

level | égaliser

**BUILDING A FUTURE OF
EQUITY AND JUSTICE**

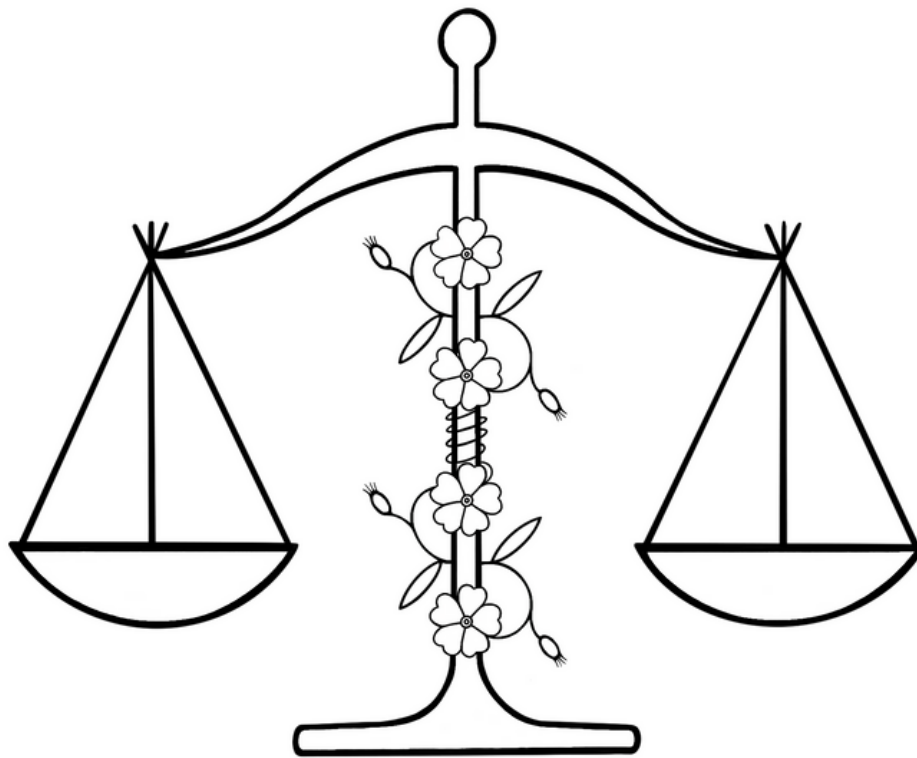
**5-YEAR STRATEGIC PLAN
2023-2028**

Level is a remarkable organization that presents an innovative approach to justice for youth, law students, and lawyers alike. The foundation of justice is centred upon people, and Level excels at bringing together individuals from diverse backgrounds and areas of expertise to envision inclusive and equitable justice systems that are accessible to all. Witnessing how Level unites people in their pursuit of access to justice is truly extraordinary.

Justice André Chamberlain

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This artwork, commissioned for Level, is by Autumn Whiteway and belongs to the Woodland style of art. The inspiration for this piece is to level the scales of justice so that all members of society can be best served without systemic barriers. The scale's design represents the three foundational poles of the tipi, which in Cree teachings represent obedience, respect and humility. When all three of these poles come together to form a tripod, they provide a sturdy foundation. The interconnectedness of everything is symbolized by wild roses wrapped around the scale, which remind us that our relationships are not only with human kinfolk, but with the entire natural world, which is governed by laws its own laws.

LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Welcome to Level's 2023-2028 Strategic Plan.

We are thrilled to share Level's Strategic Plan for the next five years. As a national justice education and human rights charity, our vision is a world where youth, law students, and the legal sector have the tools to build a future of equity and justice.

When we engage youth in legal education, together we contribute to a future where communities understand their rights, advocate for themselves and others, and better navigate the legal system. Our goal is to make legal education more accessible and engaging for youth, especially vulnerable youth who face systemic barriers. We also introduce Indigenous and Black students to careers in law, with the aim of promoting diversity in the legal sector and implementing inclusive justice practices, such as restorative justice.

As society changes, the legal sector must adapt to meet changing needs. Our law student and legal sector programs offer opportunities to explore social justice careers and research, and to engage with thought leaders who address critical questions on how we can collaboratively create a more fair and just legal system. Collectively, our programs provide pathways to achieve a more diverse and inclusive legal sector.

