

The International People's College Strategy 2026-2030

Introduction

The Strategy 2026-2030 is the third IPC strategy. It is a revised, updated version of the 2020-2025 strategy. It sets a clear direction while maintaining the flexibility needed to adapt swiftly and appropriately to the challenges of an evolving global context.

The revised strategy acknowledges the grim facts of a terrifying world development and impending climate disaster but finds solace and hope in the fighting spirit of young people and devotes its efforts to provide tools and skills to assist them in their fight for a better future for all.

Contributing to lasting and just peace and promoting active global citizenship in a world lacking a universally agreed international order, is more relevant and necessary than ever.

The future development of the school is based on IPC's core values as stipulated in IPC's current Articles of Association, namely peace and non-violence, respect and openness, equality and rights, social responsibility, democracy, and sustainability. These core values are intrinsic to IPC's DNA but must continuously be re-interpreted in the context of the rapidly changing world to remain relevant in times of new challenges.

IPC will continue to have four focus areas as the framework within which the pedagogical efforts of the school shall take place. These focus areas will help to define how life at the school shall be lived and how relations between the school and the world shall be developed.

The strategy is envisioned to:

- enable staff, students and other parties with an affinity for the school to understand, explore and to further develop the original vision of the school,
- serve as a useful tool for people living and working at the school, and
- appeal for increased collaboration with people and institutions outside of IPCs environment.

The revised strategy has been drafted in cooperation with staff, students and parties with an affinity for the school. The strategy underlines the importance and relevance of upholding and promoting the original vision of IPC with increased engagement of staff, students, the Board and the School Council.

The revised strategy is concise, written in plain language, and accompanied by supporting annexes. Implementation and monitoring of the strategy is delegated to the various IPC stakeholders.

IPC Foundation

The International People's College was founded in 1921, at a time when Europe was grappling with the aftermath of World War I, the fall of old colonial powers and the rise of nationalistic and divisive ideologies.

Peter Manniche (1889-1981), the founding father of IPC, was inspired by the Danish Folk High School movement and envisioned IPC as a place where individuals with diverse cultural backgrounds could come together and through mutual learning and peaceful dialogue would physically work together to build hope, international understanding and peace. Manniche believed that education was a powerful tool to cultivate empathy, open-mindedness and cooperation.

The Danish Folk High School's pedagogical tradition means supporting students to develop as human beings through discovering the talents and passions, they never knew they had, as a former IPC principal once explained. The Danish Folk High School tradition is part and parcel of life and civil society in Denmark.

In 2026 the overarching vision of IPC continues to be striving for **peace and non-violence**, emphasizing the importance of peaceful resolution of conflicts and respect for life. IPC's other core values – explained in today's context and in accordance with IPC's Articles of Association - are:

- **Respect and openness**, recognizing that we must respect the culture of others as well as their views and different opinions
- **Equality and rights**, understood as equal rights of all people irrespective of gender, ethnicity, nationality, socio-economic background, physical ability, age and religion
- **Democracy** based on principles of consultation, dialogue, involvement, and empowerment, including majority rule with a responsibility to respect minority rights
- **Social responsibility**, taking an empathetic approach towards the needs of others, while working together to develop collaborative solutions to shared challenges
- **Sustainability** of and responsibility for planetary resources, requiring collective stewardship and actions to solve common problems

Context

In the past decade global security has rapidly deteriorated, and presently global developments are not indicating any change for the better - on the contrary. Among the serious markers of deterioration are the many long-lasting wars and armed conflicts in more than 50 countries, defying international peace-making efforts. In

addition, the world is currently witnessing genocides and other horrific atrocities against civilian populations in several parts of the world.

Military spending for armaments at a global scale has grown to unprecedented levels unfolding against a backdrop of ecological disaster and increasing inequality within and between communities, countries and continents.

At the same time, the very international institutions meant to address global crises and challenges to uphold law and order in the international community are grossly underfunded and undermined.

Moreover, there is a widespread erosion of trust in international institutions due to the glaring hypocrisy and unequal treatment of people demonstrated by Western and other governments. The systems that govern our global international relationships are also under pressure to address the climate crisis - an area long recognized as one requiring urgent collective action and cooperation.

