

ANIMATION PLAN

PRELIMINARY DOCUMENT



BEING YEAST FOR BEING FRUITFUL
2026-2032



ASSOCIATION OF SALESIAN COOPERATORS



ANTICIPO DEL PLAN DE ANIMACIÓN
ANTICIPO DEL PIANO DI ANIMAZIONE
PREVIEW OF THE ANIMATION PLAN
APERÇU DU PLAN D'ANIMATION
ANTECIPAÇÃO DO PLANO DE ANIMAÇÃO



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1.- INTRODUCTION

Dear brothers and sisters of the Association of Salesian Cooperators:

The Sixth World Congress, held in Rome in May 2026, was not merely a one-off event or just another meeting in the history of our Association; beyond the celebration of our 150th anniversary, it was – and continues to be – a spiritual, vocational and organisational milestone, a true exercise in listening to the Spirit and in associative communion on a global scale. Those of us who were present and those who were unable to take part are equally part of this journey: the Congress belongs to the whole Association, because its fruit is for everyone and its call reaches out to us all.

We experienced the Congress against a decisive backdrop, marked by three major horizons:

- ✓ The Association, which is celebrating its 150th anniversary and is embarking on the 2026-2032 six-year term with the desire to recall its roots, renew its identity and relaunch its mission, looking to the future with hope.
- ✓ The Church, which is continuing the process of transformation initiated by Pope Francis, now under the impetus of Pope Leo XIV, and inviting us to live out synodality as a permanent way of life.
- ✓ The world, in the midst of an epochal shift, characterised by social and cultural fragilities, growing individualism and a profound need for meaning, points of reference, depth and hope.

In this context, the Congress reminded us that our vocation is deeply relevant today. The Apostolic Life Project states that *'Salesian Cooperators feel a deep sense of solidarity with the society in which they live and in which they are called to be light, salt and leaven'* (PVA, art. 16). And the Gospel invites us to be salt, light and leaven (Mt 5:13-16), a humble yet transformative presence. The Aguinaldo 2026, with its call to *'Do whatever he tells you'*, offered us four verbs that illuminate our path: to listen, to look, to choose and to act. These evangelical and Salesian principles resonate deeply with what we experienced at the Congress.

The Rector Major, in his address on 9 May, gave us four words that we wish to make part of our associative style:

- ✓ Listening – humble and docile, with God at the centre.
- ✓ Communion – a family spirit, true unity.
- ✓ Mission – apostolic boldness, a presence where the future is at stake.
- ✓ Participation – concrete co-responsibility, genuine synodal processes.



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This document has been drawn up precisely to respond to this dynamic. Following the Congress, the World Council has begun a process of gathering, discerning and synthesising everything that resonated in the assembly, in the working groups and in the speeches. Our aim is to present, by the end of 2026, a Global Animation Plan for the six-year period 2026-2032, to guide the Association in its life, mission and organisation.

The text we now present is a first draft of that Plan. It is not intended to replace the Congress Proceedings, nor is it merely a list of conclusions. Its aim is to transform the insights of the Congress into living proposals for animation, adapted to different contexts and realities, with indicators, processes and lines of action that can inspire the planning of centres and provinces for the coming years.

This draft contains two fundamental elements:

- ✓ An initial elaboration of the programme guidelines emerging from the Congress, organised by areas and geographical regions, which will be fully developed in the 2026-2032 Animation Plan.
- ✓ The identification and presentation of the seven key lines that can guide and inspire the life of the Association over these six years, serving as a reference for all and acting as elements of communion.

We look to the future with confidence. Like Don Bosco, we want to dream, walk and propose. Like Mary, we want to observe, listen and respond. As a leaven of the Gospel, we want to be fruitful. May this document be a further step on that shared journey, so that together we may live out who we are: Salesian Cooperators at the heart of the world, called to transform reality from within.

The World Coordinator,
Borja Pérez.

