faster than ever before. We are now living in a world where the risk of having another world war may be lower than ever, even with the raise of terrorism in the late years.

In today's context, 'peace' should not be interpreted necessarily as absence of a major war. 'Peace' symbolizes a world that does not have conflicts that arise from cultural, religious, or other aspects of differences in humanity.

AIESEC ENVISIONS A WORLD where its inhabitants are working together for common goals to ensure prosperity for all. AIESEC wishes to see the world as a community where its people respect, enjoy, and understand each other.

Through "Fulfilment of Humankind's potential" AIESEC expresses its aim to develop individuals who have the knowledge, skills and determination to develop their communities.

AIESEC's aim is to offer as many opportunities as possible for young people to develop their leadership potential; people who are responsible, entrepreneurial, culturally sensitive and thirsty for learning more!

Furthermore, AIESEC wants young people to learn and contribute to the learning of others so that it helps the development of their communities.

OUR IMPACT

OUR IMPACT definition clearly states that AIESEC believes the main positive impact we make in society comes as a result of the leadership characteristics people develop through the AIESEC EXPERIENCE.

OUR IMPACT implies that:

- ✓ **Our international platform** – AIESEC is the “international platform” in which thousands of ‘AIESEC Experiences’ are happening every day. The word *international* highlights the global aspect of the organization and the internationalism present in each one of our activities.

The AIESEC platform consists of a number of different opportunities – physical and virtual – through which an individual creates his/her own AIESEC experience.

This same platform also serves to connect our partner organizations to the talented young people within AIESEC.

The main opportunities of the platform are [leadership experiences](#), [working abroad](#), [learning networks](#), and [conferences](#).

Together with the [AIESEC Experience](#), this platform is how we give young people the desire to have a positive impact in society – that is the [AIESEC Difference](#).

- ✓ AIESEC's aim is to provide a platform that “enables” young people to get involved in the opportunities that AIESEC offers not develop them directly. The organization ensures that the international platform is in place and there are enough quality [leadership opportunities](#) and [international internships](#) as well as a [global learning environment](#) in which AIESEC's members can interact and learn from each other (virtual environment, [conferences](#), [Learning Networks](#), etc).

- ✓ **Leadership potential** – In OUR IMPACT statement, AIESEC expresses its aim to “develop” future leaders who have the knowledge, skills and determination to make a positive contribution in society.

AIESEC's aim is to provide our communities with future leaders who are socially responsible, entrepreneurs, and culturally sensitive; future leaders that are able to impact their societies in a positive way.

- ✓ **For them to have a positive impact in society** - The development of leadership in individuals represents the way in which AIESEC contributes to our communities, as these leaders would have a positive impact in the present and future.

This links to what we envision in the sense that to contribute to peace, we need to “provide future leaders who can make a positive impact” in their communities not only across cultures, but also across sectors of society.

This aim also represents a direct link to working to contribute to the fulfilment of Humankind's potential since AIESEC provides a platform for development of everyone's potential.

Our international platform enables young people to explore and develop their leadership potential for them to have a positive impact in society.

THE WAY WE DO IT

THE WAY WE DO IT refers to the manner we have chosen to ensure we are making a positive impact in society.

THE WAY WE DO IT implies that:

- ✓ **AIESEC provides its members with an INTEGRATED DEVELOPMENT EXPERIENCE** - AIESEC contributes to the development of individuals by providing them an integrated development experience that we call the [AIESEC Experience](#).

The AIESEC Experience is the ideal learning an individual can gain during his/her involvement in AIESEC.

The AIESEC Experience represents the main deliverable to our stakeholders (members, enablers, supporters) and is essential to all our activities.

- ✓ **Comprised of (1) LEADERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES, (2) INTERNATIONAL INTERNSHIPS and participation in a (3) GLOBAL LEARNING ENVIRONMENT** – The word ‘**comprised**’ explains that the integrated development experience needs the three elements in order to be complete.

