

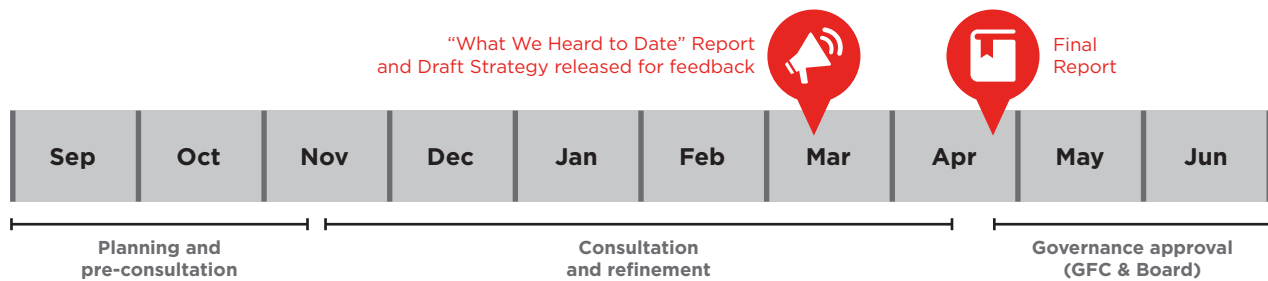


UNIVERSITY OF  
CALGARY

**Start something.**

# What we heard.

REPORT ON CONSULTATIONS  
FOR THE 2023-2030 STRATEGIC PLAN



**Consultation on the development of the University of Calgary’s next strategic plan ran from November 2022 through April 2023 and was broken into two distinct phases.** In the first, our communities were asked about goals, the University of Calgary’s values, how we might stand out from other organizations and what actions we could take that would have the biggest positive effect in reaching our goals. This phase ran from November 2022 through March 2023.

At this point, a first draft of the strategic plan and a “What We’ve Heard to Date” report were released to the university community. The second phase of consultation focused on reactions to (and feedback on) the draft strategic plan, with the purpose of improving this draft prior to its presentation through the governance process in May 2023.

Consultation is one of four major inputs into strategic planning at the University of Calgary. Insights gleaned through consultations are combined with internal and external analyses and discussion with experts on best practices to develop strategic plan drafts. Any strategic plan must ultimately be approved by General Faculties Council and the Board of Governors. More about the University of Calgary strategic planning process can be found at: [www.ucalgary.ca/future](http://www.ucalgary.ca/future)

## SUMMARY

An estimated 23,889 unique individuals have participated in strategic planning consultation since Nov. 15, 2022. This includes 20,613 people who participated in online surveys and 3,241 people who have participated in strategic planning workshops. Major themes from the first round of consultation included:

- › **A desire to connect the university better to itself,** growing awareness of existing programs, supports and opportunities and building a stronger UCalgary culture.
- › **A desire to connect the university to the communities we serve,** strengthening ties with partners in Calgary, Alberta, Canada and beyond. This was seen as a goal and a duty, and an opportunity to elevate our university.
- › **A desire to more deeply integrate research with teaching and learning,** and, in doing so, enhance both and differentiate our experience from other local post-secondaries and looming competitors in the technology space.
- › **The need to make it easier to do things at our university.** Both those who administer processes and those who use them were frustrated with the length of time it takes to accomplish basic tasks, and would rather spend their time on more rewarding, higher-value work.
- › **The need to embrace our role in strengthening society and leading by example.** Participants wanted to see the university address big issues, think globally and embrace our role as a “model city” at the forefront of taking action on Indigenous reconciliation, sustainability and inclusion.
- › **The need to protect and expand accessibility.** Participants wanted the university to be a place that is inclusive to all who have the talent and ambition to attend.

As consultation continued, feedback was received on the first draft of the strategic plan that was released on March 15, 2023. Major themes from this second round of consultation included:

- › General support for the tone, format and initiatives.
- › Concern there was too much emphasis on research — at the expense of teaching.
- › Desire to make the plan “bolder” and more concrete.
- › Desire to strengthen the plan’s connection to foundational commitments on: Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Accessibility; Indigenous Engagement; Mental Health; Global Engagement; and Sustainability.
- › Skepticism the university would follow through.

## PURPOSE OF CONSULTATION

The consultations were conducted in support of the development of the University of Calgary’s **2023-2030 Strategic Plan**. The Strategic Plan articulates what makes the University of Calgary distinct from other universities and other organizations with the same goals and lays out strategies and priorities for spending, focus and resource-allocation.



Figure A. Strategic Plan in relation to other University of Calgary Plans. Representative sample, not comprehensive.

Strategic plans at the University of Calgary are developed using the **IECB Framework** that brings together:

- › Internal data sources such as existing strategic plans and decisions that have been made to date on the direction of the university.
- › External information such as government frameworks, sector-wide planning and market/landscape analyses.
- › Consultation with affected groups, both internal to our campuses and in the broader community.
- › Best practice and emerging practice as articulated and proven by scholars and professionals at the university and beyond.

While consultation is not a “vote,” and there are three other inputs to strategic planning that must also be considered, consultation is particularly important in the development of strategic plans in our university context:

- › **VALUE OF INTERNAL ALIGNMENT.** In a diffuse environment characterized by shared governance, academic freedom and local authority, the degree to which a strategic plan is implemented is tied to its resonance with the internal community.
- › **VALUE OF EXTERNAL ALIGNMENT.** As a public university, we exist to serve the needs of our communities. Their views need to be considered and their support is necessary for success in teaching, learning and research.
- › **WISDOM OF THE GROUP(S).** Consultation also allows us to gather the ideas, enthusiasm and diverse viewpoints/considerations of our talented communities, which strengthens the quality of any plans developed.

## APPROACH TO CONSULTATION

Consultation plans were developed by members of the **Strategic Planning Working Group** under the supervision of the **Strategic Planning Oversight Committee**.

The Working Group consulted with Campus Mental Health, the Office of Indigenous Engagement, and the Office of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion on the questions being asked of participants and the setup of consultation processes.

### *Nature Of Questions Asked*

Consultation for the Strategic Plan was designed to be **iterative and increasingly focused over time**, beginning with open-ended questions and moving to gathering structured feedback on draft proposals as the process unfolded.



**OPEN ENDED, BROAD**

**REACTING TO PROPOSALS, FOCUSED**

The open-ended consultation phases asked our communities to provide their thoughts on the University of Calgary’s goals for 2030, values for which we wish to be known, and how we might stand out compared to other universities and other organizations. Participants in all consultation avenues (see below) were asked to give their thoughts on what actions we could take today to reach our 2030 goals and improve our environment. Copies of (and links to) consultation materials and survey scripts can be found in Appendices A-E.

The open-ended phase of consultation was to “get everything on the table.” By gathering our communities’ aspirations, concerns and ideas, the Strategic Planning Working Group could take this information into account in the development of a draft strategic plan that was then shared for further community conversation and feedback in an iterative process.

The addition of this loop in consultation where draft plans are brought back to the community for additional feedback prior to being brought into the formal governance process is new to the 2023 process. In the previous two rounds of strategic planning, plans developed from consultation were brought immediately to governance, which served as the avenue through which further refinement could occur. This iterative approach to consultation reflects a commitment to entrepreneurial thinking established in our previous strategic plan, *Eyes High*.

Focused consultation began March 15, 2023 (with the release of the first draft of the strategic plan), and ran through to April 14, 2023. This phase of consultation asked our communities for feedback on the draft, as well as overall thoughts and reactions to the individual strategies and sections within.

## Consultation Activities

Using the approaches of previous strategic plans (*Project Next* – 2011; *Energizing Eyes High* – 2016) as starting points, the goal was set of engaging as much of the community as possible in the strategic planning process. Because those being consulted will have different levels of interest and capacity, this meant developing a variety of feedback mechanisms of various lengths and various formats. Consultation methods have included:

- › **Short surveys via email and roving booths** (3-5 minutes)
- › **Online consultations** (15-30 minutes)
- › **Meetings and workshops** (60 to 120 minutes)
- › **Ability to provide thoughts in longform via web portal or email** (120 minutes +)

Meetings and workshops were provided in both in-person and online formats. In-person sessions for the internal community were held on Main Campus, Foothills Campus, Downtown Campus, Spy Hill Campus and at the Kananaskis Field Station. In-person sessions for the external community were held at locations convenient to those participants.

The Working Group worked with administration to **address barriers to participation**, which has generally meant creating incentives and opportunities:

- › **Four hours in work time.** All staff at the university are being provided up to four hours during regular work hours to participate in strategic planning activities. Additionally, people leaders have been asked to share this information at in-person/online meetings, accommodate schedule changes that might result and generally facilitate participation.
- › **Faculty and unit-led workshops.** Members of the University of Calgary Senior Leadership Team were asked to develop and run workshops that would involve — and be meaningful to — their students, faculty and staff.
- › **Survey participation incentives.** To encourage broad-based participation, completing the short survey entered participants into random draws for weekly prizes, with a grand prize for students being a tuition bursary that would cover up to two semesters of tuition (up to \$25,000 value).
- › **Offering workshops at times and locations convenient to a wide range of participants.** Students, faculty and staff were asked to register interest in attending workshops and identify the times, modes and locations that would allow their participation, as well as the topics in which they were interested. A workshop schedule was then developed that addressed in-person requests, offered a wide range of online options, and provided times during the day, the evening and on weekends.
- › **Addressing participant-identified barriers to participation.** In the registration of interest, participants were asked to identify any other barriers they might have to participation/things that would make their participation easier. As a result, water and snacks were provided, a focus was placed on accessible rooms, and messaging emphasized not needing to have previous strategic planning knowledge.