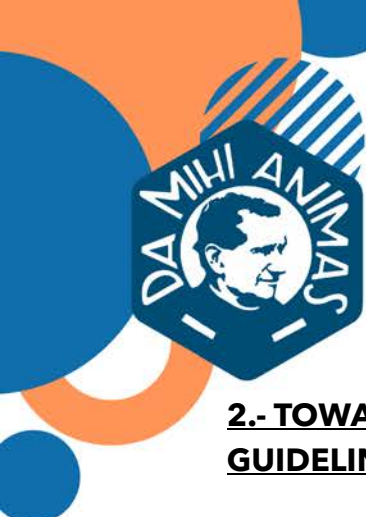


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PROGRAMATIC GUIDELINES 2026-2032: FUNDAMENTS AND KEY POINTS





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**2.- TOWARDS A SHARED VISION: FOUNDATIONS FOR THE PROGRAMME
GUIDELINES FOR THE 2026-2032 SIX-YEAR TERM**

The Sixth World Congress has left us with an immense wealth of insights: intuitions, reflections, concerns, certainties, proposals and dreams that express the vitality of the Association throughout the world. The diversity of contexts, ages, cultures and experiences became a true exercise in synodality, where listening, communion and discernment enabled us to recognise what is alive in the Association, what needs to be strengthened and what must be renewed.

However, this abundance also presents us with a challenge: how to transform all that we have experienced into a clear, shared and actionable path for the next six years. The Salesian mission demands concreteness, continuity and vision. For this reason, this document seeks to offer an in-depth and unified interpretation of the essential elements that emerged from the Congress, so that they may inspire the Animation Plan for the 2026-2032 six-year period.

1. Strengths we must safeguard and enhance

The Association possesses a wealth of assets that constitute its deepest identity and which must be protected and developed. Among these, the following stand out:

- ✓ A strong Salesian identity, faithful to the charism of Don Bosco.
- ✓ A family spirit that fosters fraternity and a sense of belonging.
- ✓ The centrality of young people, which inspires our mission and our spirituality.
- ✓ Initial and ongoing formation rooted in the PVA.
- ✓ A living Salesian spirituality, embodied in everyday life.
- ✓ A lay vocation lived out with clarity and commitment in the midst of the world.
- ✓ Communion and shared responsibility within the Salesian Family.

These strengths are the starting point. They are the foundation upon which everything else is built. Without them, any renewal would be superficial; with them, the Association has solid roots from which to grow and bear fruit. They shed light on our strengths and on what we must uphold, not taking them for granted as something achieved without effort, but continuing to work to ensure that these strengths endure.

2. Weaknesses requiring attention and conversion

The Congress also enabled us to acknowledge with sincerity the vulnerabilities affecting the life of the Association. It is not a matter of pointing out shortcomings, but of embracing them as opportunities for growth:



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- ✓ Difficulty in attracting and supporting new generations who can renew our Association.
- ✓ Weaknesses in ongoing formation and in vocational identity.
- ✓ Occasional weakening of commitment and shared responsibility.
- ✓ Risk of activism and spiritual decline.
- ✓ Limited visibility and influence outside the Salesian community.
- ✓ Difficulty in taking on responsibilities and exercising leadership.
- ✓ Poor communication and difficulty engaging with young people and cultural changes.

Identifying these weaknesses is an act of humility and honesty. Addressing them is an act of fidelity to the charism and of responsibility towards the future. They enable us to identify what we need to focus on in order to overcome them.

3. Lessons that must guide our path

The discernment process of the Congress has provided us with lessons that we must not lose sight of:

- ✓ A vocation can only be sustained by remaining deeply united to God.
- ✓ Formation must be ongoing, profound and transformative.
- ✓ Communion strengthens the mission.
- ✓ Concrete closeness to young people is essential.
- ✓ The Association must open itself up to new contexts without losing its identity (creative fidelity).
- ✓ Personal and community support strengthens vocational perseverance.
- ✓ A consistent witness of life remains the most effective means of transmitting the charism.