Level's achievements to this point include the expansion of the justice education program for Indigenous youth, the recently added Black Youth Justice Program and Environmental Justice Program, as well as the reimagined programs for law students and legal professionals. With these programs, we have pursued innovative ways to increase equitable access to justice through public legal education, social justice research, and human rights initiatives.

We have come a long way, but we acknowledge the need to keep pushing toward significant changes in equity and access to justice. In collaboration with community, we will continue to design programs to address systemic discrimination in the justice system, increase the humility and empathy of the legal sector, and build pathways to re-envision and create justice systems that are responsive and inclusive.

To accurately reflect our organization's strengths, diversity, and community connections, we consulted numerous individuals, both internal and external to Level's work. Level's Board and staff used the feedback we received during consultation to outline four main strategic directions for the next five years: **Programs**, **Relationships**, **Awareness**, and **Capacity**.

LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Welcome to Level's 2023-2028 Strategic Plan.

With these four strategic directions, we will expand our initiatives, amplify our achievements, sustain and forge new partnerships, enhance awareness and knowledge, strengthen our resources, and and refine our metrics for measuring impact.

Our Strategic Plan begins with an overview of Level: who we are, what we do, and why we do it. We then outline Level's vision, mission, values, and priority groups. We updated these concepts to align with what we heard during consultation and who we are now as an organization. In the "Implementing the Strategic Plan" section, we feature indicators to measure the success of our goals.

We are grateful for the input we received from program participants, partners, Elders, Knowledge Keepers, program Advisory Board members, Program Facilitators, volunteers, funders, Level staff and Board members, access to justice experts, and other people familiar with Level's work. Your diverse perspectives, knowledge, and wisdom greatly contributed to the strength of this plan. Together, we are building something greater and more enduring than all of us.

Sincerely,

Shelan Markus
Executive Director, Level

[Click here to read about what we heard during the Strategic Planning consultation process.](#)

In high school I got to participate in the Indigenous Youth Outreach Program mock trial Level operated. That opened my eyes about criminal law and helped me see that I wanted to help others in need.

IYOP Youth Participant

ABOUT LEVEL

WHO WE ARE

Since 2004, Level has fought for justice and equitable access to opportunities. Initially, we worked on human rights issues abroad with lawyers and law students. Now, we concentrate on issues closer to home, such as:

- Historical and ongoing injustices towards Indigenous peoples.
- Overrepresentation of Indigenous and Black youth in the criminal justice system[1].
- Climate change and environmental degradation impacts on vulnerable communities[2].
- Inequitable access to justice and systemic barriers faced by vulnerable and low-income individuals[3].
- A lack of diversity and empathy in the legal sector.
- Other human rights social justice issues in Canada.

Co-founders Yasmin Shaker and the Honourable Catherine McKenna started Canadian Lawyers Abroad / Avocats Canadiens à l'étranger in 2004 with a simple goal: to empower the Canadian legal community to make positive change in Canada and abroad. In September 2015, CLA / ACE rebranded to Level.

WHAT WE DO

Deeply rooted in community, Level's justice education and human rights programs inspire positive change, equity, and justice in both legal systems and people's lives.

WHY WE DO IT

To ensure equitable access to justice, centred around people, regardless of circumstances, we need to pose critical questions and facilitate dialogue. At Level, we firmly believe that when we engage and support youth, law students, and the legal sector we collectively contribute to a future where:

- Communities understand, shape, and use the law as active participants in breaking down barriers to justice.
- The legal sector can challenge biases and serve those in need with empathy and humility.

[1] <https://www.justice.gc.ca/eng/rp-pr/jr/loip-cjs/loip-cjs-en.pdf> & <https://www.justice.gc.ca/eng/rp-pr/jr/obpccjs-spnsjpc/index.html>
[2] <https://ecojustice.ca/news/environmental-racism-in-canada/>
[3] <https://www.cba.org/CMSPages/GetFile.aspx?guid=73c612c4-41d6-4a39-b2a6-db9e72b7100d>, <https://www.law360.ca/articles/23900/systemic-barriers-to-access-to-justice-serena-eshaghurshan>. Also see http://www.cba.org/CBAMediaLibrary/cba_na/images/Equal%20Justice%20-%20Microsite/PDFs/EqualJusticeFinalReport-eng.pdf.