Consistent with *ii' taa'poh'to'p*, our Indigenous Strategy, and the university's overall commitment to reconciliation, **a parallel process has been run with Indigenous community members**. This dialogue on the strategic plan and its implementation – which in keeping with guidance in *ii' taa'poh'to'p* is ongoing, rather than a time-bound event – had included conversations with Indigenous scholars and Elders, as well as consultation with the Office of Indigenous Engagement.

## PARTICIPANT COUNTS

As of April 14, 2023, there have been 23,913 points of contact with community members representing at least 18,500 unique participants (based on email addresses provided).

|                        | PROJECT NEXT<br>(2011) | ENERGIZING EYES HIGH<br>(2016) | CURRENT<br>(2022/23) |
|------------------------|------------------------|--------------------------------|----------------------|
| Surveys                |                        | 3,245                          | 20,613               |
| Online consultation    |                        |                                | 493                  |
| Development surveys    |                        |                                | 1,172                |
| Final surveys          |                        |                                | 18,948               |
| Weekly polls           | 801                    | 3,072                          | 0                    |
| Roving booth           | 1,104                  | 2,001                          | **                   |
| Workshops/focus groups | 440                    | 869                            | 3,241                |
| Web submissions/emails | 75                     | 19                             | 59                   |
| <b>Total</b>           | <b>2,420</b>           | <b>9,206</b>                   | <b>23,913</b>        |

\*\*Roving booth numbers captured in "Survey" for current process.

This is the largest strategic planning consultation in the University of Calgary's history.

## WHAT WE HEARD | SURVEYS

Shorter surveys provided breadth to the consultation, providing the viewpoints of a large number of internal and external community members who might be otherwise uninterested in participating in a longer consultation or planning workshop. In total, 20,613 responses have been received through surveys, 18,369 of which provided a unique email address.

The full script of the final surveys can be found in Appendix A of this report.

### Methodology

The short survey was developed from workshop consultation materials in the form in which they existed in November 2022. Four questions were posed:

1. The purposes of the university, and whether focuses on research and scholarship, teaching and learning, and community should be increased, decreased or remain constant. This question provides insights into whether our communities felt the University of Calgary was striking a good balance in addressing these three core purposes. By articulating these purposes, the question also provides useful context for questions around values, standing out and priorities in a more active way than simply presenting the information as text.
2. The culture and values we want to emphasize at the University of Calgary. Participants were asked to select words that come to mind, selecting from a list of 20, or providing their own. This provides insights into how our communities would like to see the university approach its work as it develops and implements a new strategic plan.
3. How we can stand out from other major research universities. Participants were asked to select ways the University of Calgary could distinguish itself in 2030, selecting from a list of 18, or providing their own. This provides insights into what our communities believe distinguishes us now, could distinguish us in the future and on what we need to apply focus.
4. What we should do today. Participants were asked to provide their thoughts on what actions we can take to, "reach our goals, separate ourselves from the pack or improve our campus environment." This provides insights on what our communities perceive as quick wins, "areas of pain" and "areas of priority."

The lists of default responses presented to participants for Questions 2 and 3 were created through surveys that ran in November and December of 2022 (“development surveys”). In these surveys, 1,172 participants randomly received an open-ended version of either the “standing out” or “culture and values” question where they were asked to write out up to three words or phrases that came to mind.

From these responses, lists of options that covered 98% of responses were generated by the Strategic Planning Working Group<sup>1</sup>. These lists were used in the version of the survey that was broadly distributed to the campus community (“final survey”). Participation in both the development surveys and final survey was incentivized through weekly prizes and a grand prize available to students of a tuition credit equal to their tuition costs from the Fall and Winter terms (up to a \$25,000 value).

While the final survey remains open, active promotion concluded on Jan. 28, 2023 – the day of the grand prize draw. As of March 5, there were 18,643 responses to the final survey. Prior to analysis, the following data cleanup occurred:

- › Removal of empty responses.
- › Removal of “racing” responses (survey completed in fewer than 25 seconds).
- › Removal of all responses tied to an IP address associated with more than five “extreme racing” violations (survey completed in fewer than 10 seconds).
- › Addition of tags for “Student,” “PostDoc,” “Faculty” and “Staff” based on UCalgary email address provided, if any, and application of an “Unknown” tag in all other cases.

This resulted in **17,174 categorized responses** in the final survey that were analyzed concurrently with development survey results.

|                               | STUDENT | POSTDOC | FACULTY | STAFF | UNKNOWN | TOTAL  |
|-------------------------------|---------|---------|---------|-------|---------|--------|
| Participant count by category | 13,942  | 35      | 302     | 1,327 | 1,568   | 17,174 |

An additional 1,774 survey responses were received from a survey built for external consultations. This survey shared one question with the internal community survey (how we can stand out). The remainder of the questions asked were open-ended, and analysis of these responses incorporated into the “External consultation” section later in this document.

In addition to these surveys, from Nov. 15, 2022, onward, community members have been able to complete an “online consultation” – effectively, the workshop questions in the form they existed as of Nov. 12, 2022. An additional 395 responses were received through this mechanism. Their insights have been incorporated into the workshop results in the following section (“Internal workshops”).

<sup>1</sup> The exception to this 98% cover-off was on the value of being “entrepreneurial,” which appeared regularly in the open-ended responses, but was also represented through the values of entrepreneurial thinking as defined in *Eyes High* – creativity, initiative, collaboration, resourcefulness and learning from experience – that are present in other options.



## Results

“Research universities create knowledge through **research and scholarship**, educate students through **teaching and learning** and support or improve their **community**. In each of these areas, do you believe the University of Calgary should be doing more, less or about the same?”

(SELECT FROM -3 to +3 USING SLIDER, DEFAULT is 0)

|                                 | STUDENT      | POSTDOC      | FACULTY      | STAFF        | UNKNOWN      | ALL          |
|---------------------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| <b>RESEARCH AND SCHOLARSHIP</b> |              |              |              |              |              |              |
| Mean ( $\bar{X}$ )              | <b>+1.35</b> | <b>+1.76</b> | <b>+1.21</b> | <b>+1.21</b> | <b>+1.24</b> | <b>+1.33</b> |
| Standard deviation ( $\sigma$ ) | 1.17         | 1.03         | 1.19         | 1.15         | 1.25         | 1.18         |
| Variance ( $\sigma^2$ )         | 1.37         | 1.06         | 1.41         | 1.32         | 1.56         | 1.38         |
| <b>TEACHING AND LEARNING</b>    |              |              |              |              |              |              |
| Mean ( $\bar{X}$ )              | <b>+1.48</b> | <b>+1.00</b> | <b>+1.10</b> | <b>+1.37</b> | <b>+1.27</b> | <b>+1.45</b> |
| Standard deviation ( $\sigma$ ) | 1.06         | 1.09         | 1.18         | 1.09         | 1.20         | 1.08         |
| Variance ( $\sigma^2$ )         | 1.13         | 1.19         | 1.40         | 1.18         | 1.44         | 1.17         |
| <b>COMMUNITY</b>                |              |              |              |              |              |              |
| Mean ( $\bar{X}$ )              | <b>+1.30</b> | <b>+1.06</b> | <b>+1.01</b> | <b>+1.34</b> | <b>+1.09</b> | <b>+1.28</b> |
| Standard deviation ( $\sigma$ ) | 1.20         | 1.12         | 1.23         | 1.20         | 1.27         | 1.21         |
| Variance ( $\sigma^2$ )         | 1.45         | 1.25         | 1.50         | 1.45         | 1.62         | 1.47         |

“As a university achieves its purpose, it does so while remaining true to its culture and values. Think about the culture and values you want to emphasize at the University of Calgary. What words come to mind?”

(SELECT UP TO FIVE OR SUGGEST YOUR OWN)

|                   | STUDENT      | POSTDOC      | FACULTY      | STAFF        | UNKNOWN      | TOTAL        |
|-------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| Diversity         | <b>38.3%</b> | <b>40.0%</b> | 32.5%        | <b>34.9%</b> | <b>30.4%</b> | <b>37.3%</b> |
| Critical thinking | <b>35.2%</b> | <b>40.0%</b> | <b>54.0%</b> | <b>36.9%</b> | <b>38.6%</b> | <b>36.0%</b> |
| Future focused    | <b>33.2%</b> | 8.6%         | 24.5%        | <b>33.6%</b> | 28.2%        | <b>32.6%</b> |
| Excellence        | <b>28.1%</b> | <b>40.0%</b> | <b>40.4%</b> | <b>34.0%</b> | <b>31.8%</b> | <b>29.1%</b> |
| Collaborative     | 27.6%        | <b>34.3%</b> | <b>36.4%</b> | <b>36.5%</b> | <b>29.7%</b> | <b>28.6%</b> |
| Inclusive         | <b>28.1%</b> | 28.6%        | 33.8%        | 32.8%        | 28.4%        | 28.6%        |
| Respect           | 27.0%        | <b>40.0%</b> | 19.5%        | 25.3%        | <b>29.3%</b> | 27.0%        |
| Sustainability    | 25.6%        | 28.6%        | 27.2%        | 32.2%        | 24.6%        | 26.1%        |
| Wellness          | 26.4%        | 28.6%        | 15.2%        | 24.5%        | 22.0%        | 25.6%        |
| Community         | 25.5%        | 22.9%        | 24.8%        | 26.6%        | 21.9%        | 25.3%        |
| Creativity        | 24.6%        | 14.3%        | <b>39.7%</b> | 24.3%        | 26.0%        | 25.0%        |
| Welcoming         | 24.7%        | 20.0%        | 14.9%        | 18.8%        | 20.3%        | 23.6%        |
| Integrity         | 20.7%        | 25.7%        | <b>36.4%</b> | 25.1%        | 27.7%        | 22.0%        |
| Accessibility     | 22.6%        | 20.0%        | 9.9%         | 18.5%        | 19.1%        | 21.7%        |
| Fun               | 19.7%        | 14.3%        | 3.6%         | 11.2%        | 14.0%        | 18.3%        |
| Resourcefulness   | 18.3%        | 17.1%        | 9.9%         | 14.4%        | 13.7%        | 17.4%        |
| Compassion        | 14.6%        | 11.4%        | 14.6%        | 14.5%        | 14.8%        | 14.6%        |
| Results focused   | 14.5%        | 5.7%         | 12.6%        | 14.6%        | 13.3%        | 14.3%        |
| Pragmatism        | 5.9%         | 5.7%         | 7.3%         | 6.5%         | 6.9%         | 6.1%         |
| Bold              | 5.5%         | 5.7%         | 9.6%         | 7.5%         | 8.0%         | 5.9%         |

Yellow highlighting denotes top-five responses in category

“Major research universities often distinguish themselves from each other through the type of learning they emphasize, the communities they serve or through the general way they approach things. When we compare the University of Calgary to other major research universities, what could make us stand out in 2030/what would you like us to be known for?”