The global political situation necessitates clear priorities and adherence to the basic framework of IPC's foundation: The UN Declaration of Human Rights, the Sustainable Development Goals, the International Human Rights Law and the Pact for the Future, which includes the Global Digital Compact and the Declaration on Future Generations. The Pact for the Future covers a broad range of themes, including peace and security as well as addresses Artificial Intelligence.

The contextual analysis highlights several major challenges, including threats to democracy and human rights; misinformation undermining democratic and critical dialogue; the disproportionate concentration of wealth and power; the impacts of climate change; a volatile global order marked by financial instability; the shortfalls in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals; and growing frustration among young people.

Strategic focus areas, 2026-2030

IPC's overall aim continues to be empowerment and formation of active, democratic and socially responsible global citizens.

IPC adds a global dimension to what previously was mainly a national focus of Danish Folk High Schools for generations – by formation of enlightened, committed, enabled, empowered citizens, who actively take part in the development of society for the common good for all, and who actively promote peaceful, democratic and global development while working for social and economic equality.

By focussing on active, global citizenship IPC's formative work aims to go beyond intellectual learning.

Grounded in the analysis of the current global trends, the international framework for sustainable development and human rights and IPC's commitment to the principles of

the Danish Folk High School movement, IPC retains four specific thematic focus areas for the period 2026-2030, which all relate to the overarching strategic focus on Active Global Citizenship.

IPC aims to facilitate, cultivate and promote:

- An understanding of the historic and current dynamics affecting global development, democracy and power relations
- A motivation to participate actively at relevant levels of society, from local to global
- A commitment to act by addressing social injustice and promoting a more equitable and sustainable world
- An urge to contribute to positive change after IPC and keep the motivation for lifelong learning

The four thematic focus areas for the period 2026-2030 are:

- A) Peace and Non-Violence
- B) Democracy
- C) Equality, Equal Rights and Social Responsibility
- D) Sustainability

A. Peace and Non-Violence

IPC will contribute to global, inter-personal, inner peace and non-violence by:

- Exploring and promoting philosophies and practices of peace and non-violence.
- Examining, analysing and learning from concrete peace processes and liberation movements around the world.
- Creating safe spaces for dialogue, learning and disagreement, free from physical and emotional violence, where students and staff can practice peaceful co-existence and develop peace within themselves and in the community.
- Developing and strengthening peaceful conflict management skills and non-violent communication skills among IPC community members.

B. Democracy

IPC will contribute to strengthening and consolidating democratic values by:

- Exploring and sharing democratic processes and models in theory and practice - both successful and failed democracies - from around the world.
- Analysing the role and influence of media, social media and use of Artificial Intelligence, including the analysis of information flows and the importance of applying source critique.
- Using IPC as a role model for a dynamic and inclusive democratic organisation, with open and respectful sharing of opinions based on critical thinking and dialogue.
- Supporting and facilitating processes where students can practice, experience and experiment with hands-on community-based democratic consultation models.

C. Equality, Equal Rights and Social Responsibility

IPC will promote equity, fairness and human dignity by:

- Examining the distribution of resources, wealth and power in the world, including exploitative economic institutions, and the underlying interests involved.
- Combatting unfairness, prejudice and discrimination based on privilege, power, class, gender, religion, sexual orientation, ethnicity, neurodivergence or physical abilities.
- Increasing the socio-economic diversity of the IPC community and creating an inclusive and empowering learning environment for all.
- Addressing barriers limiting equal opportunities for learning, participation and growth for all IPC community members.

D. Sustainability

IPC will raise awareness about climate change and other environmental concerns by:

- Analysing and exploring the causes and effects of climate change and its interconnection with other issues regarding sustainable development.
- Promoting and sharing examples of climate mitigation and adaptation strategies, connecting actions at global, national and individual levels.
- Identifying, practising and experimenting with innovative ways to advance sustainable and regenerative solutions in practice.
- Developing, implementing and monitoring concrete initiatives and measures, ensuring that IPC operates in a sustainable and environmentally responsible manner.

Annexes

1. Internal organisation of IPC
2. Pedagogical approach and learning objectives of IPC
3. Achievements and focus points in the IPC strategic period 2020–2025

IPC Strategy 2026-2030 approved by IPC School Council 23.11.2025

IPC School Council Chairperson



Lars Udsholt

IPC Board Chairperson



Toni Michelsen

IPC Principal



Nelima Lassen

Place /date

Elsinore, 31/01-2026