OUR COMMITMENT & GUIDING VALUES

VISION

Building a future of equity and justice.

MISSION

Level is a national justice education and human rights charity. We work closely with community to advance human rights and remove barriers to equity and justice. We achieve this through programs focused on youth, law students, and the legal sector to inspire leadership, empathy, and inclusion.

VALUES

Dignity: Access to justice is only possible with respect and humility. We listen to and encourage leadership in our communities with empathy and understanding.

Inclusion: Fairness requires the input of many. We build bridges between a wide range of people and cultures to make a tangible difference.

Accountability: When we hold ourselves accountable to others, we build trust, connection, and collaboration, and we listen with intention. At all levels, our organizational decision-making must be influenced by and transparent to the communities we serve.

PRIORITY GROUPS

We build bridges across communities to enable multi-directional knowledge sharing and to foster connections for a bright future of justice leadership.

YOUTH

Young people have the power and potential to be justice leaders in their communities and in their own lives. We collaborate with teachers, schools, and youth centers to prioritize mentorship for Indigenous and Black youth, as well as young environmental activists. Our goal is to create early opportunities for inclusive and fair justice systems.

LEGAL SECTOR

The legal sector has a responsibility to create better access to justice from within. We provide transformative learning and volunteering opportunities for the legal sector to increase humility and to engage in knowledge sharing on intersectionality, inclusion, empathy, and anti-colonial and anti-racist actions and practices.

LAW STUDENTS

Law students are the future of the legal profession. We collaborate with law schools to provide legal mentorship and fellowship programs that introduce law students to social justice careers. Our aim is to encourage law students to build awareness of accessibility to justice and work towards the creation of a more equitable future for society and future generations.

We unite the power of community, education, and law
for a more equitable and just society.

Shelan Markus
Level Executive Director

OUR PROGRAMS

YOUTH PROGRAMS

<p><u>Indigenous Youth Outreach Program</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• A justice education and mentorship program for First Nations, Métis, and Inuit youth.• Exposes students to the justice system and careers in law in positive and culturally empowering ways.	<p><u>Black Youth Justice Program</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• A justice education and mentorship program for Black youth.• Exposes students to the justice system and careers in law in positive and culturally empowering ways.	<p><u>Environmental Justice Program</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• A program to provide knowledge and skills for youth to advocate for environmental justice.• Emphasis on Indigenous legal and cultural perspectives.
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LAW STUDENT PROGRAMS

<p><u>Social Justice Fellowship Program</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Raises law student awareness of social justice issues and provides opportunities to engage in social justice research, policy, and advocacy projects in law school.	<p><u>Blazing Trails Mentorship Program</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Connects law students with trailblazing lawyers who have found social justice-oriented career paths.
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LEGAL SECTOR PROGRAMS

<p><u>Cultural Humility and Empathy Training</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The legal sector gain tools to approach their work with empathy and understanding of the histories and lived realities of Indigenous communities.	<p><u>Facing Resistance Speaker Series</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Events feature speakers and dialogue on collectively creating a justice system that is responsive, balanced, and fair.• Involves lawyers and other justice sector participants.
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It is a great joy and honour to serve as a facilitator for the Black Youth Justice Program ("BYJP"). BYJP is an innovative and unprecedented program that brings unique and tailor-made justice education to Black-identified youth in a way that incorporates their cultures, histories and lived experiences. It shows Black students that they can play a role in bringing about equitable futures for themselves and their communities by envisioning justice differently, finding their voice and choosing to pursue justice careers. I was excited to step into the classroom each week and facilitate the justice education sessions with students. I learned as much from them as they did from me. This is just the start; I look forward to watching the BYJP grow in the future.

Aisha Abawajy

Law Student at Lincoln Alexander School of Law & BYJP Facilitator

PROGRAM LOCATIONS

We are a national justice education and human rights charity.

