ISO
Strategy

Great things happen when the world agrees

ISO is an independent, non-governmental international organization with a membership of 165 national standards bodies. Through its members, it brings together experts to share knowledge and develop voluntary, consensus-based, market-relevant International Standards that support innovation and provide solutions to global challenges. ISO will make every effort to be attractive and responsive to the needs of industry, as well as those of regulators, consumers and other stakeholders.

A leader in its field and supported by a broad member base, ISO enjoys a strong governance, code of ethics and standards development process. The *ISO Strategy 2016-2020* builds on this solid foundation and will guide the organization in its decisions over the next five years.

In particular, the Strategy will help the organization respond to a future where:

- Technological, economic, legal, environmental, social and political challenges will require examination and continual improvement of the ISO system
- Stakeholder engagement and the challenges to ISO's intellectual property will continue to be both a key opportunity and risk for ISO

The Strategic Plan focuses on six strategic directions for ISO over the period 2016-2020. It is a living document where the strategic directions are adjusted as needed to reflect new assumptions. These six directions interlink and the relationship between them is represented on the following page.

The *ISO Strategy 2016-2020* also serves as the basis for the *ISO Action Plan for Developing Countries 2016-2020,* which addresses issues specific to ISO's work with developing countries.

Strategic directions

2016-2020

ISO's six strategic directions for 2016-2020 are interlinked.

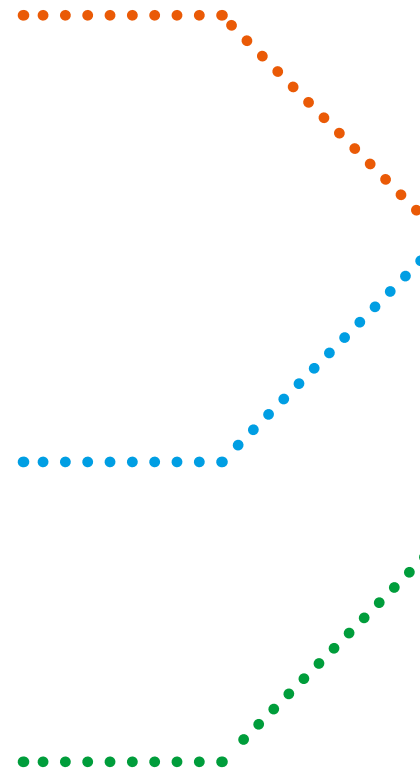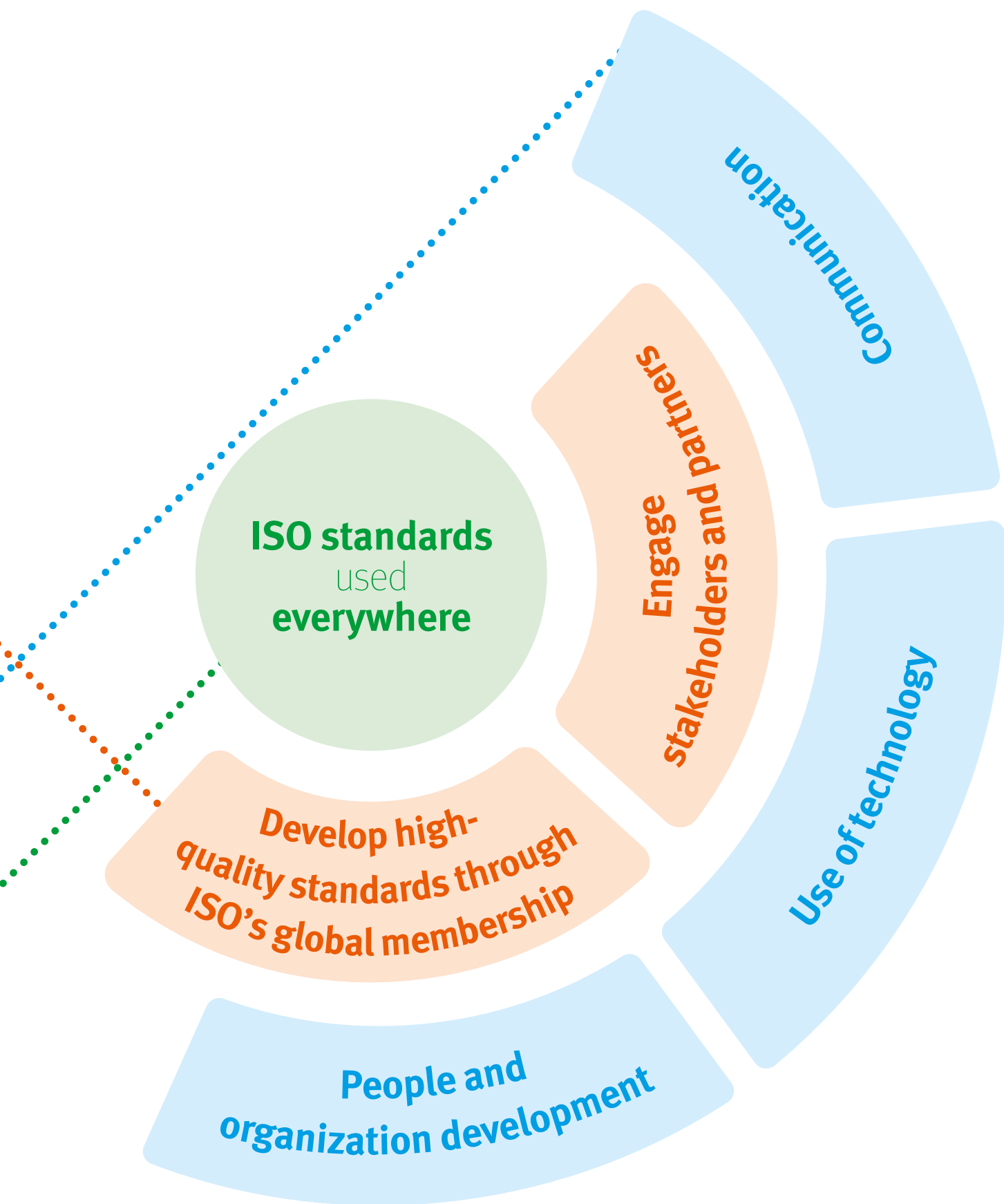ISO will " Develop high-quality standards through ISO's global membership ", by ensuring we effectively " Engage stakeholders and partners ". A strong foundation in " People and organization development ", effective