- ✓ **Leadership opportunities** - through the management of projects and activities in over 1100 offices at the local, national, and international level across 100 countries and territories, we provide about 5000 leadership opportunities to our members each year. This provides our members with a range of valuable and practical experience and skills in management and leadership.

If AIESEC's ambition is to provide as many integrated development experiences – [AIESEC EXPERIENCES](#) - as possible, we need to increase the number of leadership opportunities we are offering currently. In this sense [THE WAY WE DO IT](#) is an ambitious statement and represents the aim of the organization towards our activities.

- ✓ **International internships** - internship exchanges supply powerful learning experiences for young people. The focus of our exchange experiences is not only to provide a professional experience to the individual but also to provide a more powerful learning experience, which will lead him/her to become more entrepreneurial, culturally sensitive, open minded and active learner.

International Internship Exchange is an ideal tool to develop individuals when in the host country. When a young person experiences an AIESEC international internship, his/her worldview is challenged as never before. It is not just the absence of the natural bonds with home (family, friends, culture, etc) but also the opportunity to stand by him/herself, to face the day to day challenges outside of the 'comfort zone', to question his/her own paradigms, and the way things are or the way things work, both at personal and professional level.

Due to these reasons AIESEC believes international internships are a crucial component of the AIESEC Experience and all our members should be given the opportunity to experience it.

- ✓ **Participation in a global learning environment** – The AIESEC global learning environment is built under the AIESEC Experience using both physical and virtual spaces where each member can access on their own the full range of valuable learning opportunities.

AIESEC provides its members with an integrated development experience comprised of leadership opportunities, international internships and participation in a global learning environment



POINTS TO NOTE

1. We must understand that the 'AIESEC EXPERIENCE' is our **TOOL**, our **DELIVERABLE** to young people; it is NOT the final result. Through AIESEC experiences, we offer young people the opportunity to develop their leadership potential. Through these learning experiences we aim to create a larger impact in the world by providing leaders able to make positive impact in society as stated in **OUR IMPACT** statement.
2. Each AIESEC EXPERIENCE is **unique** because it is based on the decisions each member makes when determining which available opportunities are valuable for him/her.
3. Therefore we must strive to provide a large number of complete 'AIESEC EXPERIENCES' which are high quality and which are truly powerful life-changing experiences!
4. The **way** we deliver AIESEC EXPERIENCES needs constant improvements and innovation. The 'AIESEC EXPERIENCE' as we know it right now can change slightly or dramatically in the following years to contribute better to **WHAT WE ENVISION** and **OUR IMPACT**, that is why we name the AIESEC Experience in **THE WAY WE DO IT** statement as an **'integrated development experience'**.

We consider the three elements stated in **THE WAY WE DO IT** statement as the crucial ones: **leadership opportunities**, **international internships** and the participation on a **global learning environment**.

Please note that the **global learning environment** leaves room for innovation on the kind of components that the learning environment provides our members with. However in the current context we have clearly identified which are **the components**.

“Our Values”

VALUES guide our actions and operations as association. They define the acceptable standards which govern our members within the organization.

Without such values, our members will pursue behaviours that are in line with their own individual value systems, which may lead to behaviours that AIESEC doesn't wish to encourage within our local committees around the world.

Clearly, **OUR VALUES** are in line with the rest of the statements that comprise **THE AIESEC WAY**.

So to summarize, **OUR VALUES** provide a **way** for the collective leadership of AIESEC to encourage common norms of behaviour across our global network which will support the achievement of our goals and will support us in pursuing our ideals.