Alberta

- Siksika First Nation
- Edmonton

British Columbia

- Vancouver
- Tsleil-Waututh Nation
- Quatsino First Nation
- Victoria

Manitoba

- Winnipeg
- Fisher River Cree Nation
- Split Lake
- Nelson House

Nova Scotia

- Halifax

Ontario

- Ottawa
- Toronto
- Chippewas of the Thames First Nation
- Rama First Nation
- Sioux Lookout
- Midland
- Fort Frances
- London
- Kingston

Quebec

- Montreal

Saskatchewan

- Saskatoon
- Pelican Narrows
- Cote First Nation

Northwest Territories

- Yellowknife

Nunavut

- Iqaluit
- Pond Inlet

Yukon

- Whitehorse

The Indigenous Youth Outreach Program (“IYOP”) is a missing piece that fills a major gap between the law and Indigenous youth in Canada. The program provides a safe space for Indigenous students to ask questions and grasp concepts about the law and their place within it. The program is rooted in the understanding that Canadian law alone cannot combat the inequities we see in the justice system for Indigenous people, but when society as a whole understands, respects and implements Indigenous law that has existed since time immemorial, equity is more achievable.

Shawnee Monchalin

BC Human Rights Tribunal Legal Counsel & IYOP Facilitator

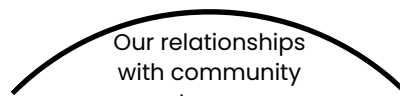
STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

Level's goal for 2023-2028 is to deepen our impact.

OUR FOUR STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS ARE INTERCONNECTED

PROGRAMS

Review, improve and expand programs based on feedback and data.



Our relationships with community partners are essential to design, deliver and expand programs.

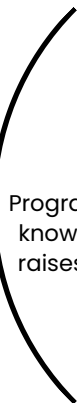
RELATIONSHIPS

Strengthen relationships with partners and participants.

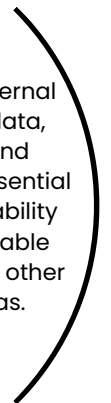
STRATEGIC OUTCOMES

Equitable justice systems and a legal sector that meet the diverse needs of everyone.

- Increased legal capability for communities, especially young people and communities facing barriers to justice.
- Pathways for law students to become positive change-makers in the future of equity and justice.
- A more empathetic and inclusive legal sector that administers legal services with humility and compassion.



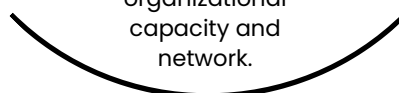
Programs generate knowledge, which raises awareness.



Sufficient internal capacity (data, funding, and staffing) is essential for accountability and sustainable growth in the other three areas.

AWARENESS

Raise awareness of the knowledge Level has gained through our work.



Increased awareness of Level's work allows us to grow our organizational capacity and network.

CAPACITY

Strengthen internal capacity through staffing, data, and sustainable funding.

I want to express my gratitude to Level for allowing me to work on the Environmental Justice Program ("EJP"). During our final EJP session, which focused on negotiations, the students were highly engaged in finding mutually beneficial agreements. They incorporated the lessons and terminology from previous sessions to express themselves effectively. Overall, it was a fantastic experience for me.

Dan Rutabingwa Gakire
Ecology Ottawa Climate Change Campaigner & EJP Facilitator

DIRECTION 1: PROGRAMS

Review, improve and expand programs based on feedback and data.

Why this direction?

Level's programs are the core of our mission. They have a direct impact on everyone involved.

APPROACH

Youth Programs

- Offer more tailored content and rigorous volunteer and facilitator training.
- Expand the new Black Youth Justice Program and the Environmental Justice Program.
- Strengthen connections with educators and school boards, who are essential partners.

Law Student Programs

- Recruit more mentors from social justice careers and strengthen orientation in the Blazing Trails Mentorship Program.
- Establish methods to share research gathered by students in the Social Justice Fellowship Program.

Legal Sector Programs

- Broaden the geographic reach of the Facing Resistance Speaker Series.
- Refresh Cultural Humility and Empathy Training content and increase offerings to justice sector organizations.

All Programs

- Strengthen evaluation.
- Increase collaboration across Level programs.
- Explore ways to keep in touch with people after a program is over.
- Create an annual review schedule.

I believe that Level provides an essential service for both the justice community and Indigenous people. Their programming is culturally sensitive and community-informed, acknowledging that in order to help those who need it the most, we must approach our work with equity, empathy, and cultural diversity at the forefront.

Kim Wheatley

Anishinaabe Cultural Consultant & Knowledge Keeper

DIRECTION 2: RELATIONSHIPS

Strengthen relationships with current partners and participants, while also fostering new relationships.