(SELECT UP TO FIVE OR SUGGEST YOUR OWN)

|  | STUDENT      | POSTDOC      | FACULTY      | STAFF        | EXTERNAL     | UNKNOWN      | TOTAL        |
|--|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| <b>Affordable</b> education                    | <b>62.7%</b> | <b>37.1%</b> | 27.5%        | <b>50.1%</b> | <b>49.8%</b> | <b>47.3%</b> | <b>58.7%</b> |
| Creating <b>opportunities</b> for students     | <b>44.1%</b> | <b>37.1%</b> | 25.8%        | <b>37.0%</b> | <b>37.2%</b> | <b>32.3%</b> | <b>41.7%</b> |
| Exceptional <b>student experience</b>          | <b>39.7%</b> | 20.0%        | <b>32.1%</b> | <b>40.3%</b> | <b>33.1%</b> | <b>35.8%</b> | <b>38.7%</b> |
| Extraordinary <b>faculty and staff</b>         | <b>34.4%</b> | 20.0%        | <b>46.7%</b> | <b>38.4%</b> | <b>34.5%</b> | <b>38.2%</b> | <b>35.2%</b> |
| Commitment to <b>diversity and inclusion</b>   | 25.7%        | <b>34.3%</b> | <b>36.1%</b> | <b>29.5%</b> | 28.0%        | <b>28.7%</b> | <b>26.6%</b> |
| Connection to <b>industry</b>                  | <b>26.6%</b> | 28.6%        | 17.9%        | 23.1%        | <b>31.1%</b> | 20.5%        | 26.2%        |
| More <b>experiential learning</b>              | 21.8%        | 14.3%        | 22.2%        | 25.1%        | 24.1%        | 21.0%        | 22.2%        |
| Commitment to <b>excellence</b>                | 20.7%        | 28.6%        | <b>31.1%</b> | 23.3%        | 25.1%        | 26.9%        | 22.0%        |
| More <b>research opportunities</b>             | 21.7%        | 54.3%        | 32.1%        | 25.0%        | 17.4%        | 22.8%        | 21.9%        |
| Modern <b>campus</b>                           | 22.3%        | 11.4%        | 7.3%         | 15.4%        | 10.5%        | 17.2%        | 20.1%        |
| Commitment to <b>sustainability</b>            | 19.1%        | 22.9%        | 23.8%        | 24.5%        | 22.5%        | 18.4%        | 19.8%        |
| Strong <b>campus culture</b>                   | 20.0%        | 11.4%        | 19.9%        | 22.7%        | 16.5%        | 18.6%        | 19.7%        |
| <b>Entrepreneurial thinking</b> and approach   | 18.0%        | 20.0%        | 22.5%        | 23.1%        | 26.9%        | 20.0%        | 19.4%        |
| <b>Cutting edge</b> curriculum                 | 17.2%        | 17.1%        | 19.9%        | 17.6%        | 20.9%        | 18.2%        | 17.7%        |
| <b>Newest technology</b> and tools             | 17.1%        | 31.4%        | 8.9%         | 18.2%        | 16.9%        | 15.4%        | 16.9%        |
| Commitment to <b>Indigenous reconciliation</b> | 15.3%        | 17.1%        | 29.8%        | 21.8%        | 18.3%        | 20.0%        | 16.7%        |
| Connection to <b>community</b>                 | 14.5%        | 17.1%        | 31.1%        | 20.0%        | 26.7%        | 20.3%        | 16.7%        |
| <b>International</b> focus                     | 13.5%        | <b>40.0%</b> | 16.9%        | 10.9%        | 9.5%         | 14.7%        | 13.1%        |

Yellow highlighting denotes top-five responses in category



## **WHAT WE HEARD | INTERNAL WORKSHOPS (NOVEMBER–MARCH)**

The first round of workshops and meetings provided depth to the open-ended phase of internal consultation, providing the opportunity for community members to discuss and debate the goals, values, distinguishing characteristics and priorities of the University of Calgary — as well as areas of challenge where they believe focus is needed. In total, 2,735 workshop participations were tracked in this phase, with a further 395 comments coming in through the online-survey version of the consultation. It is estimated that this represents 1,500 unique workshop participants.

Links to materials used in workshops, including activity sheets, background materials and presentation materials, can be found in Appendix B of this report. The list of workshops that have occurred can be found in Appendix C of this report.

### ***Methodology***

The workshop questions and formats were developed by the Strategic Planning Working Group through consultation with the Strategic Planning Oversight Committee and practitioners across campus including Communications; the Office of Institutional Analysis; the Office of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion; the Office of Indigenous Engagement; and Campus Mental Health.

Draft materials were then refined through a series of test workshops that occurred through November and December 2022. Test workshops allowed the Strategic Planning Working Group to home in on what format, background material and questions would provide enough context to orient participants, without providing so much as to steer the result. This was done to improve the participant experience and quality of data gathered.

To meet the needs and interests of our community, workshop variants were created with different focuses (general, community and culture, research, or teaching and learning), different lengths (60-, 90- or 120-minute) and different modalities (online or in-person).

Using these materials, the Strategic Planning Working Group ran 39 workshops in the months of January and February 2023. The number and nature of the workshops was determined based on responses received to a series of “expression of interest” emails sent out in November and December. Potential participants were asked to register interest in attending workshops and identify the times, modes and locations that would allow their participation, as well as the topics in which they were interested. A workshop schedule was then developed that addressed 98% of in-person requests, offered a wide range of online options, and provided times during the day, the evening and on weekends.

In-person workshops were run across multiple University of Calgary locations (Main Campus, Foothills Campus, Downtown Campus, Spy Hill Campus, Kananaskis Field Station).

Workshops were also run by faculties and units. Senior Leadership Team members were tasked by the provost with ensuring their areas of responsibility were aware of the strategic planning exercise and had the opportunity to participate in the strategic planning exercises.

While the same workshop materials were made available to faculties and units, they were encouraged to tailor the workshop experience to their specific needs and interests, including, potentially, prompting participants with different questions that they would find more meaningful. Faculties and units were asked to provide a report on the workshop and conclusions in a common “Workshop Response” format (see Appendix D). Fifty-two faculty- and unit-led workshops occurred.

Finally, materials were made available to community members to run their own workshops, if they desired. The Strategic Planning Working Group received one community-led workshop submission.

To supplement manual review of all submissions, activity sheets and facilitator notes, the Working Group made use of generative AI tools to create summaries and make recommendations that were checked against the Working Group’s own analyses and interpretations. In this way, the generative AI tools served as a guard against biases (recency and otherwise) that might occur.

## Results

The collecting of workshop feedback into major themes is an ultimately subjective exercise and it would be difficult to come up with a topic that did not arise from somebody over the course of the approximately 100 workshops that occurred across campus. But, upon review of Working Group-led, faculty-and-unit-led, and community-led workshop responses, the following themes have been identified as occurring with regularity:

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### **Participants know the attributes they want in a “marquee goal,” but there is no consensus on what the goal itself should be.**

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Participants were, nonetheless, in agreement with the purpose of the university: to educate students, to advance scholarship through research and study, and to support our community. There was, however, less clarity on what a marquee goal for the university could be. Participants were far better at identifying the attributes they want in a marquee goal for the university than identifying a potential goal.

- › **The goal should be about us, not us relative to other universities.** Most participants wanted a goal that was less tied to external rankings than *Eyes High's* aspiration to be a top-five research university. Many participants expressed the belief that we needed to stop chasing external validation and “step off the page”; our aspirations should be more about what type of university we want to be.
- › **The goal should be about impact.** Themes around the goal that came up regularly included impact, community and student satisfaction. Participants want any goal to be inspirational and inclusive of the entire community and reinforce our value to society as a whole.
- › **The goal is an opportunity to step onto the world stage.** Participants regularly discussed using the marquee goal as a reflection of our maturation as an institution and as an opportunity to “take the next step.” Shifting our focus to be more global (“not just top five in Canada”) was a major theme.
- › **The goal should not lose focus on teaching and learning and community impact.** There was a general sense that the *Eyes High* goal-setting was successful, but a common concern was that it shifted the focus away from teaching and learning and community impact.
- › **Quotes:**
  - › “I don’t know what the goal is, but the single most important word is impact. Impact in our community.”
  - › “Let’s be something that no other university defines themselves as.”
  - › “Success is the ability of our students, faculty and staff to change the world.”
  - › “Pulling the community together needs to be a conscious outcome when we think ‘marquee goal’.”
  - › “We’d like to transcend rankings and start talking about social impact, but we’re not sure what that goal is.”
  - › “I think the university is a better place today because we set a goal to be top five.”

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## Participants want the university to connect better to the communities we serve.