These lessons serve as spiritual and pastoral compasses. They remind us that renewal is not merely structural: it is vocational, spiritual and communal. They point to a journey that we must neither ignore nor forget, but rather continue, building upon what we have learnt.

4. Lines of action for a fruitful journey

Based on the strengths, weaknesses and lessons learnt, as well as the challenges identified in the various regional contexts, lines of action emerge to guide our life as an local, provincial and world association. They are organised into a number of areas that reflect the entirety of our vocation and mission:



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4.1. Identity

- a. To strengthen the ownership of and lived experience of the Apostolic Life Project. To ensure that all Salesian Cooperators know, understand and use the PAL as a regular point of reference for discernment, formation and mission.
- b. To reinforce the sense of belonging to the Association and to the Salesian Family. To promote concrete experiences of communion, co-responsibility and participation that strengthen vocational and associative identity.
- c. To foster integrated generational renewal. To bring in new generations without losing the richness of accumulated experience, whilst strengthening intergenerational encounter and dialogue.
- d. To deepen spiritual life as the foundation of identity. To promote consistent pathways of prayer, discernment, spiritual accompaniment and spiritual exercises that sustain the vocation.

4.2. Formation

- a. To consolidate a comprehensive and ongoing formation programme. To ensure continuous formation processes that integrate human, Christian, Salesian, apostolic and vocational dimensions.
- b. To form qualified leaders, counsellors and animators. To develop systematic preparation programmes for those exercising responsibilities in animation and governance.
- c. To strengthen personal accompaniment throughout the entire vocational journey. Ensure processes of human, spiritual and apostolic accompaniment from the aspirancy stage through to ongoing formation.
- d. To produce up-to-date training materials and methodologies. To develop shared resources that facilitate contextualised formation and the practical application of the PVA in daily life.

4.3. Young People

- a. To bridge the generation gap between with young people. To create spaces for encounter, listening and collaboration between Salesian Cooperators, the MJS and young adults.
- b. To promote youth leadership within the Association. To involve young people in councils, working groups, discernment processes and specific leadership roles.
- c. To strengthen vocational accompaniment and the transition to adulthood. To develop processes that help young people to discern their vocation and take on responsibilities within the Church and society.



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- d. To strengthen our Salesian presence in youth and digital environments. To use new languages, technologies and meeting spaces to accompany young people where they actually live and interact.

4.4. Mission

- a. To increase our meaningful presence amongst young people and families. To strengthen concrete initiatives of support, listening and evangelisation aimed at young people and families.
- b. To promote apostolic initiatives specific to the Salesian Cooperators. To develop sustainable projects that reflect the distinctive nature of the Salesian lay vocation within society.
- c. To expand our presence beyond traditional Salesian settings. To encourage more active engagement in social, cultural, educational, ecclesial and community spheres.
- d. To consolidate networking and the shared mission within the Salesian Family, taking the lead in initiatives rather than merely being their recipients. To strengthen structures and common projects that foster apostolic co-responsibility amongst the various groups.
- e. Strengthen pastoral care and family support. Develop specific initiatives for married couples, parents, children and new family structures.

4.5. Autonomy

- a. To Promote the economic solidarity of the Association. To develop a culture of shared financial solidarity that ensures the continuity of the mission.
- b. Consolidate our own structures for leadership and management. Strengthen organisational mechanisms that enable us to act with greater autonomy and responsibility.
- c. Increase the role of the laity in leadership and governance. Encourage Salesian Cooperators to fully assume the responsibilities inherent in their vocation.
- d. Build more mature and mutually responsible relationships with the SDB and FMA. Promote collaboration based on mutual recognition of complementary identities and responsibilities.

4.6. Other areas

- a. Improve communication and links between centres, provinces and regions. Promote permanent mechanisms for exchange, support and networking.
- b. Increase the Association's public and digital visibility. Raise awareness of the vocation and mission of the Salesian Cooperator through up-to-date communication strategies.