Why this direction?

At Level, we recognize the crucial role our partners play in our impact and achievements.

We prioritize establishing and nurturing positive, mutually beneficial connections with them. Additionally, our programs emphasize the importance of building relationships, such as between young people and justice sector volunteers, to promote trust, empathy, and understanding.

APPROACH

Engagement

- Engage more interactively with our program Advisory Boards.
- Continue to work closely with current community partners.
- Pursue additional partnerships where necessary to reach new communities, support new programs, or enhance existing programs.

Transparency

- Ensure transparent expectations with partners and program Advisory Boards.
- Develop formal terms of reference or partnership agreements as needed.

Technology

- Use virtual programs strategically (e.g., to reach underserved or remote communities).

Level's Facing Resistance Speaker Series ("FRSS") provides an eye-opening experience where we challenge the status quo and create solutions for a more responsive justice system. It is inspiring to see people come together for positive change and justice reform. I am grateful for the opportunity to contribute.

Kat Owens

Project Director, Women's Legal Education and Action Fund & FRSS Speaker

DIRECTION 3: AWARENESS

Raise awareness of the knowledge Level has gained through our work.

Why this direction?

Level's programs and relationships offer valuable knowledge. Raising awareness and sharing this knowledge can help Level attract, connect, and collaborate with organizations and individuals with similar goals.

APPROACH

Knowledge Sharing

- Share stories, developments, impact, learning, and data.
- Increase Level's community presence for multi-directional knowledge sharing.
- Share knowledge in accessible ways, using different languages and formats to reach diverse communities.

Influence

- Participate in conferences or other events to promote equity and justice.
- Form relationships with, and contribute content to, justice-focused publications and other media outlets.

We must seek permission to share knowledge and learning that Indigenous communities have gifted to us.

– Fallon Melander, Board Member, Level

As a recent law school graduate myself, I understand the importance of professional and personalized guidance in law school, especially for students interested in pursuing a social justice oriented career. As a mentor for the Blazing Trails Mentorship Program (“BTMP”), I connected with a law student to discuss what I have learned in my career so far. I found the experience to be very rewarding and would recommend it to all law students who wish to pursue social justice careers.

Tasha Stansbury
Professor of Law, University of Ottawa & BTMP Mentor

DIRECTION 4: CAPACITY

Strengthen internal capacity through sustainable funding, staffing, and data.

Why this direction?

To make a greater impact and improve the effectiveness of our work, we need to increase Level's capacity. This can be achieved by obtaining sustainable, multi-year funding that will enable us to attract, retain, and expand our staff, and by collecting more qualitative and quantitative data. With additional resources, we can elevate our organization to new heights.

APPROACH

Funding

- Create a plan with the Board to secure and expand multi-year funding and enhance program outcomes.
- Get expert assistance to develop and implement the strategy.

Staffing

- Enhance Level's staffing plan to increase expertise and impact.
- Make long-term staffing commitments to the extent funding permits.
- Enable the Executive Director to focus more on outreach, partnerships, funding, board support, and management.

Data

- Improve data collection and analysis for progress tracking.
- Develop tools for collecting and analyzing data from program participants, Advisory Boards, staff, and Board members.

As a Level Social Justice Fellow, I can attest to the importance of the Social Justice Fellowship Program (“SJFP”) for law students who are passionate about social justice issues. I have been interested in environmental justice since I was a child. Through the SJFP, my co-fellow and I were able to research and write a report on the environmental justice issues that were most important to us. The experience gave us the support to tackle necessary legal questions and the space to learn more about the field.

Natalie Oleksinki
University of Ottawa Law Student & Social Justice Fellow

IMPLEMENTING THE STRATEGIC PLAN

The strategic plan will be implemented over the course of five years.

SUCCESS INDICATORS

Below is a summary of the indicators Level staff and Board will monitor to keep us keep on track and accountable to implementing the Strategic Plan. The extent to which we can achieve the indicators will depend on the amount of funding and staffing resources that are available. Our progress will be reported to the Board, funders, and community partners. The Executive Director will oversee strategic direction implementation with guidance from the Planning Committee.

PROGRAMS

Each program is reviewed and updated in consultation with program partners and participants.