FIVE WAYS TO LIVE OUT VALUES

However, just as with **WHAT WE ENVISION** or **OUR IMPACT** statements, it is one thing to have a written guide to AIESEC's values that remains on the wall of the Local Committee office, or in a folder, but it is quite another thing to have living values which shape our culture - the **way** that things get done. So here are five suggestions to ensure you are living our organizational values:

1. **Communicate OUR VALUES constantly.** Values should fit with AIESEC's communication. If we say that we Enjoy Participation and we Activate Leadership, then having a dirty boring office may challenge this. Acknowledge and thank those members who have achieved something which particularly emphasises **OUR VALUES**.
2. **Enrol newbies.** **OUR VALUES** should be explicitly available as new members join AIESEC. This should be a part of the induction process. Your Local Committee then needs to deliver on the promise that **OUR VALUES** bring all along!
3. **Refresh the understanding of OUR VALUES** periodically - allowing members to refresh their understanding of them. This has the power of enrolling those who have joined AIESEC recently – like Exchange Participants –, and avoids the stated values no longer reflecting the AIESEC culture.
4. **Confront contradictory behaviour.** Ensuring that we give feedback to those who don't live out **OUR VALUES**. If members are allowed to live out contradictory values, then over time there is a clear danger that these will corrupt the desired values, particularly if it is the more dynamic, dominant individuals who are espousing the contradictory values.
5. **Periodically check out with feedback.** Ask people what they think **OUR VALUES** are - not only members, who may be influenced by the stated values, but outsiders - partners, advisors, alumni, etc.



Activating Leadership

We lead by example and inspire leadership through our activities. We take full responsibility for developing the leadership potential of people.

The people that we are aiming to develop are our members. Therefore we are aiming to activate leadership in them through an experience that allows for leadership in the 'AIESEC EXPERIENCE' like teamwork and development of interpersonal skills.

Some examples of living this value are:

- ✓ We make sure that through the different AIESEC activities we run we are offering the opportunity for members to work in international teams and gain international experience.
- ✓ We encourage and delegate responsibility to the new members of AIESEC in managing the organisation.
- ✓ We educate and pass on our experience and learning to the new generations to ensure the long-lasting success of our organization.
- ✓ We provide others with the opportunity to take responsibility and we empower them to do so.
- ✓ We encourage ambition for the organisation.
- ✓ We inspire actions in others by excelling in our role and having committed communication.

Demonstrating Integrity

We are consistent and transparent in our decisions and actions. We fulfil our commitments and conduct ourselves in a way that is true to our

ideals.

Some examples of living this value are:

- ✓ We work together with committed promises and requests
- ✓ We have open and honest communication within ourselves, the organisation, and our stakeholders
- ✓ Our actions back up our words. We fulfil all our responsibilities and promises.

Living Diversity

We seek to learn from the different ways of life and opinions represented in our multicultural environment. We respect and actively encourage the contribution of every individual.

AIESEC needs to ensure that there is internationalism and diversity always present in the way that we work. We should always perceive diversity as an enriching factor.

Some examples of living this value are:

- ✓ Assuring that we are exchanging with different parts of the world and that we are ensuring full usage of the diversity that we have in the organisation.
- ✓ Assuring that the students we recruit and the companies / organisations we partner with open up to a diverse and international experience. Target these kinds of organisations and students.
- ✓ Co-operating with other AIESEC offices by transferring your knowledge and resources as an investment to increase their capacity to provide complete AIESEC Experiences and contribute in society
- ✓ Interacting with delegates from a large range of countries at international conferences.

Enjoying Participation

We create a dynamic environment by active and enthusiastic participation of individuals. We enjoy being involved in AIESEC.

Some examples of living this value are:

- ✓ We foster the participation of different stakeholders and members in the AIESEC Experiences we provide as a way to enhance leadership in our programs
- ✓ We assure that more individuals will have the opportunity to participate in AIESEC activities by targeting and delivering high quality activities
- ✓ We work together and enjoy what we are doing therefore we get the best out of each individual and we reach higher results.
- ✓ We are proactive.
- ✓ We celebrate our victories, share our achievements and recognise our contributions.

Striving for Excellence

We aim to deliver the highest quality performance in everything we do. Through creativity and innovation we seek to continuously improve.

