



**Technical Commissions
Description & Program of Actions**



**ASSOCIATION of IVORIANS
IN
TEXAS-HOUSTON (AIT-Houston)**



Executive Bureau

Table of contents

I. Introduction

II. House of AIT-Houston

III. Commission Description

1. ACADEMIC AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

- a. MENTORING PROGRAM:*
- b. SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM*
- c. PROFESSIONAL NETWORKING*

2. SOLIDARITY AND SOCIAL AFFAIRS

- a. AKWABA PROGRAM*
- b. CHARITY AND VOLUNTEERING PROGRAM*

3. WOMEN EMPOWERMENT AND CHILD PROMOTION

- a. WOMEN NETWORK PROGRAM*
- b. KIDS PROGRAM*

4. CULTURAL AND EVENTS COORDINATION

5. SPORT AND RECREATION

6. BUSINESS AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP

7. FUNDRAISING

IV. Conclusion

I. Introduction

The purpose of this document is to provide an overview of AIT-Houston vision and the technical commissions that the Executive Bureau intends to use to build a strong and sustainable organization. Our goal is to establish several programs targeting the full demographic of our community with the goal of inspiring a cohesive group of Ivorians that are educated, ambitious and ready to support one another.

The House of AIT-Houston is the visual symbol that we are using to better illustrate our aspiration to become one of the most dynamic community in Houston. Our goal is to forge a meaningful and long lasting impact on this community and we intend to do so with the same building principles that apply to the edifice of a house, which we are calling The House of AIT-Houston. Our foundations will be our core values and our pillars will illustrate our area of actions. Together we will progressively build the most dynamic community in the city of Houston.



II. House of AIT-Houston

The House of AIT-Houston will firmly stand on core values that will serve as the foundation of our organization:

- **Patriotism:** “Men and Women love their country not because it is great, but because it is their own”. Our members’ passion for their beloved country of Cote d’Ivoire, its history and culture, are the key drivers that unite all of us through this Association.
- **Team work:** “Alone we can do so little, together we can do so much”. AIT-Houston believes that a consolidated and coordinated effort to uplift this community is essential to our success.
- **Solidarity:** “Solidarity was the movement that turned the direction of History”. Our willingness to sacrifice time, effort and resource for the betterment of our community and come together in support of our people in need is critical to our aspiration of collective greatness.

AIT-Houston technical commissions will target 3 main courses of actions, which will serve as pillars of the House we are striving to build. We are envisioning all members contributing to the rise of those pillars and actively taking part in the realization of our vision.

- **Social Cohesion:** This pillar supports the establishment of a positive environment within our base where members have the opportunity to interact with each other, participate in group activities and share interest to promote a social harmony and cohesion. Our ability to create a family type atmosphere where our members enjoy being around each other is crucial to our objective to bring this community together and making it stronger.
- **Members Development:** A strong and dynamic community is an educated and professionally ambitious one. We want our members to grow in their respective occupations and provide them the tools and the necessary guidance for success.

- **Social Support:** As an association, we need to build an organization strong and resourceful enough to react to critical situations faced by our members. Our community needs to be informed of their rights and resources available to support them.

All technical Commissions described in the following sections are designed to progressively elevate our organization to become one of the most dynamic community in the city of Houston.

III. Commission Description

1. ACADEMIC AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

One of the key objectives of AIT-Houston is to celebrate academic and professional excellence among the Houstonian Ivorian community and create educational programs and activities fortifying the development of our students and contributing to the professional growth of our members:

a. MENTORING PROGRAM:

- The goal is to identify professionals within our community with significant experience in a given field (Medicine, Accounting, Finance, Engineering, IT...) willing to mentor young students in their area of studies and provide insights into potential professional opportunities and career aspirations. Mentors should be willing to share their experience, provide guidance and help mentees enhance their personal development. This program can be extended to early career professionals.
- Our objective is to pair all students participating in the program with mentors whose responsibility will be to assist mentees with their integration within their social and academic environment.

- This program is also designed to foster more interactions between generations of our community and help with the goal of encouraging social cohesion among our members.

b. SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

- AIT- Houston will be actively looking for academic scholarship opportunities in order to encourage and celebrate academic excellence within our student population. The Academic and Professional Development Commission will engage with local universities with the goal of discussing financial benefits for deserving students among our members. Our Association is planning on allocating funds for academic scholarship on the basis of merit. The role of this commission is also to inform our members and stay in touch with local university programs that our students can benefit from.

c. PROFESSIONAL NETWORKING

- This program aims to build a network of professionals within our community in order to establish relationships contributing to the professional growth of our members. The AIT-Houston professional network will connect professionals operating in the same industries so that they could share experiences and opportunities within their field of expertise. This program will introduce potential business partners and hopefully lead to the economic growth of our community by promoting a spirit of entrepreneurship among our members.
- The Academic and Professional Development Commission will champion the organization of networking events and keep our members informed of networking events within the city of Houston.

2. SOLIDARITY AND SOCIAL AFFAIRS

AIT-Houston would like to promote a spirit of solidarity among the community and provide, whenever possible, social support to its members in need of assistance. AIT-Houston will appoint a team that will timely address various social issues faced by our members. This commission will serve as a bridge of information between our members and government programs and look to establish partnership with immigration law firms and non-profit organizations that can assist in the support of our members in difficult situations. This team will be well informed of all government programs and assist members in accessing those social services. Our goal is to be a resource to our members and help them through challenging times.

a. AKWABA PROGRAM

- The objective of this program is to assist newly arrived Ivorians in the city of Houston by putting them in contact with competent real estate agencies to help them with their house or apartment search and provide information on neighborhoods, public school systems along with relevant information to their integration within the city of Houston. This program will also help arriving members with their social integration by introducing them to other Ivorians and encouraging them to participate in events and programs organized by AIT-Houston.

b. CHARITY AND VOLUNTEERING PROGRAM

- AIT-Houston would like to have an impact in the city of Houston and express our gratitude and appreciation for such a welcoming city. We would like to encourage our members to participate in volunteering programs such as United Way, Houston Food Bank, Target Hunger etc... Our members will learn from other successful non-profit organizations and share their experience with our members for the growth of our institution.