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- c. Encourage active and committed participation from all members. Move from primarily formal membership to effective participation in the life and mission of the Association.

5. Different geographical contexts

Within the Association, a multitude of realities and contexts coexist. As Salesian Cooperators, we are called to be a leaven in the world in which we live; whilst this world shares common elements across all geographical areas, it also presents distinct characteristics depending on local circumstances.

The different paces at which the Association operates in different contexts – a result of differing social, cultural and ecclesial realities – sometimes mean that a particular aspect is perceived as a strength in some areas and as a weakness in others.

We must know and understand these contexts, as our responses must be adapted to each reality in order to be a true leaven that bears fruit.

Continent	Key strengths	Key challenges	Areas for development 2026-2032
Africa	Youthful vitality, expansion of the charism	Fragile structures, identity and autonomy	Consolidating provinces, structured formation, sustainability
The Americas	Presence on the peripheries, social awareness	Family and social crisis, lay leadership	Family, socio-political formation, capacity for influence
Europe	Salesian tradition, historical network of associations	Ageing, secularisation, low visibility	New evangelisation, young people, communication
Asia-Oceania	Religious diversity, pastoral creativity	Christian minority, rapid digitalisation	Interreligious dialogue, digital mission, autonomy

Conclusion

The Association must cultivate values that express its deepest identity:

- ✓ Shared responsibility
- ✓ Sense of belonging
- ✓ Family spirit
- ✓ Consistent witness
- ✓ Love and closeness to young people
- ✓ Synodality and communion
- ✓ Fidelity to the charism and the Apostolic Life Project



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These values are not abstract ideas: they are concrete ways of living out the charism. Similarly, for the lines of action to bear fruit, we need to strengthen the factors that act as drivers of growth:

- ✓ Holistic and ongoing formation
- ✓ Youth leadership
- ✓ Networking
- ✓ Synodality and participation
- ✓ Autonomy and sustainability based on solidarity
- ✓ Human and spiritual accompaniment
- ✓ Witness of life and meaningful presence

The path laid out for us by the Sixth World Congress is profound, demanding and full of hope. Safeguarding our strengths, facing up to our weaknesses with sincerity, valuing what we have learnt and translating this into concrete processes form the basis of authentic renewal. The vitality of our Association will depend on our ability to live out our Salesian identity authentically, to provide ongoing formation, to accompany young people, to be a meaningful presence in the mission, and to grow in autonomy and shared responsibility.

3.- KEY PROGRAMMATIC GUIDELINES

The Sixth World Congress has left us with an extraordinary wealth of resources: profound reflections, diverse contributions, spiritual insights, careful analyses of our contexts, pastoral proposals and calls for renewal. All of this constitutes a treasure that the Association must safeguard and develop. However, this very abundance presents us with a challenge: how to transform a broad and complex body of content into a clear, shared and actionable path for the whole Association.

For this reason, the World Council has deemed it necessary to identify seven key areas to serve as the backbone of the 2026–2032 six-year term. These areas do not replace the depth of the Congress nor do they seek to simplify its richness. Rather, they aim to make it fruitful, offering the Association a common framework that will enable it to move forward with unity, clarity and hope. There are several reasons behind this proposal, which is, rather than a simplification, a move towards greater specificity:

To avoid fragmentation and distraction. The Congress generated dozens of proposals, reflections and calls to action. Without a clear synthesis, we run the risk of becoming scattered, of trying to take on too much and of losing sight of what is essential. The



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seven key areas help us to concentrate our energy, to prioritise and to move forward with focus.

To facilitate participation. A small number of lines enables everyone—local centres, provinces and regions—to understand, embrace and work towards our shared path. Participation increases when the path ahead is clear and accessible. The key lines are an invitation for us all to make them our own..

To provide a stable framework for six years. The life of the Association requires continuity. The seven key guidelines offer a stable framework, a point of reference that will guide the Association throughout the six-year term. They are not passing fads or fleeting intuitions: they are pillars that underpin the mission and identity.