Some examples of living this value are:

- ✓ We constantly look for improvements in the way that we run AIESEC to improve the way that we deliver AIESEC Experiences and satisfy all our stakeholders.
- ✓ We deliver what we promise, run complete AIESEC Experiences, and never sacrifice the learning of the individuals that we are aiming to develop, as it is our end goal.
- ✓ We use the added value of each individual and get feedback from the team to achieve higher results.
- ✓ We encourage each other to be better every day in everything we do.
- ✓ We approach our work with innovation and creativity for achieving better results

Acting Sustainably

We act in a way that is sustainable for our organisation and society.

Our decisions take into account the needs of future generations.

Some examples of living this value are:

- ✓ We manage our resources in a way that we leave the best conditions for the organization for future years.
- ✓ We aim to ensure maximum financial sustainability after assuring a high level of quality. Our end goal is the impact and not the revenues.
- ✓ We aim to foster an attitude of respect for the future generations throughout the complete AIESEC Experiences we provide.
- ✓ We support each other and we build on what has been done in the past.
- ✓ We plan to focus our efforts in only that which we can achieve.
- ✓ We consider the environment in the use of natural resources in our offices worldwide.

Section 3: Evolution of The AIESEC Way

It is usual and healthy for an organization to revisit and revise its description and ideals over the years. This is essential to adapt to the continuously changing environment and society. Indeed, AIESEC has discussed its description and ideals many times over the course of its history.

As a result of these discussions, the statements have been revised several times to best represent the relevance of our organization in that given period of time. Below, you can find how **THE AIESEC WAY** has evolved through the years of its existence.

AIESEC in 1948:

“AIESEC is an independent, non political and international association, which has as its purpose, to establish and promote friendly relations between the members. The function of the members is to supply information of study conditions, arrange trainee exchanges, provide contacts and other facilities for student visitors and undertake exchange visits for students”

AIESEC in 1964:

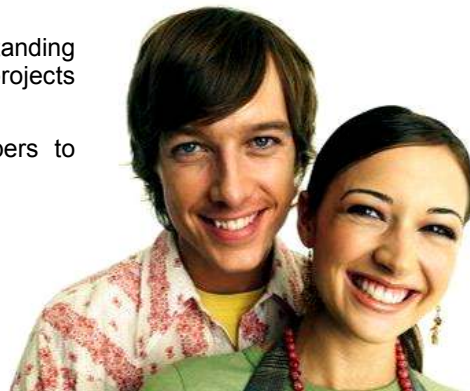
“The aim of the association shall be carried out by the members arranging trainee exchanges, and providing contacts and other facilities for student visitors, and undertaking exchange visits of students”

AIESEC in 1978:

“AIESEC shall be an independent, non-political, non-profit international association of scientific character, whose purpose shall be to develop internationally educated management which can effect various economic environments”

TO THIS END AIESEC:

- ✓ Believes in finest quality as an approach towards all activities
- ✓ Shall build bridges between management, academic and student communities
- ✓ Shall promote international understanding, goodwill and empathy for different management attitudes.
- ✓ Shall complement a management and economic education with international educational programmes, which provide practical experiences in management, without discrimination and insights into the economic, political and social environment in which management operates.
- ✓ Shall provide students with a better understanding of societies actual problems throughout projects held at national and international level.
- ✓ Shall offer a challenge to AIESEC members to achieve the aims of the association.



AIESEC in 1989:

VISION: Peace and fulfilment of humankind's potential

PURPOSE: To contribute to the development of our countries and their people with an overriding commitment to international understanding and co-operation.

Means:

- ✓ Creating opportunities for exposure and interaction between young people of different cultures and nations
 - ✓ Assisting people in acquiring skills and knowledge through management education and practical experience.
 - ✓ Offering people the opportunity to interact with their social and economic environment at national and international level.
 - ✓ Shall offer a challenge to AIESEC members to achieve the aims of the association.
-

AIESEC in 1999:

In 1992 AIESEC created its first long term organizational plan. It was called **DIRECTION '96**. This long term plan ended at IC 1996 in Poland when the organization decided to completely focus its efforts in exchange activities.