The new Black Youth Justice and Environmental Justice programs are running in multiple locations.

Evaluations are conducted to determine if programs are individually meeting their objectives, and if they are working together to achieve the overall mission.

RELATIONSHIPS

Community partners and program Advisory Board members indicate that they feel meaningfully engaged.

One or more new partnerships are in place per program to enhance expertise and reach.

AWARENESS

Level's website, newsletter, and annual report feature insights on equity and justice.

Each year, Level contributes content to at least two publications and participates in at least one conference to advance equity and justice.

CAPACITY

A formal fundraising strategy and committee are in place.

Expertise is brought in to build Level's data collection and data analysis strategy and implementation.

A staffing plan is refreshed, redeveloped, and continually implemented to meet the current needs of the organization.

Education is a passport to the future and when we prepare students to engage critically, empathetically, and confidently with the law and what it means to build a just society, we support justice leaders and change-makers of tomorrow. I am grateful to Level for being a part of this inspiring process.

Vallery Cooper
Grade 7/8 Teacher
Kâpapâmahchakwêw-Wandering Spirit School

LOGIC MODEL

This logic model illustrates how Level's programs build a future of equity and justice. The model is fluid and will evolve with community needs.

Goals	Programs	Participants	Outcomes	Indicators	Intended Impact	Ultimate Impact
<p>Increased legal capability for communities, especially young people and communities facing barriers to justice.</p>	<p>Indigenous Youth Outreach Program</p> <p>Black Youth Justice Program</p> <p>Environmental Justice Program</p>	<p>Indigenous youth and communities.</p> <p>Black youth and communities.</p> <p>Young environmental justice advocates.</p>	<p>Increased leadership and critical thinking skills, connection to cultural identity, and meaningful relationship-building with justice sector.</p> <p>Increased knowledge of legal rights and how to eliminate barriers.</p>	<p>%/# of participants in program, quantitative and qualitative evaluations, growth of programs, and development of resources.</p>	<p>Reduce alienation in the justice sector.</p> <p>Reduce overrepresentation of Indigenous and Black communities in the criminal justice system.</p> <p>Cultivate a more inclusive, diverse, and empathetic legal sector.</p> <p>A more just future for people and the planet.</p>	<p>Equitable justice systems and a legal sector that meet the diverse needs of everyone.</p>
<p>Pathways for law students to become positive change-makers in the future of equity and justice.</p>	<p>Social Justice Fellowship Program</p> <p>Blazing Trails Mentorship Program</p>	<p>Law students interested in human rights, equitable access to justice, and social justice research, advocacy, and careers.</p>	<p>Increased awareness, leadership, and advocacy on human rights, equitable access to justice, and social justice issues.</p> <p>Increased exposure to public interest and social justice careers.</p>	<p>%/# of participants in program, quantitative and qualitative evaluations, growth of programs, and development of resources.</p>	<p>Increased legal innovation and awareness of solutions to collectively address human rights, equitable access to justice, and social justice issues.</p> <p>A steady stream of dedicated social justice advocates entering the legal sector.</p>	
<p>A more empathetic and inclusive legal sector that administers legal services with humility and compassion.</p>	<p>Cultural Humility and Empathy Training</p> <p>Facing Resistance Speaker Series</p>	<p>Legal sector.</p>	<p>Increased knowledge of systemic barriers.</p> <p>Increased empathy, humility, and intercultural awareness.</p>	<p>%/# of participants in program, quantitative and qualitative evaluations, growth of programs, and development of resources.</p>	<p>Increased capacity to disrupt systemic barriers.</p> <p>Increased capacity to foster equitable justice systems.</p>	

THE TEAM WHO MADE IT HAPPEN

We worked together to create an ambitious plan for equity, justice, and human rights.

This 2023–2028 Strategic Plan is the result of collaborative efforts by Level's passionate and knowledgeable Strategic Planning Committee, Board, and staff:

THE STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMITTEE

Adrian Di Giovanni
Brittany Twiss
Desneige Frandsen
Fallon Melander
Fatima Ahmed
Heather McKay
Jewel Amoah
Jennifer Guerard
Richard Zeni
Shelan Markus
Susan Spence
Tanya Mushynski

Shelan Markus
Level Executive Director

Fallon Melander
Level Board Member

We would also like to express our gratitude to Karen Cohl, Level's strategic planning consultant, for her dedication and expertise.