" Use of technology ", and a focus on " Communication ", will help us to achieve the ultimate objective of " ISO standards used everywhere ".

ISO standards
used
everywhere

Engage
stakeholders and partners

Communication

Use of technology

Develop high-
quality standards through
ISO's global membership
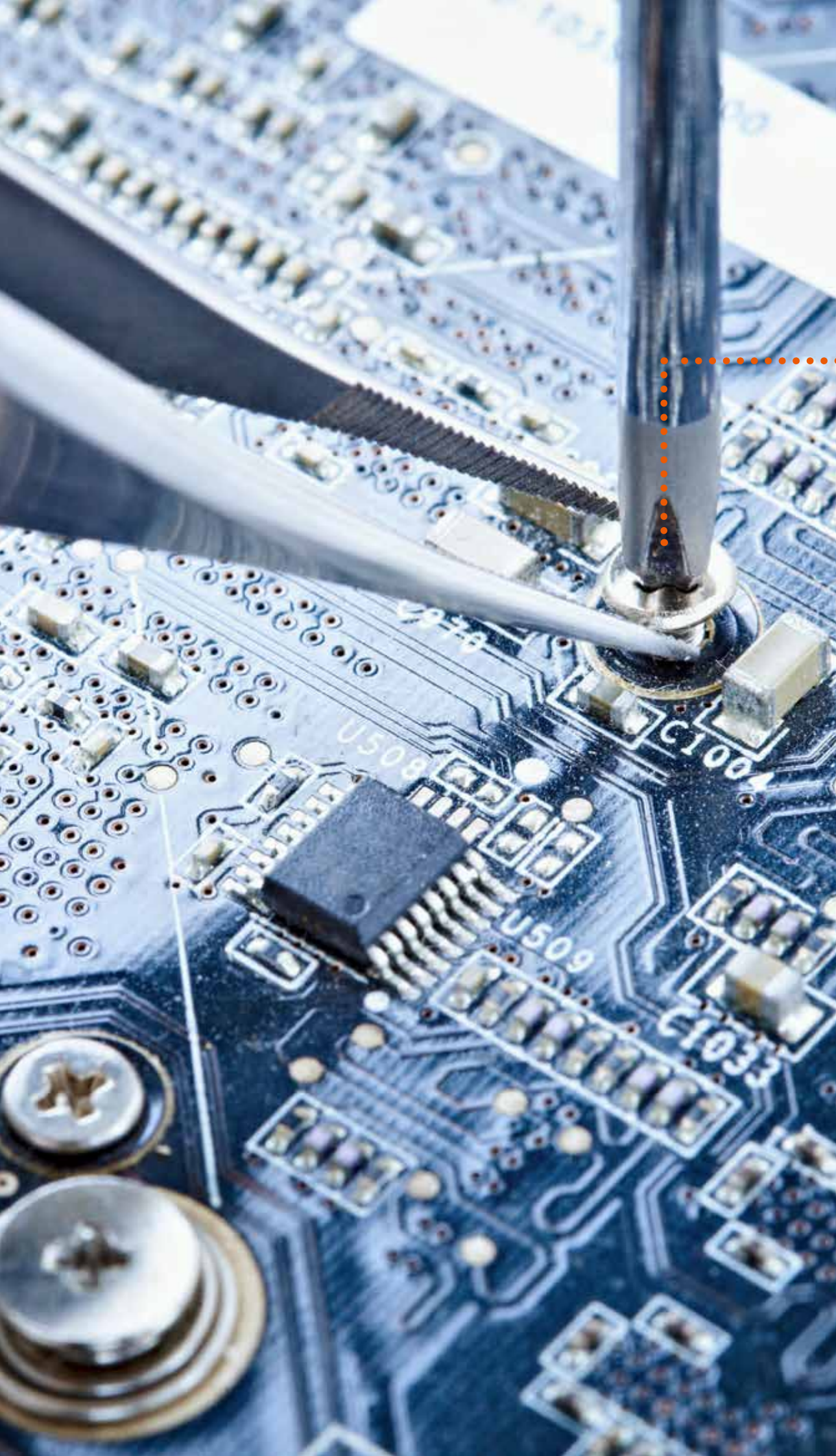
People and
organization development

ISO standards
used everywhere

ISO's goal is to produce globally relevant International Standards that are used everywhere.

For the period 2016-2020, "ISO standards used everywhere" means:

- Ensuring a coherent and credible collection of standards that are used effectively by industry and bring recognized benefits to economies

- Producing International Standards in a clear, understandable language, that are easy to read and user friendly

- Enabling ISO members to successfully reach their markets, promote the use of ISO standards, and deliver ISO content to their customers

- Increasing the uptake of standards as business performance tools

- Identifying and meeting the changing needs of customers, with a focus on how they would like to use and access ISO standards

- Developing supporting information that complements International Standards, which members can provide to their customers as and when needed

- Providing a suite of international conformity assessment standards applicable to all sectors and all types of conformity assessment that help ensure stakeholders have confidence in the implementation of standards

- Implementing intellectual property protection policies that are well understood and respected by developers and customers

Develop high-quality standards through ISO's global membership

The core strength of ISO is its decentralized, professional, member-based system for developing International Standards. It is through the national members that the organization can identify and serve the needs of markets and society, engage a broad variety of stakeholders, disseminate standards and support their implementation.