However, the lack of a consistent plan to integrate and align all member committees resulted in a situation of confusion and lack of results across the network.

In 1998 AIESEC International decided to bring in Dianna Old, founder of [The RAE Group](#), a professional consulting firm, in order to help the association begin a change initiative. There was not only a lot of confusion across the network, but also a lot of confusing description on AIESEC, which The Rae Group addressed by providing a clear approach that enabled us to better understand and describe the organization.

As a result of our work with The RAE Group, a description of AIESEC and its ideals was introduced at IPM 1999 in Taiwan and later adopted. Along with this description of the organization and its ideals, The Rae Group was also responsible for the long term vision initiative called AIESEC 2005. It was created and used by The Rae Group at IPM 1999 to help the AI team and MCPs launch a global change initiative. Along with AIESEC's description and ideals, AIESEC 2005 became the springboard for significant positive change that still continues today. It included as well a definition and agreement upon the values of the organization; however the process of defining and agreeing upon those values was planned to be done later.

"The framework" used to refer to **THE AIESEC WAY** at that time is property of The RAE Group; for such reason the original titles of the statements below have been replaced with the ones that comprise our new description: **THE AIESEC WAY**.

WHAT WE ENVISION: Peace and Fulfilment of Humankind's Potential.

OUR IMPACT: By developing individuals, we contribute to the development of our communities with an overriding commitment to international co-operation and understanding.

THE WAY WE DO IT: AIESEC facilitates international traineeship exchanges and supporting activities that provide practical learning experiences for our trainees and that facilitate the learning of our members and other stakeholders.

- ✓ AIESEC offers an International Traineeship Exchange Program⁴ that is supported by learning activities that are comprised of recruitment/selection, preparation, reception/integration and reintegration.
- ✓ AIESEC members mainly run the process for other university students. Few AIESEC members participate of the International Traineeship Exchange Program.

⁴ **ITEP:** *International Traineeship Exchange Program*.

- ✓ Trainees (participants of the ITEP) are seen by the organization as the main delivery to our communities in order to achieve our vision.
- ✓ Our members are just the engine that makes the process happen and not necessarily participants of the process itself.

AIESEC in 2000:

Following IPM 1999, we needed to complete the **values** component of our association description that would guide our actions and operations. .

At International Congress 1999 in South Africa we ran through a process for doing this and also explored what we needed to do to utilize our common global association description and ideals to increase our profile, impact, and results. At that moment the challenge that we had in front of us was to act upon that agreement and to reach the goals that we all envisioned.

By completing our organizational description and ideals – through agreeing upon **OUR VALUES** and simplifying **THE WAY WE DO IT** statement – IPM 2000 was a historical event in which the global association confirmed its commitment by legislating the complete description. This refreshed description would determine how the association was positioned internally and externally and how each member and entity in AIESEC acted until the latest refreshment at IC 2005 in India.

WHAT WE ENVISION: Peace and Fulfilment of Humankind's Potential.

OUR IMPACT: By developing individuals, we contribute to the development of our communities with an overriding commitment to international co-operation and understanding.

THE WAY WE DO IT: AIESEC facilitates international traineeship exchanges and supporting activities that provide practical learning experiences for our trainees and that facilitate the learning of our members and other stakeholders.

OUR VALUES:

✓ **Activating Leadership**

We lead by example and inspire leadership through our activities. We take full responsibility for our role in developing the potential of people.

✓ **Demonstrating Integrity**

We are consistent and transparent in our decisions and actions. We fulfil our commitments and conduct ourselves in a way that is true to our ideals.

✓ **Living Diversity**

We seek to learn from the different ways of life and opinions represented in our multicultural environment. We respect and actively encourage the contribution of every individual.

✓ **Enjoying participation**

We create a dynamic environment by active and enthusiastic participation of individuals. We enjoy being involved in AIESEC.