Brittany Twiss
Level Board Member

Susan Spence
Level Board Member

CONCLUSION

At Level, our vision is to create a future where equity and justice prevail. Our focus is to inspire and share knowledge with current and future justice leaders. We are confident that they, in turn, will help to build more responsive justice systems and equitable access to opportunities. We believe that by collaborating closely with our community partners as we implement our Strategic Plan 2023-2028, we will offer exceptional justice education programs that foster leadership, empathy, and inclusivity. When we nurture meaningful connections, we can achieve our mission to level barriers to equity and justice for all.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Guerard
Level Board Chair

THANK YOU

To everyone who contributed to this Strategic Plan and the generous corporations, foundations, government, and individuals who have supported Level. Your support signifies a commitment to building a future of equity and justice.

GLOSSARY

“Access to Justice” is defined by the United Nations as “a basic principle of the rule of law. In the absence of access to justice, people are unable to have their voice heard, exercise their rights, challenge discrimination or hold decision-makers accountable.” The Right Honourable Richard Wagner, P.C. Chief Justice of Canada defines Access to justice many things: “Having the financial ability to get legal assistance when you need it. Being informed of your right to counsel when your liberty is at stake. Having courts that can resolve your problem on time. But it also means knowing what tools and services are available, and how to get to them. It means knowing your rights and knowing how our legal systems work. It can even mean seeing people like yourself represented in all parts of the legal system. And it means having confidence that the system will come to a just result – knowing you can respect it, and accept it, even if you don’t agree with it. Ultimately, it is about getting good justice for everyone, not perfect justice for a lucky few. It’s a democratic issue. It’s a human rights issue. It’s even an economic issue.”

“Advisory Board” refers to a group of eminent individuals who provide non-binding strategic advice to Level’s leadership team on various programs.

“Board” refers to the refers to the Board of Directors of Level

“Consultations” refer to the process of formally consulting with individuals who are familiar with Level’s work or provide an expert opinion on matters related to Level’s work.

“Equity / Equitable” is defined by the University of British Columbia Equity & Inclusion office as achieving parity in policy, process and outcomes for historically, persistently, or systemically marginalized people and groups while accounting for diversity. Equity considers power, access, opportunities, treatment, impacts and outcomes, in three main areas:

- Representational equity: the proportional participation at all levels of an institution;
- Resource equity: the distribution of resources in order to close equity gaps; and
- Equity-mindedness: the demonstration of an awareness of, and willingness to, address equity issues.

“Human Rights” is defined by the United Nations as rights inherent to all human beings, regardless of nationality, place of residence, sex, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, language, or any other status. We are all equally entitled to our human rights without discrimination. These rights are all interrelated, interdependent and indivisible. In Canada, human rights are outlined in the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*.

“Level” refers to the federal not-for-profit corporation with charitable status incorporated under the *Canada Not-for-profit Corporations Act* and currently registered as “Level. Changing Lives Through Law / Égaliser. Changeons Des Vies Par Le Droit.”

“Multi-Directional Knowledge Sharing”, as defined by [4 Directions Conservation](#) within Indigenous contexts, prioritizes diverse and accessible knowledge, multi-directional knowledge exchange that equally privileges expert and local voices, and the translation of useful evidence into real-time responses and actions.

“Social Justice” is defined by the British Columbia Ministry of Education as “the full participation and inclusion of all people in society, together with the promotion and protection of their legal, civil and human rights.” The aim of social justice – to achieve a just and equitable society where all share in the prosperity of that just society – is pursued by individuals and community through collaborative social action.

“Strategic Directions” are simply organizational “goals.” Level defined its strategic directions through consultations and collectively reflecting on our vision, mission, and values to identify our most important goals and determine the strategies to achieve (and hopefully exceed) those goals.

“Systemic” relates to or affects an entire system. For example, the Ontario Human Rights Commission describes systemic discrimination as “patterns of behaviour, policies or practices that are part of the structures of an organization, and which create or perpetuate disadvantage for racialized persons.”

level |
building a future of equity and justice

égaliser |
construire un futur équitable et juste

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**All photos are taken by Shelan Markus
for Level, unless stated otherwise.**