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There was strong desire articulated by participants to strengthening ties with Indigenous communities, with the city of Calgary, the province of Alberta, Canada — and beyond. This desire for connection came through different — but reinforcing — lenses:

- › **Community connection as a goal.** As a public research university, community connection was seen by many as a core goal. It was seen as closely tied to knowledge-mobilization and developing a pedagogy that is relevant to our students and our communities.
- › **Community connection as a duty.** Closely tied to the idea of community connection as a goal, participants also saw community connection and the creation of ethical spaces as a duty. The idea that we are in a privileged place, and we needed to share our privilege for the betterment of our society came up regularly, as did the need to provide a safe place where people can thrive.
- › **Community connection as a strategy.** Many participants saw community connection as something that made the University of Calgary stand out from other universities and could be the thing that differentiates us from other major research universities in Canada. A “community-first” approach would distinguish us from the stereotypical view of research universities as places of ivory towers, removed from the concerns of the society in which they find themselves.
- › **Community connection as an opportunity.** Calgary is Canada’s third most-diverse city and, with a third of the population newcomers to Canada, participants saw enormous opportunity in working with community to connect to the world. This was seen as a way to step outside of the Canadian frame and begin to realize global aspirations.
- › **Quotes:**
  - › “Let’s talk about being a global leader. It’s one thing to be a leader in Canada. But there are no more national lines. We need to broaden our idea of community.”
  - › “We are a public university. Community is why we exist ... there’s such remarkable civic pride in Calgary and we can and should tap into that.”
  - › “Local is good. We have an incredible community, and most universities would kill for our connection to community.”
  - › “We need to address the pressure to conform to the already established ways of doing things. We need to expand ways of knowing and remember that Indigenous knowledge keepers bring gifts of knowledge into the institution.”
  - › “We need to ensure Indigenous process are visibly included in activities such as admissions, program development, institutional events and activities, convocation, and in various leadership roles.”
  - › “This is such a diverse city. We way under-utilize the combination of community and global networks that we have.”
  - › “[Let’s] keep the ‘universe’ in university.”

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**Participants reconciled an often-felt conflict between learning and research by encouraging great integration between the two.**

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A tension between research and teaching and learning was sometimes felt and often acknowledged at workshops, but participants were generally keen to look at ways learning could be further built into research and research could be further built into teaching and learning. Many opportunities were seen including:

- › **Research differentiates us from other learning options.** Research and discovery were seen as something that differentiated us from other local post-secondaries and looming competitors in the technology space, such as Google.
- › **Research introduces students to ambiguity and setbacks.** Research is an experiential-learning method that exposes students to the idea that data is rarely perfect and not everything succeeds as you hope. It establishes pragmatism, resiliency and the ability to navigate through ambiguous situations.
- › **Involving more learners in research would allow more ambitious, community-focused research.** Learners can support community-focused research and innovation by liaising with communities, bringing insights to them and feedback and other considerations to researchers.
- › **Researchers have much to teach learners.** Exposing learners to more research opportunities and more researchers helps develop critical-thinking skills and creativity. It also helps propagate cutting-edge subject-matter expertise.
- › **Learners have much to teach researchers.** The need to translate research approaches and outcomes to learner audiences develops core knowledge-mobilization skills in researchers.
- › **Quotes:**
  - › “Research has to be a part of any signature student experience at our university.”
  - › “There’s no trade-off [between learning and research]. Research helps build adaptable, flexible students. We need to teach research skills — knowledge is doubling rapidly.”
  - › “There’s immense opportunity in bringing transdisciplinary research into teaching. The idea of dominating a schedule for a particular major is preparing them for the 1970s.”
  - › “There’s no reason why you shouldn’t have courses in scientific thought that work for both Arts and Science.”
  - › “I work with a lot of students. I am learning stuff from them all the time.”
  - › “We don’t do a great job of telling undergraduates the value add of research. When you do research, you learn to cope with failure.”

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## Participants want it to be easier to do things at our university.

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Perhaps the most-common theme of the workshops, both those who administer processes and those who use them were frustrated with the length of time it takes to accomplish basic tasks, and would rather spend their time on more-rewarding, higher-value work.

There was widespread consensus that the university is a place where you are allowed to do more things than you are at other universities — but that it can be difficult to actually do them with our processes and approvals. Many participants identified the contradiction between our commitment to entrepreneurial thinking and our processes.

- › **Build processes “for the 95% — not the 5%.”** There was a widespread view that our processes are designed to catch everything and address all situations. While everybody acknowledged the importance of legal and ethical requirements, faculty members in particular wanted to see processes that were not rooted on the assumption things would go wrong and would rather those situations be dealt with by managers and leaders.
- › **Participants — both in administrative roles and otherwise — were concerned that administration was (or was perceived) as a hinderance to work, rather than an enabler of work.** As noted by one participant, “Administration is a means to an end, and that end is to support and unlock our scholarship.”
- › **Participants — both in administrative roles and otherwise — were concerned that processes were built for a time of more financing and support.** Those processes were now overly complex relative to our current resource levels, and it was difficult for faculty — who may only need to fill out a particular form every year or two — to navigate these complex processes without support.
- › **Participants felt that decision-making relied too heavily on running things up chains of command.** They encouraged the devolution of decision-making to local managers, leaders and staff members, which they perceived as being consistent with being an entrepreneurial university and consistent with shared governance.
- › **Participants also saw an immense opportunity in making it easier to do things at the University of Calgary.** It was generally acknowledged that universities are known for inefficiencies in processes. It was debated by participants whether it was worse here than at other universities — many suggested it was actually better. But it was not debated that it would be very appealing to academic staff and support staff to be the university that gets this right — and allows us to be more nimble than other universities.
- › **Quotes:**
  - › “If we are going to be entrepreneurial, we need to be entrepreneurial in our methods. Here, you should be able to learn faster, research faster, collaborate more quickly.”
  - › “Right now, processes are something that happen to us. We need more collaborative construction of processes.”
  - › “All this entrepreneurial talk. But, behind the scenes, we are the rusty old Tin Man. We need to be less hierarchical and move faster.”
  - › “This should be a place where students can ‘choose their own adventure.’”
  - › “I’d like to be an entrepreneurial university and not just talk about it. I have been trying to get a contract signed for a year.”
  - › “I worry our services are driving how we act, rather than how we need to act driving our services.”
  - › “Everybody at every university is frustrated with bureaucratic processes. One easy way to set ourselves apart would be to be different in that aspect.”
  - › “Having a better balance between goals and resources available is urgent.”
  - › “We don’t need leadership to say, ‘we’re going that direction,’ so much as we need leadership to say, ‘something is standing on the hose and I’m going to move it.’”
  - › “Our mantra should be, ‘how can we make it happen?’”



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## Participants want us to unapologetically embrace our role in strengthening society and modelling behaviour.

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Participants wanted to see the university on the vanguard of addressing climate change, mental health, Indigenous reconciliation, and increasing equity, diversity, inclusion and accessibility. Participants wanted us to take a global outlook and embrace our role as a “model city.”

- › **Participants wanted the university to be a values-driven place.** Commitments to our institutional strategies around Indigenous Reconciliation; Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Accessibility; Mental Health; Globalization; and Sustainability were seen as foundational to who we are. The parallel path process needs to be recognized as fundamental to the university strategy – by 2030, parallel processes should be part of the cultural process in all that we do.
- › **Participants wanted the university to model understanding of emerging best practice, and be first to incorporate increased standards.** By serving as a model city, participants saw the university as providing value to industry, government and non-profit sectors in showing how practices can be applied in a day-to-day sense, as well as inspire action and impact.
- › **Quotes:**
  - › “We can be a place of continuous improvement. A role model and a micro-city that acts as an example to the broader community.”
  - › “UCalgary is a small city unto itself, and it adopts the culture of our host city – but the host city adopts our culture, too.”
  - › “In 2030, we should be a small city – living and engaging here, not just coming to class and leaving.”
  - › “The parallel path process [laid out in ii’ taa’poh’to’p] needs to be recognized as fundamental to the university strategy – by 2030, parallel processes should be part of the cultural process in all that we do.”
  - › “Let’s be a zero-waste university by 2030. We can do it.”
  - › “We can show the way on things like climate action, Indigenous reconciliation, mental health and well-being. People look towards the university.”
  - › “We should be recognizing that we are part of a whole. This whole is multifaceted—part of the city, part of the region, part of province, part of the nation, part of the lands. We look from many perspectives at what we are doing.”
  - › “We’re diverse. Leaders in environmental stewardship. Developing on accessibility. We’re removing barriers. We put people first. We focus on wellness and respect.”
  - › “[We’d like to] see sustainability and climate action leadership as being part of UCalgary’s core values.”

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## Participants want us to protect and expand accessibility.

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Participants wanted the university to be a place that is inclusive to all who have the talent and ambition to attend. In conversations about values, people rapidly and near-universally expressed a desire to be a diverse, inclusive university that addressed diverse learner needs.