✓ **Striving for Excellence**

We aim to deliver the highest quality performance in everything we do. Through creativity and innovation we seek to continuously improve.

✓ **Acting Sustainably**

We act in a way that is sustainable for our organisation and society. Our decisions take into account the needs of future generations.



AIESEC in 2005:

The most recent global discussion about revising [THE AIESEC WAY](#) content started in 2004 and resulted with the refreshment of our organizational description and ideals in the International Congress 2005 in Agra - India.

The definition of the '[AIESEC Experience](#)' in 2002, a result of the Global Change Process initiated by the creation of AIESEC 2005 with The Rae Group at IPM 1999 in Taiwan, helped us to reconsider who our primary target group is. After a long time of different viewpoints, it symbolised increased unity and common vision among the membership of the organisation and a clear link to contribute to the achievement of our vision.

After the common agreement of the organization to implement the '[AIESEC Experience](#)' at IPM 2004 in Sri Lanka, we realized that our organizational description and ideals were no longer an accurate representation of AIESEC. Formal discussion started to happen on [THE AIESEC WAY](#) changes in the organization at that point, including AIESEC International discussions, Steering Team meetings and MCPs participation at the International Congress 2004 and International Presidents Meeting 2005 as well as participation of MCVPs at the XPros 2005.

During those discussions it was determined that the organisation's description and ideals were tied to the former concept of AIESEC as an organization that provide a service to university students and indirect service to society by providing it with capable future leaders without considering the formal development of its members as those future leaders. The '[AIESEC EXPERIENCE](#)' aims to set up the organization to provide these opportunities to all its members – this needed to be reflected in [THE AIESEC WAY](#) statements. As well, the fact that AIESEC contributes to the achievement of [WHAT WE ENVISION](#) by providing leadership for a positive impact in society was not clear.

By re-discussing [THE AIESEC WAY](#), it was aimed to:

- ✓ Facilitate internal and external communication to create one common image/message around the world.
- ✓ Reflect the evolution of the organization itself after the Global Change Process that brought the '[AIESEC Experience](#)' as the essence of what we do stated in [THE WAY WE DO IT](#).
- ✓ Re-enforce the description and ideals of AIESEC.

AIESEC in 2008: MOST RECENT REVISION OF THE AIESEC WAY

Since the 1999 changes were made to our association description and ideals with the support of The RAE Group, we have been using a language that is property of the consultancy firm due to not completing the final work on our description with them. (*This "language" includes without limitation, 'the framework', its title, and the titles and format of the statements.*)

In order to handle the property of this consultancy company properly, and find [our way](#) to completing the work on our organizational description and ideals, Dianna Old of The RAE Group supported us in the process of defining something that we think suits the unique needs of AIESEC.

In this context [THE AIESEC WAY](#) was born.

[THE AIESEC WAY](#) describes not only AIESEC and its ideals, but also states that this is [our way](#). It helps us to differentiate ourselves even more from other organizations.

[THE AIESEC WAY](#) also states that **Peace and Fulfilment of Humankind's Potential** is [WHAT WE ENVISION](#). This will help us differentiate the role this statement plays in comparison with our AIESEC 2010 organizational vision, which is the vision we have for AIESEC in 2010.

The [OUR IMPACT](#) statement as well as our [GLOBAL DESCRIPTOR](#) have also been slightly re-worded as compared to the initial format of 2005, with the same purpose of ensuring the current [AIESEC WAY](#) is not disclosing confidential information of The RAE Group and that the current toolkit is fully the property of AIESEC International.

Following is **THE AIESEC WAY** current statements (left column) alongside the former concepts we were using (right column).