- The Charity and Volunteering program will look for opportunities to lead or participate in charity events in Cote D'Ivoire, our home country. AIT-Houston will look to organize book drives, clothe drives and potentially the sourcing of medical equipment to support local organizations back home.

3. WOMEN EMPOWERMENT AND CHILD PROMOTION

AIT-Houston will strive to encourage women to take an active and prominent role within the Association and create a women force that will insure that their interests and concerns are taken into account within the Association decision process and program of activities.

a. WOMEN NETWORK PROGRAM

- The objective is to create a platform promoting constructive interaction among Ivorian women of our community. Women can benefit from each other's experience and establish relationship, which can contribute to their flourishing within their social, academic and professional environment. This network will look to celebrate women achievement within our community and provide an insight to key concerns of women. This commission will look to address those concerns and accompany women in their growth.

b. KIDS PROGRAM

- Events targeting kids' entertainment need to represent an important component of the Association program of activities. Engaging our kids and encouraging them to get to know each other is not only important for the joy that it brings to them and us as parents but it is also a reminder of their origins which can easily be lost when living abroad. This program will look to organize several kids outing events (Farm, zoo, museum etc...) including the

end of the year kids' appreciation day. We are trying to contribute to the growth of future leaders of our community.

4. CULTURAL PROMOTION

- The Cultural Commission will lead all efforts to promote the Ivorian culture and celebrate our cultural heritage. This team will ensure that our community is proudly represented at events honoring cultural diversity. AIT-Houston wants to become the best advocate of the Ivorian culture by showcasing our gastronomy, music, fashion and traditions. AIT-Houston wants to become an ambassador of the Ivorian culture and this commission will encourage our members to be fully involved in that effort. We look forward to the celebrations such as our Independence Day, US national and various holidays bringing this community together in a spirit of festivity. The Association believes that those activities will strengthen the bonds of our community and contribute to its growth.

5. SPORT AND RECREATION

- The sport and recreation commission will primarily focus on encouraging our members to stay active and maintain a healthy fitness level by regularly engaging in sport and recreational activities. AIT-Houston values of team work and solidarity are virtues that can be easily practiced in a sport environment. AIT-Houston would like to use sport as a popular way of bringing this community closer and provide a healthy environment in which our members can socialize, learn more about each other's and ultimately lead to stronger relationship among our members.
- Soccer is the most popular sport practiced by Ivorians and Houston Elephants Soccer Management Team has successfully built an organization, which proudly represents our community in Houston and travel across the

country to meet and play other Ivorian community in the USA. The team impact on young Ivorian men over the years has been nothing short of remarkable and AIT-Houston would like to show its support to the team by contributing to their budget and providing a logistic support during their events. AIT-Houston will advertise games and tournaments to our members so that they can come and cheer for their team.

- This commission will primarily look to diversify sport and recreational activities among our members with the introduction of others sports events such as Basketball, Indoor Soccer, CrossFit and Golf. The objective is to initiate a series of activities that will target the full demographic spectrum of our membership population. We also want to generate a fun and competitive spirit among our members with for example Video Games, Scrabble, Chess and Checkers mini tournaments. Our objective is to bring members with similar recreational interests together.

6. FUNDRAISING

- The fundraising commission goal is to raise the necessary funds required for the Association to implement its program of activities. This commission will look to attract donors and establish relationship with sponsors willing to support the Association. This department will encourage our members to maintain their active status by regularly honoring their membership dues. We'll look to simplify the payment process by offering online payment and the use of credit card at our events.
- This commission will actively pursue the support of corporate sponsors and businesses interested in partnering with the Association. We will use all of our communication channels, website, social media outlets and email distribution to market sponsors' products and services. Our strategy includes taking advantages of existing programs supporting non-profit organization in their fundraising effort.

- The Fundraising Commission will look for additional ways to generate funds such as the commercialization of AIT-Houston products including T-Shirts, hats or polos. We will organize auctions of donated items and raise money through tickets sales at our events.

7. BUSINESS AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP PROMOTION

- The Business and Entrepreneurship commission goal is to promote Ivoirian business and encourage members to support and prioritize businesses from our community. This commission will initiate a registry of Ivoirian businesses in the city of Houston and assist them in marketing their business among our members. AIT-Houston would like to encourage our members to create wealth and jobs opportunities in our community.
- This commission will also communicate training opportunities, information about how to finance business and the mayor office's program to prioritize business owned by minorities.
- The Business and Entrepreneurship commission will look to create an investment funds for the community and look to establish a franchise which will allow the participants to join financial forces.

IV. Conclusion

Our objective to become the most dynamic community in Houston is ambitious and will require hard work, sacrifice and patience but it is our conviction that our community possesses some of the best talents, which we will look to put to the service of the Association. These technical commissions will drive our activities and promote programs targeting the betterment of Ivoirians within the city of Houston. We want our members fully engaged and taking leadership positions within those

commissions so that that the dynamic culture starts from inside the organization and spread to become part of the culture of this community.