In order to ensure high-quality standards, the organization must both excel in the core business of developing standards – which includes applying good standardization practices such as those established by the World Trade Organization – and ensure it makes the most of its valuable network of national members.
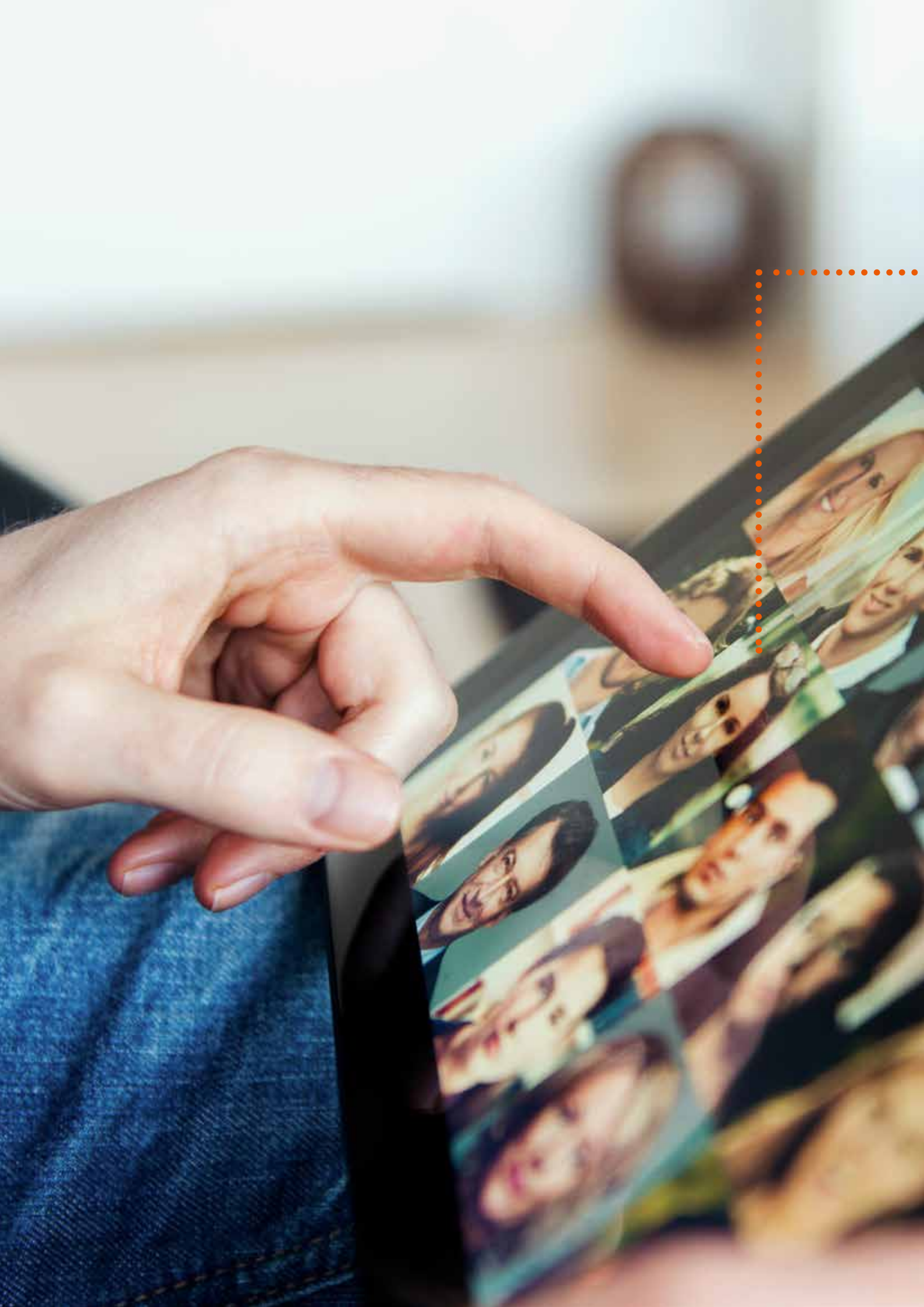
For the period 2016-2020, "develop high-quality standards through ISO's global membership" means:

EXCELLING IN THE CORE BUSINESS OF STANDARDS DEVELOPMENT

- Developing market-relevant standards that address the needs of industry, regulators, consumers and other stakeholder groups

- Improving the coherence, efficiency and timeliness of standards development through good project management, technical, editorial and procedural rigour, and effective information and communication support

- Ensuring that experts continually think about the users of ISO standards

- Strengthening the ability of ISO committees and their leaders to build consensus among experts from different countries, cultures and stakeholder categories

- Considering horizontal and systems issues for the existing work programme and when developing new fields

- Sharing tools and technologies to facilitate ISO's development work

EXPLOITING THE FULL VALUE OF THE ISO MEMBER NETWORK

- Building the capacity of members to ensure they can serve their markets, from stakeholder engagement to the dissemination of standards

- Collecting, sharing and building on member best practices to drive excellence throughout the ISO system, e.g. fostering regional cooperation and improved networking among members

- Capitalizing on the relationships between members to identify new needs for standards that address market needs

Engage stakeholders and partners

Effective and wide-reaching stakeholder engagement is essential in order to maintain ISO's credibility and the relevance of International Standards. This means ensuring that all ISO members can successfully drive stakeholder participation in addition to effectively engaging with global and regional partners. Stakeholders must see their national members as the pathway to ISO, as organizations that engage them on important issues with other national stakeholders and connect them to the global standards debate. ISO needs to clearly show its value to stakeholders.