THE AIESEC WAY – Current Version	THE AIESEC WAY - prior to IC '05
<p>WHAT IS AIESEC?: AIESEC is a global, non-political, independent, not-for-profit organization run by students and recent graduates of institutions of higher education. Its members are interested in world issues, leadership and management. AIESEC does not discriminate on the basis of race, colour, gender, sexual orientation, creed, religion, national, ethnic or social origin.</p> <p>WHAT WE ENVISION (no changes) Peace and Fulfilment of Humankind's Potential.</p> <p>OUR IMPACT Our international platform enables young people to explore and develop their leadership potential for them to have a positive impact in society.</p> <p>THE WAY WE DO IT AIESEC provides its members with an integrated development experience comprised of leadership opportunities, international internships and participation in a global learning environment.</p> <p>OUR VALUES (no changes)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Activating Leadership ✓ Demonstrating Integrity ✓ Living Diversity ✓ Enjoying Participation ✓ Striving for Excellence ✓ Acting Sustainably 	<p>AIESEC is an international, non-political, non-profit, student-run, independent, educational foundation. It is comprised of students and recent graduates of institutions of higher education who are interested in economics and management. AIESEC does not discriminate on the basis of race, colours, sex, sexual orientation, creed, Religion, national or ethnic origin.</p> <p>Peace and Fulfilment of Humankind's Potential.</p> <p>By developing individuals, we contribute to the development of our communities with an overriding commitment to international co-operation and understanding.</p> <p>AIESEC facilitates international traineeship exchanges and supporting activities that provide practical learning experiences for our trainees and that facilitate the learning of our members and other stakeholders.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Activating Leadership ✓ Demonstrating Integrity ✓ Living Diversity ✓ Enjoying Participation ✓ Striving for Excellence ✓ Acting Sustainably

Appendix 1:

Main differences in [OUR IMPACT](#) and [THE WAY WE DO IT](#) statements after the 2005 refreshment

1. Changes in [OUR IMPACT](#) Statement:

In the previous [OUR IMPACT](#) statement we declared that ***'by developing individuals, we contribute to the development of our communities with an overriding commitment to international co-operation and understanding'***; making clear that our aim was to provide the world with individuals able to foster international co-operation and understanding.

At that time, the statement identified the organisation's aim at both a societal and also an individual level.

The new version of [OUR IMPACT](#) no longer states that AIESEC develops individuals, but rather that AIESEC **enables** them to develop. This is due to our higher understating of what the impact of AIESEC is in the world, and the need to empower people to experience the opportunities that AIESEC provides.

Today AIESEC's contribution is definitely made through indirect impact. The impact of our activities is focused on enabling young people to be leaders rather than in direct impact of our activities in society.

The evolution of our organization to meet the external reality lead AIESEC to define the AIESEC EXPERIENCE as a tool to enable young people to develop themselves to make a positive impact in society, an impact that can not be limited to ***'international co-operation and understanding'*** but rather open to different scopes and wider reach.

AIESEC wants to enable young people to become leaders able to make positive impact in diverse global issues such as: HIV/AIDS, finances, energy, entrepreneurship, poverty, discrimination, international co-operation and understanding, etc. This is also currently stated in the [WHAT IS AIESEC?](#) statement.

The risk of loosing the international nature of our activities is diminished by two facts: the presence of the ***'world issues'*** interest declared in the [WHAT IS AIESEC?](#) statement and the presence of the subject ***'our international platform'*** in [OUR IMPACT](#) statement itself.

'World issues' is extensively explained in the [WHAT IS AIESEC?](#) part of this toolkit.

'Our international platform' phrase in [OUR IMPACT](#) states clearly that AIESEC is that international platform on which thousands of AIESEC Experiences are happening everyday, connecting people globally through our ***'global learning environment'***.

The change from 'communities' to ***'society'*** is due to the fact that society holds a wider range. We are talking about all sectors of society – corporate, non-corporate, government, social, etc – while in most cases 'community development' is more connected with social development at local level. Society is also open to be a cross borders concept more that just a local impact concept.

Finally, our commitment is no longer purely based on international co-operation and understanding, but on a ***positive impact in society***. This includes international co-operation and understanding and gives room for other relevant global issues that shape our world today and in the incoming future.



