



ACS Leadership Development Program® Virtual Strategic Planning Retreats (VSPR) and In-person SPRs

Our VSPRs and In-person SPRs are designed to deliver a high quality, collaborative, and interactive planning environment. The In-person offers 1-1/2 day facilitated Strategic Planning Retreats for ACS committees, local sections, divisions and other interested governance groups. The Strategic Planning Retreats expand on the principles covered in the ACS LDS *Strategic Planning* course and provide participants with the opportunity to learn and apply the strategic planning process for their group. Over the course of a weekend, participants confirm or define their group's vision and mission statements and develop a portfolio of goals along with a prioritized list of strategies to meet these goals. Most importantly however, the retreat provides an opportunity for group leaders to coalesce around an actionable strategic plan and a clear direction to move forward as a team.

The VSPR mimics the in-person Strategic Planning Retreats closely to achieve the best outcomes in the virtual environment. Through the virtual format, groups successfully develop a highly effective strategic plan with ready to implement projects to achieve their goals without having to travel to a central site. What are some main points about the VSPR?

First, what is the VSPR format? The format is four (4) 2.5-3.0 hr. online collaborative sessions held over the course of a week, using 4 successive virtual modules. Each of these module sessions has pre-session learning assignments plus intersession homework assignments between modules 2 and 3, and 3 and 4.

Second, participants must be comfortable with virtual meeting logistics. We use Zoom for the audio/video platform, including the Chat and Share screen functions and breakout rooms for interactive discussions, and MURAL for the collaborative platform. Optional pre-VSPR technology training sessions are held on the use of Zoom and MURAL.

Third, participants must use a laptop or computer and approved internet browsers, have sufficient broadband capability for simultaneous audio and video transmission, attend all four sessions, and have a distraction-free location for the virtual sessions.

Lastly and very importantly, the VSPR design is customized to your particular strategic planning needs.

Strategic planning is not rocket science; anyone can do it and there is no one best planning process. However, the LDS facilitated Strategic Planning Retreat provides ACS groups with an understanding of the disciplined, creative strategic planning process that is utilized and executed by the Society. The retreat provides a foundation to inform group decisions and attunes the group's goals to those in the ACS Strategic Plan. ACS members serving as facilitators and peer mentors guide the group in developing an actionable, customized strategic plan.

The materials were customized to our [situation] and we were able to come away with a 3-5 year Strategic Plan for immediate implementation that has allowed us to hit the ground running and not lose the momentum achieved in the energizing weekend event. ...The facilitators [understand] how ACS works and [can identify] the resources available to help us meet our goals.

The value of a Strategic Planning Retreat is threefold:

- Synergistic and greater impact results: Planning teams engage in a process that aligns group goals with the ACS Strategic Plan.
- Plans ready for immediate start: Planning teams take away their own goals and actionable strategic plan.
- Transportable skills: Individual participants build skills that can be applied in their professional and other endeavors.

The retreat is a partnership between the participating group and the ACS with both stakeholders making a financial investment in the process.

Interested groups should consider the following costs for hosting a retreat:

Costs for a VSPR:

Retreat Fee:	\$2,000 Includes: Registration, course manual, handouts, and certificates of completion.
Facilitation Fee:	\$4,000 Includes: Cost of retreat customization and execution by two facilitators: pre-retreat consultation call(s), pre-work materials and surveys, Participant Guide, technology training sessions, virtual facilitation (4 separate 2.5-3 hr sessions), priority setting for Goals and Strategies/Measurements, developed Project Plans, and a follow-up final written Strategic Plan report.

Costs for an In-person SPR:

Retreat Fee:	\$2,750 Includes: Registration, course manual, handouts, shipping, flipcharts, laptop/projector and certificates of completion.
Facilitation Fee:	\$3,500 Includes: Cost of Retreat customization by two facilitators: pre-retreat consultation call(s), pre-work materials and surveys, Participant Guide, onsite facilitation, follow up written reports from session, and priority setting for Goals and Strategies/Measurements, developed Project Plans, and a follow-up final written Strategic Plan report. Facilitators' travel and out of pocket costs are paid by ACS.
Travel & Onsite Costs:	A minimum number of 10 participants is highly recommended. The participating groups should budget accordingly for participant travel expenses, room rental fees, meals.

Interested groups should contact leaders@acs.org for more information.