- › **Creating a sustainable campus.** Participants saw the need for the university to be sustainable in all aspects, but particularly as it came to the environment and in creating sustainable workloads for students, faculty and staff. Needing to continue and strengthen our commitment to mental health — and address drivers of challenges to mental health such as inflexibility and unsustainable workloads — came up regularly. Participants also identified the need for a commitment to sustainability from an Indigenous perspective by recognizing and demonstrating our interconnectedness with the environment and the land.
- › **Conversations about affordability often focused on accessibility.** Participants worried that rising prices were excluding individuals who otherwise had the talent and ambition to attend university and felt it was important the university take concerted steps to preserve and expand accessibility. Affordability for graduate students was identified regularly as of particular concern for accessibility and the sustainability of higher education.
- › **Participants worried that ever-increasing grade requirements were excluding non-conventional students that should make up the core of an “entrepreneurial university.”** Many participants encouraged expanding our view of who would be a successful student beyond grades. It was generally acknowledged that, as a university in a growing city, we would need to continue to grow, or else we would become an option only available to an elite few.
- › **Quotes:**
  - › “Nobody that has the talent and ambition to attend the University of Calgary should be unable to come here.”
  - › “EDIA needs to be woven throughout everything that we do.”
  - › “We need to build an honour of oral systems—there are many countries with oral processes and practices. Nurture oral ways so they are present in all programs.”
  - › “We need to develop a culture of inclusion and a culture of making it easy [for students].”
  - › “The students are what give us a place and purpose.”
  - › “We need to build courses in a way that considers affordability. Can we provide more access to materials? Open learning? Open sources? There are barriers we control.”
  - › “Other universities are already reaching out to us to borrow from our expertise in [Indigeneity and EDI]. Continuing to do this can set us apart.”
  - › “Our goal should be elite education for everyone.”

## WHAT WE HEARD | INTERNAL WORKSHOPS (MARCH-APRIL)

Workshops and meetings after the release of the first draft of the strategic plan focused on community reaction and recommendations for improvements to the draft plan. During this round, 17 workshops and meetings were held with 227 participants. In addition to these 227 participants, feedback was also received through 98 online consultation submissions and 7 emails. Links to presentation materials used in these workshops can be found in Appendix D of this report.

### Methodology

Using the materials from the more open-ended consultation phase as a launching-off point, the Strategic Planning Working Group developed workshop questions and formats appropriate for soliciting feedback on the first draft of the strategic plan. These materials were refined through a series of test workshops that occurred in March 2023. Test workshops allowed the Strategic Planning Working Group to ensure the materials were clear and helpful to participants, allowing the Working Group to home in on what format would result in the best participant experience and quality of data gathered. Two variants were created of different lengths (60- and 90-minute) to be used in either online or in-person workshops.

Using these materials, the Strategic Planning Working Group ran 17 workshops in the months of March and April 2023. As with in the initial round, the number and nature of the workshops was determined based on the volume of sign-ups to all-community invitations to participate in the strategic planning process.

### Results

The collecting of workshop feedback into major themes is an ultimately subjective exercise and many mutually exclusive viewpoints on the first draft were expressed by participants over the course of the consultation.

As can be expected on a detailed draft, feedback often went in different directions: “it’s generally pretty vague” and “it’s too specific” are both critiques that were regularly provided. There were roughly equal calls for the plan to be more bold and for the plan to be more realistic. While there were few, if any, “universal” positions, the following themes have been identified:

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### General

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- › **Participants liked the tone, format and initiatives.** It was positively remarked that the draft felt concrete and that it was well-structured. It was seen as positive and matter-of-fact.
- › **Participants wanted to see strengthened connection to the University’s Institutional Strategies in general and equity, diversity, inclusion, and accessibility in particular.** Workshop participants specifically referenced the table of plans in workshop materials as clarifying that the strategic plan is only part of the story, and some of the story is in foundational commitments to EDIA, Indigenous Reconciliation, mental health, global engagement and sustainability.
- › **Many participants felt there was too much of an emphasis on research at the expense of teaching and learning.** One observed that, by word count, teaching was mentioned 3 times and research mentioned 36 times. This criticism came in more frequently in online feedback, though certainly not exclusively.
- › **Many participants wanted to be “bolder.”** When pressed, there was a sense that the plan needed to have stronger goals to rally around that would speak to our aspirations in a concrete way.
- › **Entrepreneurial thinking had its detractors.** Some of the respondents to the online survey included negative comments about entrepreneurial thinking. Workshop participants viewed entrepreneurial thinking either more positively or as a given.

- › **There is ample skepticism that we will follow through.** There is a great deal of cynicism about whether the university will follow through on the plan and questions as to how we will hold ourselves accountable. Many noted that versions of some of these commitments have been made in the past, without material outcomes being realized.
  - › “What are we honestly serious about at this institution? ... UCalgary is really good at saying we care about things. I want to see the proof.”
- › **Participants felt postdocs should be explicitly mentioned in the plan.** As a group that drives research activity but does not see themselves naturally as students, faculty or staff, there were strong opinions that they needed to be explicitly mentioned and considered in the strategies. Many strategies would speak naturally to postdocs if clearly included (e.g., shared core).
- › **In the online consultation participants were asked how they would distribute points representing priority among the strategies.** These are their responses (98 responses):



## Goals, Mission, And Values

- › **The goals, mission and values sections were received, but there was plenty of disagreement as to whether goals were goals, mission was mission and values were values.** Many participants recommended looking at how we described these and whether they could be collapsed or expanded. There were many specific language suggestions:
  - › E.g., from an academic staff member: “In my view, the goals and mission of a research-intensive university are three-fold: (1) seek truth, (2) inspire curiosity, and (3) share scholarship with the community”.
- › **Participants articulated a desire to see a stronger through-line from goals, mission and values to strategies.** Words in the vision and mandate need to be meaningfully woven into the strategies.

## Strategy 1 – Establishing a Shared Core of Research, Critical Thinking and Entrepreneurial Thinking

- › **Across consultations, the idea of a shared core generated the most discussion.** There were very divergent opinions on this strategy, and it generated some of the most positive comments (“No brainer. We are so far being American universities in this regard”), but also negative comments (“Required first year courses on research, critical thinking and entrepreneurial thinking will detract from the subjects that students come here to learn”). In workshops it was seen more positively, with people expanding on the idea and discussing what else could be part of this common core.
- › **There were regular and widespread requests to increase the number of topics covered in mandatory courses.** Additional topics most recommended included: Indigenous reconciliation and “University 101” content about how to be a student more generally.
  - › One student participant thought mandatory courses could also be a place where students are given a sense of the pathways available to them — academically and beyond. This student suggested that, just as we were creating a strategic plan, students should make themselves a strategic plan for their own education, looking at external forces, what internally motivates them and how to keep as many options open as possible.

- › **There were some requests to remove entrepreneurial thinking from a shared core.** While not a major theme in workshops and meetings, some online consultation participants were opposed to entrepreneurial thinking being part of a shared core and some suggested other topics that could take its place, such as Indigenous reconciliation or the university’s commitment to EDIA.
- › **There were recommendations that at least a part of this new mandatory material be choosing from a set of “options.”** For example, within the mandatory courses a student could choose a module that further develops their knowledge of one of our core strategies — sustainability, global engagement, Indigenous reconciliation, EDIA or mental health. This was seen to broaden the material available and make it more relevant without it being a frustrating mandatory in which they have no interest.
- › **There were recommendations that faculty and staff be able to choose the pieces of a shared core most relevant to them.** To make this shared core more meaningful, staff should be able to choose from among many different areas of focus such as community tools, teaching and learning trends, etc. that would bring people together and build culture in a way more meaningful to them.
- › **Participants did not always see students clearly enough in these plans.** Participants recommended bolstering language about students in these plans.

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## Strategy 2 — Provide Canada’s Most Accessible Student Experience

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- › **There were regular requests to expand the view of accessible to include more of an EDIA and belonging lens and more consideration of remote and asynchronous learning opportunities.** There were also comments that the use of “accessible” may be confusing, as it has different meanings in an EDIA context that it appears to have in this section.
- › **Some saw the increased targets as less about accessibility and more about growth designed to benefit the university’s standing.** There were also many questions as to how the specific targets were set. It was also noted that, while student increases are articulated, there were not corresponding targets for increases in faculty, staff and postdocs, which might leave the impression people would be asked to do even more.
- › **Financial supports for graduate students were very popular.** As close to universally supported as we saw in the consultation — these were seen as a very good thing by most participants and a great way to distinguish the university.
- › **Financial support for first-in-family students was more controversial.** Some were very supportive, and some felt that it privileged birth order and left other equity-deserving groups and considerations out of the picture.
- › **Micro-credentials, stackable certificates and experiential learning were seen as things we were already doing and having them as initiatives was not adding much to the plan.** They had supporters and detractors, but the consensus was they did not add a lot to the plan (or we would be doing them regardless) and could stale-date what is meant to be a long-lived document. Some participants felt them being included in the plan seemed out of touch or ignorant of the fact this work was already occurring.
- › **Expanding the use of pass/fail for first-year courses was very polarizing and there was no clear consensus.** Some emphatically stated its importance while others were equally emphatic it would be a bad idea that would damage the university’s standing and quality of teaching.
- › **Postdocs were supportive of graduate student supports and suggested that similar supports and targets be considered for them.** It was noted many of the same challenges exist for postdocs — Canadian universities providing relatively low compensation and supports — and that the same opportunity existed as a result, for the same logic: these highly skilled researchers will put roots down in Calgary if attracted to an exceptional postdoc experience.