2. Changes in THE WAY WE DO IT Statement:

By stating that *'AIESEC facilitates international traineeship exchanges and supporting activities that provide practical learning experiences for our trainees and that facilitates the learning of our members and other stakeholders'*, we clearly defined that the essence of our activities was the international traineeship exchanges. The *'supporting activities'* as the name itself declares, were a 'support' tool for the exchanges themselves.

In the new statement, AIESEC provides an **integrated development experience** (AIESEC EXPERIENCE). This experience is **'comprised'** of the three key elements:

1. **Leadership Opportunities,**
2. **International Internships and**
3. **Participation in a Global Learning Environment.**

Committing us to deliver as many 'complete' AIESEC EXPERIENCES as possible by increasing the number of our international internships as well as the number of leadership opportunities provided to our members, and ensuring the existence of the components of learning in each one of our local committees worldwide.

In the new statement there is no distinction between members and trainees. The organization is talking in terms of 'AIESEC people' in its organizational description and ideals, giving the ambition to ensure that we are building generations of 'AIESEC Experience people' for a future in which most of our interns have been AIESEC members for a period of time and most of them have been given with the opportunity to take on a leadership role within the organization.

The new statement reflects clearly what we do in every local committee: **AIESEC provides as many complete AIESEC Experiences as possible to make a positive impact in society.**

POINTS TO NOTE

1. The integrated development experiences (AIESEC EXPERIENCES) provided by AIESEC are comprised of the three elements mentioned – **leadership opportunities**, **international internships** and participation in a **global learning environment** – we need to strive to provide as many **complete** AIESEC Experiences as possible.
2. This means that providing only international internships or leadership opportunities is not sufficient. Along with the internships and leadership opportunities, the presence of the global learning environment in every local committee is the unique **way** for AIESEC to provide complete AIESEC Experiences.
3. We believe that by providing **complete** AIESEC Experiences, AIESEC then impacts youth to become those leaders able to make a positive impact in society.



Appendix 2:

THE AIESEC WAY information to be used externally

Please note, this is the only The AIESEC Way information approved by AIESEC for external use.

Many organizations are working to make a positive impact in our society, as we do. Each one of them has its own approach. We also have our unique way to make that impact...

THE AIESEC WAY!

WHAT IS AIESEC?

AIESEC is a global, non-political, independent, not-for-profit organization run by students and recent graduates of institutions of higher education. Its members are interested in world issues, leadership and management. AIESEC does not discriminate on the basis of race, colour, gender, sexual orientation, creed, religion, national, ethnic or social origin.

WHAT WE ENVISION

Peace and fulfilment of humankind's potential.

OUR IMPACT

Our international platform enables young people to explore and develop their leadership potential for them to have a positive impact in society.

THE WAY WE DO IT

AIESEC provides its members with an integrated development experience comprised of leadership opportunities, international internships and participation in a global learning environment.

OUR VALUES

Our Values define the acceptable standards which govern our members within our global network and support us in pursuing our ideals.

Activating Leadership

We lead by example and inspire leadership through our activities.

We take full responsibility for developing the leadership potential of our members.

Demonstrating Integrity

We are consistent and transparent in our decisions and actions.

We fulfil our commitments and conduct ourselves in a way that is true to our ideals.

Living Diversity

We seek to learn from the different ways of life and opinions represented in our multicultural environment.

We respect and actively encourage the contribution of every individual.

Enjoying Participation

We create a dynamic environment created by active and enthusiastic participation of individuals.

We enjoy being involved in AIESEC.

Striving for Excellence

We aim to deliver the highest quality performance in everything we do.

Through creativity and innovation we seek to continuously improve.

Acting Sustainably

We act in a way that is sustainable for our organisation and society.

Our decisions take into account the needs of future generations.

THE AIESEC WAY is not only a description of the way (*manner*) we aim to make a positive impact in society, but also describes the way (*road*) we are taking to achieve what we envision.