To enable periodic evaluation and review. Without clear criteria, we cannot evaluate. The key guidelines allow us to define verifiable indicators, processes and targets. Thanks to them, we will be able to review the progress made, celebrate the achievements and make any necessary adjustments. Evaluation is not about control: it is about growth in fidelity to the charism.

To find common symbolic and visual languages. A limited number of guiding principles facilitates the creation of symbols, images, metaphors and communication tools that can be used worldwide. The Association needs shared languages that strengthen identity and communion.

To focus on concrete proposals. The Rector Major reminded us of four words that should define our approach: listening, communion, mission and participation. The key guidelines enable us to translate these calls into concrete, realistic, achievable proposals tailored to each context. Without concreteness, the mission becomes diluted; with concreteness, the mission is embodied in real proposals.

To transform a profound document into a living path. The Congress Proceedings are necessary: they capture the richness, depth and memory of the gathering. But the Association also needs an operational, dynamic and action-oriented tool. The seven key lines ensure that the Six-Year Plan is not merely a lengthy document, but a living proposal, capable of inspiring decisions, processes and projects.

In short, the seven key lines form a bridge between the depth of the Congress and the daily life of the Association. They are a tool for communion, mission and hope. They help us to look to the future with clarity, to walk together and to turn intuition into action, reflection into process, and the call into fruitfulness.

We present below these seven key programme lines, which bring together the fundamental aspects emerging from the last World Congress:

1. Young people at the centre

This is an invitation to move from young people being mere recipients to **young people taking a leading role** within our Association, in animation, mission, governance, leadership and formation processes.



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2. Spirit of family and communion

The 6th World Congress was a genuine family experience, which challenges us to continue living relationships based on **kindness, unity, closeness and collaboration**, within the Association and with the whole Salesian Family.

3. Salesian identity

It is essential to strengthen our vocational awareness and our lived experience of the PVA as **a living identity card**, based on a deep understanding of the real Don Bosco.

4. Shared responsibility

The times call on us more than ever to foster a culture of **lay leadership** and a shared mission in synodal style.

5. Integral formation

It is essential that we continue to nurture our initial and ongoing formation, whilst understanding formation from a holistic perspective, going beyond the mere assimilation of content. Formation must be up-to-date, balancing theory and practice, and which helps us on our journey to live rooted in Christ and to come to know the true Don Bosco.

6. Mission and influence

As Salesians in the world, we are called to bring the Salesian charism to the world we are called to transform, through a greater public presence, social impact, networking and attention to the peripheries, within youth and family settings.

7. Autonomy and sustainability

We must continue to move forward so that our associative structure is mature and autonomous, with a solidarity-based and sustainable economy, responsible management and a vision for the future, whilst never losing sight of the care of our common home.

4.- CONCLUSION

The Congress has shown us that the Association is alive, that it possesses a fruitful charism and that it has a promising future. But it has also reminded us that this future is not built solely on lengthy documents, in-depth analyses or detailed assessments. All of these are necessary, but they are not enough.

We need key guidelines that are clear, simple, shared and practical. Guidelines that prevent us from losing focus, that facilitate everyone's participation, that serve as a stable reference point for six years, that enable evaluation, and that help us to find a common symbolic and visual language.



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We need guiding principles that invites us to develop concrete proposals, as the Rector Major asked of us: humble listening, genuine communion, a bold mission and shared responsibility.

By the end of 2026, we will present our Animation Plan 2026-2032, which will set out all these proposals in greater detail and with greater specificity. This document is a preliminary step intended to be a further step on that journey towards a present and a future that invites you to offer meaningful responses. An invitation to look to the future with hope. A call to walk together. A proposal to ensure that the Association remains what Don Bosco dreamed of: leaven in the world, a light on the peripheries, a family for young people, and the Church's presence in everyday life. We invite you to familiarise yourselves with it, to study it, to take it on board and to make it your own.



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