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### Strategy 3 – Expand Research Opportunities for Students, Faculty, Staff and Community Partners

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- › **Research opportunities were seen by students and those who work closely with students as hugely valuable.** Increasing research opportunities, particularly for first-year students, was positively received. They were seen as a great way to build the skills we say we want in graduates. There was, however, some concern that if not properly implemented those research experiences could be meaningless or detrimental.
  - › One student participant suggested going further and clearly denoting research opportunities more generally as being open to first-year students, as he would otherwise assume that only somebody in their third or fourth year would be considered.
- › **There was debate as to whether research opportunities were better scattered throughout the academic year rather than being placed in the summer.** Similarly, some respondents thought it would be better to have research opportunities after second or third year.
- › **There was some concern that research scholarships for the “top 1,000 students” cut against both entrepreneurial aims and accessibility aims.**
- › **Open access to data was supported, but some wanted to see a clearer tie to DORA.**
- › **This strategy drew a lot of the criticism that research was prioritized over teaching and learning in the draft of the strategic plan.**

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### Strategy 4 – Place Community at the Centre of Everything We Do

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- › **There was modest confusion as to when “community” was meant to mean external community and when “community” meant internal community.** The short phrase was interpreted by many as being internal community until they read the longer strategy. Clarity was recommended.
  - › Some participants recommended the word “communities” instead to make it both more inclusive and reduce the confusion.
- › **The idea of bringing in the community early strongly resonated and there was strong support for the “fork in the road” statements.** Two online respondents, however, took exception to the phrase “ducks in a row”<sup>2</sup>.
- › **The Campus “Global Project” generated a lot of enthusiasm.** It was seen as a natural extension of transdisciplinarity.
- › **The Associate Deans (Community) position was a popular idea.** While some thought it added bureaucracy, a strong majority who expressed an opinion on this topic thought it could be a powerful way to increase community focus (“Can’t tell you how much I love the idea of Associate Dean (Community)”).
- › **The partnership database was seen as something that exists in pieces and has been promised before.** Participants also thought that, when in the same category as a campus global project, seemed very small and tactical.

<sup>2</sup> Which refers to pins in lawn bowling — and not actual ducks.

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## Strategy 5 — Make it Simpler to Undertake and Accomplish Goals Here Than Any Other University

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- › **A top-down expectation of simplification was seen as helpful.** Some participants said they felt such an expectation would be necessary to break the inertia of the organization.
- › Participants recommended this strategy also talk to pushing decision-making and accountability down throughout the university organization. Many said that local decision-making — and local accountability — would be an important part of making things simpler.
  - › “Simplify what we control [as a university]. Explain what we don’t control.”
- › **Increased ability to register in other program’s courses was popular — but experts in the space cautioned it is not “one size fits all.”** In Arts, a certain number of seats are reserved for out-of-program. In Haskayne, courses are reserved for out-of-program (e.g., marketing). It is also possible to add a section exclusively for out-of-program. This was seen as very good and very popular with students, but the devil would be in the details. Some noted that this is, in practice, already happening and the real challenge was there were not enough seats additional to those needed for the program. From a student advisor: “I think thought it’s a really good idea and it’s something students are always looking for.”
- › **There was significant skepticism the university would be able to follow through on this strategy.** Though, people would be over the moon if we did, and many agreed it would help us stand apart as a university.

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## Miscellaneous

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- › Some ideas that came through that do not necessarily fit in one category:
  - › **Address the need to retain staff.** This came up in terms of supports for permanent staff and making employment less tenuous. Both sessionals and temporary staff talked about the challenges with employment being doled out in months or years, and the need to create a sustainable workplace for all participants.
  - › **Provide more support for professional development — particularly out-of-province professional development.** To augment the “shared core” for staff, get UCalgary staff out at conferences everywhere, finding skills and bringing them back more aggressively.
  - › **If we really want to be a different university, we need to consider who we’re admitting.** Non-conventional students such as those who are strong in one area and weak in others, those who are curious but easily distracted, those who are community minded rather than academically minded, are going to be increasingly left out of a grade-focused university.
  - › **If we really want to take a new approach to our work, that means letting go of some of the work we used to do.** We need to aggressively do fewer things to focus on our new priorities.
- › A few participants noted the absence of technology in general and AI during a moment of significant change. Some expressed a sense the plan might feel quaint without these components.
- › “We’re so earnest in this plan. Is there any fun? **Where’s the stuff about the University of Calgary being a great experience?** The memories that you will build that you will take with you. The connections you make that will last forever. Wanting to come to work every day. Wanting to come to school every day.”

## WHAT WE'VE HEARD TO DATE | INDIGENOUS COMMUNITY CONSULTATION

Consultation with internal and external communities has included conversations with Indigenous scholars and Elders about the goals, values and strategies of the University of Calgary, Indigenous engagement with the University of Calgary, and how we can consider our work towards reconciliation as we develop our Strategic Plan.

### Methodology

The University of Calgary's Indigenous Strategy, *ii' taa'poh'to'p*, outlines an approach to Indigenous engagement that allows us to move "together in a good way."

Within *ii' taa'poh'to'p*, a conceptual model, developed in consultation with Indigenous communities, that articulates key focus areas that govern the university's approach, known as visionary circles, is outlined. Under the "Ways of Being" visionary circle, an approach to community engagement is articulated:

***An openness and active support of community relationships and engagement reflects a commitment to reconciliation, and confidence in the University of Calgary's evolving identity. This engagement will be characterized by ongoing dialogue, reciprocal learning and mutual respect and recognition for existing protocols and traditions in campus and Indigenous communities.***

*ii' taa'poh'to'p* (p. 28) - Transforming Ways of Being - Community Engagement

Accordingly, a parallel-path consultation process that reflects traditional ways of knowing, doing, connecting and being has been run under the guidance of the Office of Indigenous Engagement that makes use of both textual and non-textual knowledge-transfer. This consultation is not an event, but a process that is marked by ongoing dialogue.

### Results To Date

The collecting of workshop feedback into major themes is an ultimately subjective exercise and the translation of oral feedback into a written summary will inevitably lose much of the richness of dialogue. But, upon review of facilitator notes, the following themes have been identified from Indigenous community consultations:

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**There is pride in the progress we've made and what we have achieved over the last 5-10 years — but agreement there is still much work to do.**

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The University of Calgary is seen as more inclusive and more accepting than ever before — with better supports for Indigenous students — but discrimination and racism still exist and there is a need for more supports and more cultural change. We can't take our progress for granted and must be mindful that resource constraints, if not addressed, have the ability to push us backwards.

#### › Quotes:

- › "The water is full of waves. Navigating this requires respect of knowledge and traditions. It also requires the proper number of [Indigenous] scholars to meet the needs. And all of that requires funding!"
- › "It is great to see numbers of Indigenous graduates increasing. We still have the same academic rigour, and our students are very successful ... but we are not just pumping out numbers for the sake of pumping out numbers and we need to come back to human interest. How we measure positive impact in our learning communities is so important."
- › "A statement of the university's commitment to reconciliation will be important in a new strategic plan."
- › "We haven't done enough yet to ensure our Indigenous students are supported to reach their goals."



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## **Indigenous ways of knowing and being need to be honoured in everything we do.**

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In particular, the concept of ethical spaces should be used more prominently by 2030, and we need to consider the place and effect of language. Indigenous languages should be embraced by the University of Calgary. The university should remember that many issues that have become major societal challenges have been addressed by Indigenous communities for generations, and there is much that can be learned from their approach.

### **› Quotes:**

- › “We call it innovation, being aware of climate change — but it’s a very Indigenous concept. One Health is not a new concept — it’s a very Indigenous concept.”
- › “The language used in competitive strategies — the best and brightest, most intensive. It is not always intuitive to me. I prefer more of a collective, non-competitive approach. What is best for our community? What supports wellness?”
- › “If the university wanted to do something quite remarkable — why not create a lab where people are speaking Indigenous languages to discuss natural phenomena? How would that look different?”
- › “We need to make Indigenous languages more important in everything we do.”
- › “I want to see different ways of knowing be more accepted — what if you didn’t have to write a paper, but could present in a different format?”

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## **It is not just about removing barriers to come to the university — it is also about removing barriers to staying.**

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The University of Calgary needs to be a safe and welcoming environment that considers representation in our scholars and support staff. The university should also make investments in dedicated Indigenous people’s buildings and spaces to support the building of community and act as labs for Indigenous knowledge.

### **› Quotes:**

- › “We need more places dedicated to Indigenous ceremony.”
- › “Some Indigenous students leave because they do not feel safe. Some leave because they feel lonely. We want a safe environment and a welcoming environment.”
- › “Consider cultural camps — safe places to build encouragement, strength and commitment to what a young person is trying to achieve. Some students come from far away to go to school: build community for them, help and encourage them.”

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## **We need to be thinking about place and opportunities to bring Indigenous culture into everything we do at the University of Calgary.**

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Examples included welcoming ceremonies, cultural camps, expanded use of smudging, the feather tradition continuing at graduation and encouraging the use of Indigenous languages.

### **› Quotes:**

- › “We sometimes forget that we are a university on this land. As we look to walk a better path, we are not going to be the same as UBC or McGill.”
- › “Look at representation of Indigenous scholars and staff in all levels of administration at the university, in all faculties of the university.”
- › “The capital plan needs to consider the built environment — think about how we can create Indigenous-friendly spaces and set aside resources for Indigenous capital projects.”

## WHAT WE HEARD | EXTERNAL CONSULTATION

Consultation with the external community involved engagement with 279 individuals representing alumni, volunteers, industry partners, non-profit partners, governments, community groups, donors and other stakeholders. Consultations with external stakeholders began in November 2022, with most of the external consultation activity occurring over March and April 2023. Feedback was also solicited through an online survey on goals, actions and ways the university could stand out. 1,774 external community members completed this survey.

### Methodology

The University of Calgary Office of Advancement co-ordinated with faculties and units across the university to identify current external stakeholders. These lists were then expanded to include additional groups of significance within the city that the university wanted to receive feedback from including prospective partners, those who had declined to partner with the University of Calgary and others. The Strategic Planning Oversight Committee then recommended further additions to those lists.

External consultation occurred through 15 small-group meetings and nine one-on-one interviews. Communities and community members were asked their views on the University of Calgary's goals, the university's role in the community and how the university can support their aspirations. The Office of Advancement organized external stakeholders into one or more affiliation groups:

- › Alumni
- › International
- › Donors/industry leaders
- › Government
- › Community partners
- › Engaged volunteers

In addition to convening meetings, the Office of Advancement identified opportunities to bring consultation to existing meetings and fora, such as the Council on Innovation and Entrepreneurial Leadership (CIEL), Calgary Economic Development (CED), and Alberta Children's Hospital Foundation. Individuals and groups who were invited to attend meetings or small-group interviews that could not attend were encouraged to complete a short online survey to provide their thoughts. Through the Alumni Newsletter, alumni were also encouraged to provide their thoughts on the same.