For the period 2016-2020, "engage stakeholders and partners" means:

- Improving ISO member engagement with stakeholders, considering their level of development, expected performance in ISO, national strategic priorities, language and translation needs, and regional cooperation opportunities

- Strengthening the input of as many members and their stakeholders as possible in ISO's development process, including under-represented groups

- Engaging the best experts in a continually growing list of relevant subject areas that address global challenges, and make best use of this valued knowledge resource

- Promoting ISO's credibility and improving its ability to attract stakeholders, including younger-generation contributors

- Enhancing the traceability of standards and highlighting the stakeholder needs that led to their development

- Collaborating with key global and regional partner organizations with clear purpose and benefit (e.g. IEC, ITU)

- Connecting with the academic community and research centres to ensure a strong relationship between standards and innovation

People and organization development

ISO's most important resource is its member organizations and their networks of experts. ISO will therefore invest in building the capacity of all its members, both at the human and the organizational level, through learning, research and development solutions. This includes supporting the transfer of knowledge to a younger generation of experts.

For the period 2016-2020, " people and organization development " means :

- Providing capacity-building solutions for ISO members, taking account of their strategic priorities, culture and economic development
- Providing opportunities for ISO members to better define, build and lead their engagement in ISO
- Delivering customized work programmes to meet the individual and regional competency development needs of the different ISO members
- Developing partnerships and working more closely with :
  - ISO members on issues of national knowledge sharing and development
  - International and regional organizations to build capacity for the benefit of ISO members
- Implementing the *ISO Action Plan for Developing Countries 2016-2020*

Use of technology

Cutting-edge technology, shifting demographics, changing social behaviours and new collaborative work practices are creating new demands and possibilities for all organizations. It also challenges traditional notions of how we consume and use information; of publishing and copyright. The impacts of these changes are particularly profound for global, information-based businesses such as ISO. For the period 2016 -2020, "use of technology" means :

- Investing in solutions that facilitate stakeholder engagement and easy access to content through ISO's network of members, providing opportunities for said members to deliver services to stakeholders and customers in new ways
- Providing improved interfaces for data and documents, and better "end-to-end" member options for national implementations of ISO's technology solutions
- Developing solutions that are open, adaptable and robust and reflect the reality of industry trends and technology developments
- Supporting ISO members to develop, publish, search, access, comment on, link to, use and protect ISO's digital content

Communication

The value and impact of International Standards must be recognized by decision makers in both the public and private sector, as well as by all stakeholders and the general public. The ISO member network, supported by ISO's Central Secretariat, is key to fulfilling this aspiration. Beyond their role as national standards bodies, ISO members " are " ISO in their country and are the driving force for communicating with the various groups interested in, and affected by, standards.
For the period 2016-2020, " communication " means:

- Developing high-quality, effective and easy-to-understand communication materials in a range of media for use by ISO members

- Using media relations, communication technologies and social networking for the benefit of the ISO community

- Helping members build strong relationships with their governments, local businesses and leaders of key stakeholder groups

- Providing consistent messaging on strategic issues for ISO, including the value, benefits and impacts of International Standards

- Participating actively in key events, such as national, regional or international conferences, to help promote the use of International Standards

- Supporting an efficient communication network that fosters an up-to-date and reliable information exchange among ISO members, and effective communication with partner organizations

Ensuring success

Success depends on extensive communication and requires the development of aligned annual plans for ISO's governance groups, Central Secretariat and technical bodies. These include specific plans and actions for developing countries, ISO's technical management, and its policy work in areas such as consumers and conformity assessment.

To ensure the Strategic Plan performs as designed, appropriate central resources will be mobilized, as well as a financially viable and sustainable network of ISO members, to support the work and execute these actions. In addition, metrics will be established to measure the performance of the organization in its implementation of the Strategy.

ISO will continue to be a world leading provider of International Standards. The present ISO Strategy will serve as a guide to setting priority achievements and objectives to ensure the success of ISO into 2020 and beyond.

iso.org

iso.org