### Results

The following themes emerged from community conversations:

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**There is a lot of community pride in the University of Calgary and what our students, faculty and staff have accomplished.**

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Participating community members felt we were doing many things right and that we were beginning to get recognized nationally and internationally for our accomplishments. They want us to "keep it up."

#### › Quotes:

- › "It's really exciting what you've achieved over the past ten years."
- › "The University of Calgary is at an exciting, inspiring crossroads."
- › "[You should] define the future of what a university looks like."
- › "Being number one in startup creation for a second year in a row is a big point of pride."
- › "You're young. You're not encumbered by bureaucracies and structures that exist in other Canadian, U.S. and European universities."
- › "The University of Calgary is doing well, but the world is catching up... the university needs to do more and move faster."

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## **The community wants us to be bold and focus on impact, rather than rankings.**

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Participating community members saw the university as an organization with a lot of strength and encouraged us to think less about rankings and more about how we use that strength to positively change the world around us. Participants generally want us to focus on the areas where we are strong and have potential for transformational growth, and not get distracted trying to do everything.

› **Quotes:**

- › “Calgary no longer measures itself solely in the Canadian context and neither should the University of Calgary. Even on international standards, we measure up well. It’s not just global rankings we should have our eyes on, it’s other metrics, too.”
- › “Be bold in setting the strategic vision [for the university]. Set transformational goals. Bring people at least a little bit out of their comfort zone.”
- › “Calgary’s problem is that we always seem to need to wait for other people to tell us we’re good. We’ve proved that now.”
- › “Calgary has never tried to play the same game as other cities. We’re different – unique – and we should leverage that. We need to be bold and think global.”

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## **The idea of the University of Calgary as a place of “entrepreneurial thinking” is well-understood and appreciated by our partners.**

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Support for the university “doubling down” on entrepreneurial thinking came up in every session held with participating community members. Partners believe this is a “competitive opportunity for the university” and something that distinguishes it from other universities and other public-sector organizations with which they partner. The university was encouraged to celebrate and incentivize “risk”, “non-linear paths” and “persistence.” These were seen as values shared by both the university and the city.

› **Quotes:**

- › “One thing we absolutely don’t want to lose is the momentum and excitement built around entrepreneurial thinking. It is a huge competitive opportunity for the university.”
- › “The University of Calgary has a ‘get it done attitude’.”
- › “CDL, Hunter Hub, and Innovate Calgary are all competitive differentiators [for the university and the city]. Keep growing these programs.”
- › “Youth today have different values and we need to understand how [they] think. [They’re] creators, disruptors and innovators and want to improve the world around [them]. Entrepreneurship is about taking the next step and making it happen. We need to speak that language.”
- › “Encourage people to fail early and fail forward.”
- › “As I see it, research = creativity = entrepreneurialism. Research universities that are producing critical thinkers are inherently entrepreneurial.”

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**They want us to move past “connecting with the community” to a place where we are actively partnering and “integrating with the community.”**

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Participants saw a “symbiotic relationship between the university and the city” that they wanted to push further and saw part of the brand of Calgary and the University of Calgary being support and connection — a collaborative culture where newcomers are welcomed and opportunities are generated.

The university was encouraged to “think about the different dimensions of community”: how the university extends into the community; how we bring people to the university (campus tours, walking trails, free parking, etc.); how we bring Calgary to the world; and how we bring the world to Calgary. The university was seen as having a particularly important role in generating excitement around the long-term prospects of our city and our province.

The university was also encouraged to think about how we serve different regions and groups in the city, and how we include groups that are currently underrepresented in deeper and more meaningful ways. At the same time, the university was encouraged not to lose its current connections or take for granted areas of current strength for Calgary and the university, such as the energy industry. We were encouraged to think about “volunteer at scale” — and how we mobilize our entire university to the betterment of the communities we serve. We were also encouraged to maintain engagement with those already involved — and not lose track of (or interest in) our volunteers who have completed roles.

Participants also saw enormous potential to grow partnerships between the university and community or industry groups though some participants also expressed challenges or frustrations when engaging with the university. Generally, our partners see us as easier to work with than other universities, but they want us to do more and move faster because, while faster than other universities, we often move slower than other groups with which they partner. Participants were excited by a potential future where scholars can share or make available for a fee their expertise.

› **Quotes:**

- › “Think about the different dimensions of community and how the university extends into the community.”
- › “There’s a coffee culture in Calgary. Everybody is willing to meet with anyone. And that doesn’t end at the university — it’s supported by the community, too. You won’t see that anywhere else — this is done in Calgary in a very special way.”
- › “The long-term prospects of our city used to be a competitive advantage. They still are, but the rhetoric in the province makes people think otherwise.”
- › “The University of Calgary should be the research centre for the city, not just for the university... companies are increasingly outsourcing their R&D and that’s a huge opportunity for you.”
- › “I’ve gone to five doors [with my partnership idea]. One was shut, four others welcomed me in but, after initial conversations, never got back to me. Frankly, I preferred the shut door. It feels like everybody I talked to was very willing, but I got the sense people aren’t sure what step two is.”
- › “Be a global leader in local connectivity.”

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## They want us help build an increased sense of alumni pride and connection.

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Alumni participants want us to foster more meaningful engagement between the university and its alumni, and in doing so build stronger connections and relationships. As the Calgary area has a massive number of alumni, this was also seen as a great opportunity to strengthen engagement with our local communities more generally.

The university was encouraged by these participants to support the creation of more alumni groups and include alumni in more university activities.

### › Quotes:

- › “How many words [about themselves] does someone have to rhyme off before they mention they’re a University of Calgary graduate? Too many.”
- › “A significant proportion of our alumni stay in the Calgary region – that can create challenges but can also be a hugely positive asset.”

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## Access to education is a big and growing concern.

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Many community participants expressed concerns that the university is getting too exclusive from the perspective of both cost and admission requirements. They saw higher education as “one of the great equalizers in society” and worried that the city’s population and the need for university education were both growing faster than the university’s capacity. This plus growing tuition fees, they feared, were making a University of Calgary education increasingly out of reach for large portions of the population. Many had personal stories about family members and friends with excellent grades who had expected to go to the University of Calgary and were surprised by having to go elsewhere for an education. They felt an important part of being a community-focused university meant the university remained accessible to the community.

There were many suggestions that assessment at an “entrepreneurial university” go beyond grades, and that we be “willing to take a chance on people” and assess them as well through scenario-based interviews (similar to MMI interviews in medicine). Participants also emphasized the need for planning to meet demand in a way that sets the university up for success (“what will a UCalgary with 50,000 students look like?”) and is intentional about access, affordability and overall equity concerns.

### › Quotes:

- › “It shouldn’t matter where you came from. What matters is your talent, your ambition, and the impact you want to have on the world.”
- › “We are leaving too much great talent on the table.”
- › “[You face] reputational risk if you can’t meet demand and become increasingly inaccessible. Ask yourself if there is a ratio or mean admission average that you don’t want to pass.”
- › “What kind of financial supports can you create to help students who really need it?”
- › “If you are going to be a university with 50,000 students, what will the makeup of the student body be? Where will they learn? Where will they live? And what changes will you help them make in the world?”

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## Community participants want us to be at the forefront of innovation in teaching.

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The desire for a continuously evolving approach to learning was also articulated by community participants and was seen as a natural extension of being a young, nimble and entrepreneurial university.

As part of this approach, they encouraged an examination of modality, format, and timing of courses — and then making the necessary investments in infrastructure, facilities and technology to support the conclusions of that examination. Exploring demand for courses in the evenings and weekends was also encouraged.

Community participants stressed the importance of focusing on graduating well-rounded global citizens with skills for the future, such as critical thinking, leadership, resilience and people skills. They saw this approach as increasing employability, as employers seek smart, thoughtful, interesting and creative individuals.

The value of a diversity of learning opportunities — and the value of “learning how to learn” — was also highlighted. Experiential learning opportunities (e.g., work-integrated learning, Hunter Hub programs) and interdisciplinary learning were seen as providing significant value. Community participants also encouraged the university to look at the world-class expertise within Calgary and consider whether the number of guest lectures should be increased.

They saw recruiting and retaining world-class academic staff as crucial. They wanted faculty members to continue to be given autonomy and space to be creative, nimble, and innovative. They felt entrepreneurial thinking and community activity should be incentivized.

Community participants also suggested ideas such as delayed specialization be, and that the university facilitate students being exposed to many subjects to allow them to discover their interests and strengths. They felt students should be able to switch programs without fear of losing a year’s worth of work and wanted the university to expedite and simplify foreign credentialing.

Finally, partners encouraged the university to more strongly consider creative business models and micro-credentialing. Some articulated the hope that more be done to positioning the institution as a leader in executive education and that the University of Calgary becomes the “professional development engine of Calgary.”

### › **Quotes:**

- › “[To meet the needs of future students, you’re] going to also have to get more creative about scheduling.”
- › “What makes people want to hire someone at the end of the day? If they’re smart, thoughtful, interesting and creative.”
- › “If you want entrepreneurial students that want to change the world, you need entrepreneurial faculty that want to change the world, and you should reward the faculty that are doing this.”
- › “Give young people time to sample many things, discover what they like and are good at, and help them find their lane. This would support their mental health too.”
- › “What if we were the leader in executive education and we could stop sending everyone in Calgary to Harvard or Stanford?”
- › “[In the realm of teaching and learning,] don’t be afraid to shake things up.”

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## **They want us to support an exceptional student experience.**

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Participants — many of which were once UCalgary students themselves — also emphasized the importance of the student experience at UCalgary. They saw a strong sense of belonging and the generation of opportunities as two critical factors that they would like to see the university support.

To enhance the student experience, the community suggests investments in building both physical and virtual community. This could include improving digital student experiences (to meet today's expectations for seamless online support) and high-quality social spaces and facilities. Foundational mental health and resilience training for students was also proposed.

Participants felt it crucial to support non-conventional students and international students. These students bring a global perspective and contribute to the local economy and retaining them in the Calgary region after graduation should be a priority. More support should be provided to achieve this.

Suggestions were also made that exceptional student experience includes more support systems that show students their learning paths and progression options. This could include expanding mentorship programs for first-year students, pairing them with second- or third-year students, as well as offering opportunities for first- and second-year students to connect with recent graduates. Exposure to successful role models was seen as something that can make a significant difference, as "you can't be what you can't see."

### **› Quotes:**

- › "Students only spend 25% of their time on campus in class. Give them a social and cultural environment for the other 75% of the time."
- › "Look at how [you] provide an excellent digital student experience for students ... this is the tech savvy generation that grew up with iPhones and they'll get frustrated by clumsy online supports."
- › "International students bring major benefits to the economy and to prosperity, particularly if the city or province can retain them. Any time an international student graduates and leaves, it's a clear failure. We need to offer more supports to keep them in the Calgary region."

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## **Invest in a world-class research ecosystem and take on global challenges.**

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Community participants emphasize the importance of university research in tackling global challenges. They believe that the university's ability to bring researchers, students and communities together from across fields sets it apart and could allow it to address grand challenges like homelessness, food security and an aging population. They suggest rallying the whole university behind a single mission of this nature could be transformational and would speak to a values-driven population.

Participants also advocate for supporting more knowledge translation and collaboration. They suggest expanding the visiting scholars program and investing in world-class facilities, technology and shared resources across faculties. Some partners encouraged the streamlining of intellectual property (IP) and tech-transfer processes, as they viewed the current turnaround for IP transfer and agreements as too lengthy, hindering effective partnerships and company creation.

### **› Quotes:**

- › “[I believe] students are value driven and want purpose. If they knew they could work on these grand challenges if they enrol at UCalgary, this would resonate in a big way.”
- › “Pick areas where you say you are going to lead the world and invest in them so that you do. This isn't about winners and losers – high tides rise all boats and it's a simple reality that you can't lead the world in everything.”
- › “Support academic voices and support academics in knowing how to be relatable when speaking to the community. What they have to say is so important and we need to ensure it can be understood.”
- › “The next big generational opportunity for the university is to position itself as a global university.”
- › “The University of Calgary has the power to elevate Calgary and Alberta to greatness on the global stage.”

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## **They want us to invest in world-class facilities and technology.**

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The university's facilities were seen as serving its teaching and learning mission, its research mission, and the communities we serve. Participants encouraged the university to look at placing some of these facilities in other parts of Calgary (such as downtown). Technology was seen as increasingly important, underpinning the university's digital (or virtual) presence.

### **› Quotes:**

- › “You need to invest in world-class facilities. This goes a long way in attracting world-class talent.”
- › “The Olympic Oval and other infrastructure in Kinesiology shows what you can do – the training that becomes possible and the research that becomes possible. They also weave the university into the community.”
- › “You need to continue to invest. [You have faced budget reductions, but] scarcity drives innovation. Use this as your opportunity to innovate.”
- › “There's an enormous opportunity here [with a downtown campus]. It would naturally have connection to industry. It adds needed capacity. It frees up space on your other campuses. And it creates vibrancy downtown and supports the local economy.”
- › “The best way to raise money ... is to captivate with a bold, compelling vision and that needs to be a consideration in building your strategic plan.”



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**They want us to use our “power to convene” and role as an honest broker and a source of truth to help society through an “era of misinformation and mistrust.”**

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Because of the university’s role in fostering diversity of thought, debate and knowledge development, community participants see us as well suited to be the common ground from which society addresses the problem of polarization. The university was also seen as having a role in developing the skills needed to break out of the “confirmation bias machine” such as critical thinking.

› **Quotes:**

- › “The University is a source of reliable and trustworthy information and resources. This is increasingly critical in society and it is needed to break through the echo chambers.”
- › “The University could become an anti-polarization machine.”
- › “All voices need a space on campus.”
- › “Be the source of guidance for the complex issues our community is dealing with.”
- › “Have the strength to withstand criticism and avoid just following loud – but in the minority – viewpoints.”

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**They feel we need to do more to tell our story.**

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Partners feel that, as part of our maturation and elevation as a university, we need to focus more on growing our reputation through advertising, third-party storytelling and community outreach.

› **Quotes:**

- › “I had no idea the trajectory the university’s been on ... [you] need to do a better job getting our message out and creating third party ambassadors to tell your story.”
- › “Success attracts funding, so it’s critical that you find a better way to advertise the remarkable trajectory the university is on – particularly given the current fiscal environment.”
- › “Articulate why [great cities need great universities] in the next strategic plan. Talk about how they drive economic prosperity – not just economic recovery.”
- › “Reputation is built through relationships. Yes, you need direct spend, but it’s also about creating third-party ambassadors. Get other people talking about you. Leverage relationships already built. Create a buzz!”
- › “Get the word out!”

In addition to more open-ended conversations on the university’s goals and strategies, participants at some external consultations were also asked specifically about their reaction to initiatives within the first draft of the strategic plan. The initiatives that generated the most external community excitement were:

- › Growing enrolment — including graduate education enrolment — to meet demand
- › Transdisciplinary scholarship that tackles grand challenges in collaboration with the community
- › First-in-family scholarships
- › Common core courses on entrepreneurial thinking and research skills
- › Experiential learning
- › Micro-credentials
- › Incentivizing student contributions and volunteerism in community

## WHAT WE HEARD | PRIORITIES AND “QUICK WINS”

In each consultation — from short survey to long workshop — we also asked participants to identify areas of priority and potential “quick wins.” This served the dual purpose of grounding our aspirational conversation in the here and now (it helped identify paths and barriers) and gathering ideas we might not otherwise hear that could immediately improve quality of life at the University of Calgary.

Many thousands of ideas were provided by our communities and these ideas ranged from the very grand (focus the entire university’s efforts on a single issue) to the very modest (increasing availability of hot water across campus). In addition to reviewing them to support the development of the Strategic Plan, the Strategic Planning Working Group will also be sharing them, anonymized, with the responsible faculties and units for consideration and action.

From the responses provided, several themes emerged additional to those directly noted above: investing in IT, taking on the role of climate leadership, and being more responsive to student, faculty and staff concerns and feedback. People also, generally, encouraged doing fewer things and doing them really well. Many comments were also received in early workshops about the need for clarity on hybrid work. Since those comments have been received, hybrid work guidelines have been released by University of Calgary Human Resources.

The following ideas came up with more frequency and/or evoked strong affirmative response from workshop sessions. They are presented for interest, with no commentary on feasibility, appropriateness or universality of support:

- › Make it easier to register in courses outside of your home faculty.
- › Explore expanding UPass to faculty and staff.
- › Explore ways we can engage more local contractors and buy more of our supplies locally.
- › Have access buttons added to every door on campus.
- › Incorporate Indigenous languages into signage across campus.
- › Create a repository of all the initiatives underway across the university, so we spend less time reinventing the wheel.
- › Make greater use of guest lecturers to increase relevance of content, stay on top of trends in industry and non-profit sectors.
- › Increase the minimum graduate student stipend.
- › Make parking free on evenings and weekends.
- › Increase focus on first impressions of our campus and prioritize aesthetic upgrades to the buildings most often seen by the public, such as the Kinesiology complex.
- › Hire sessional instructors for longer than one year at a time to allow accessibility of grants and allow sessional instructors to invest more time into the production of teaching materials.
- › Recreate a faculty club on campus or in the University District.
- › Expand the use of “pass/fail” and “met/not yet” for first-year courses to allow students to orient themselves and focus on learning outcomes.
- › Build a dedicated Indigenous building on campus to demonstrate our commitment to Indigenous engagement.
- › Reduce reliance on government funding through alternative revenue sources.
- › Have the university administration backstop gaps in soft money to allow the university to be an employer of choice and to keep the human capital investment made in support staff hired with soft money.
- › Create a more diverse sense of what is success and celebrate attempts, unconventional wins.

## **A NOTE OF THANKS | FROM THE STRATEGIC PLANNING WORKING GROUP**

Over the past few months, we have had the privilege of listening to many of you share your thoughts, concerns, hopes and aspirations for our university. We are deeply grateful for your honesty, candor and passion. You have given us a wealth of insights and perspectives that will inform our strategic direction and priorities.

We heard you say you want a university that is innovative, inclusive, impactful and inspiring. A university that is recognized internationally for its research excellence, while being responsive to the needs of our local community. A university that provides a great student experience, while enabling world-class research. A university that embraces an increasingly large and diverse student body, while creating a supportive environment for international students and immigrants.

We also heard you express your challenges: you face unprecedented budget cuts, which force you to do more with less. You struggle with COVID-19 weariness after 2-3 years of pandemic life, which disrupts your work, learning and personal lives. Many of us experience stress, fatigue, anxiety and uncertainty.

And we heard you celebrate your achievements: you have adapted to new ways of teaching, learning and researching. You have supported each other and our community through various initiatives. You have continued to pursue excellence in everything you do.

We hope that you feel reflected in this report, and that it shows an understanding of the challenges you face, the sacrifices you make and the successes you enjoy.

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**Questions about this report's conclusions or methodology? Email [future@ucalgary.ca](mailto:future@ucalgary.ca) and we will be happy to answer as best we can.**

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