

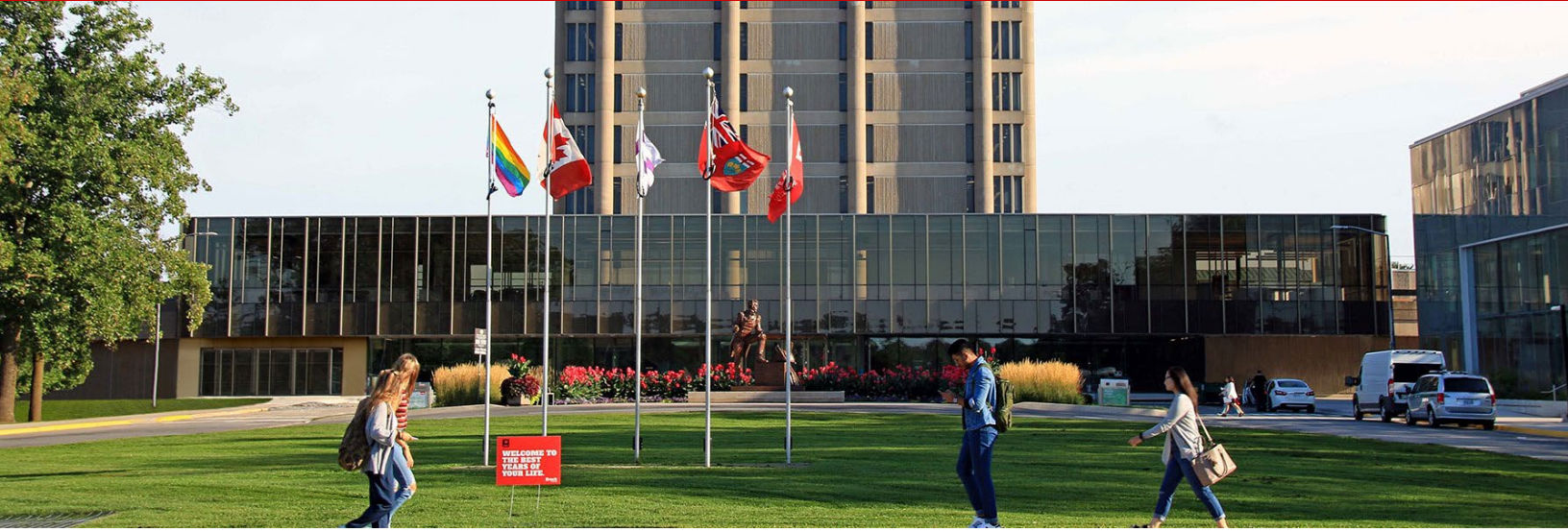
**BROCK  
LINC**

Brock University

# Brock LINC

## Strategic Plan 2022-2025





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## INTRODUCTION

Brock University reached an important milestone in 2020 with the official grand opening of the Brock LINC. Located in the Rankin Family Pavilion, the university's new entrance to campus, the Brock LINC plays an important role in welcoming students, faculty, staff and visitors to the university.

The physical space and presence of the Brock LINC places creativity, innovation, research, and entrepreneurship at the centre of the Brock University experience.

Brock University's strategic plan highlights four strategic priorities

- Offering a transformational and accessible academic and university experience;
- Building research capacity across the University;
- Enhancing the life and vitality of our local region and beyond; and
- Fostering a culture of inclusivity, accessibility, reconciliation and decolonization

Two of these priorities include specific goals and activities identified for the Brock LINC

- Goal: Invest in research infrastructure and support to ensure sustainable and accessible research services for the Brock scholarly community.
  - Action: Integrate research and experiential education, in part by developing Brock LINC's capacity to enhance student innovation, entrepreneurship, research and commercialization.
- Goal: Support regional economic, social and cultural vitality
  - Action: Support entrepreneurship, commercialization and innovation by:
    - Encouraging entrepreneurial-minded students, faculty and community members to start businesses by providing knowledge, resources and space through Brock LINC programming;
    - Fostering creativity and curiosity through engagement with technology and new digital methods through Brock's Makerspace and Digital Scholarship Lab;
    - Increasing the volume, diversity and impact of commercialized IP and innovation.

The strategic priorities of the Brock LINC address these specific call outs, but also aim to address the priorities of a transformational and accessible university experience, and an inclusive and accessible culture. This document aims to establish the foundation of work for the first few years of the Brock LINC, and to revisit the strategic priorities when the university completes its next strategic planning exercise in 2025.

# BROCK UNIVERSITY GUIDING VALUES AND STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

## GUIDING VALUES AND STRATEGIC PRIORITIES<sup>1</sup>



<sup>1</sup>The colours in the graphic include Brock's brand standards and those from the Indigenous Medicine Wheel, the Pride Flag and the Dish with One Spoon Wampum Agreement Flag.

## BACKGROUND

The Brock LINC is the university's centre for creativity, innovation, research, and entrepreneurship. It is housed in the Rankin Family Pavilion, a 41,000 square foot facility which is dedicated to supporting creative exploration and ideation, and features open spaces for student gathering, studying and events. The spaces in the Rankin Family Pavilion span two floors, Level 200 and Level 300.

**Level 200** spaces are themed around creative exploration, and providing people the opportunity to play, experiment and tinker.

- The Atrium is intended to be a creative playground, with games, interactive experiences, art, music and wellness events that welcome people into this open and collaborative space.
- The Makerspace fosters creative inquiry and exploration through making. The space is open to students and community members to experiment with new technologies such as 3D printers, laser cutters, Cricut machines, specialized software, and audio and video production facilities.
- The Digital Scholarship Lab helps students and researchers discover new and emerging digital research methods and tools, especially as they are related to data and visual tools. People can learn about computer programming languages, data management tools, high performance computing, and a variety of digital platforms with the workshops provided here.



**Level 300** spaces are themed around helping creative ideas come to life and supporting research and innovation projects with community and industry partners.

- The Ready Space provides open study and workspace for students and community members and includes a separate kitchenette and eating space that is available for public use.
- The Sett Space the home for student entrepreneurship on campus and includes space for the Kickstarting Entrepreneurship program and for Entrepreneurship Co-op students.

- The Grow Space is dedicated space for our community startup incubation program, the LINCubator, which is an 8-month intensive program designed to help early-stage businesses grow.
- The R3 Wine Consumer Lab is the first lab of its kind in the world, dedicated to using three “R’s” or realities – virtual reality (VR), augmented reality (AR) and physical reality (PR) – to address wine consumer behaviour questions.

The structure of the Brock LINC is unique. It is an independent administrative department that reports into the Office of the Vice President Research, and also houses programs and services in partnership with other departments on campus as shared activities.

The Brock LINC currently works with the following partners on shared activities and spaces:

- The Library’s Makerspace and Digital Scholarship Lab
- The Cool Climate Oenology and Viticulture Institute’s R3 Wine Consumer Lab
- Goodman Group’s Venture Development programs

While the Brock LINC acts as a central point of access for creativity, innovation, research and entrepreneurship at the university, it does not own these concepts; instead, it aims to cultivate their prevalence throughout the university and in the community through collaboration. At its core, the Brock LINC supports collaboration and partnerships internal and external to the university.

## CONSULTATION PROCESS

The Brock LINC Strategic Plan was developed in two phases. From January to May 2020, the Brock LINC consulted with a range of stakeholders, and developed early recommendations to inform the first phase of planning. This was revisited from June 2021 to January 2022 to account for adaptations with COVID-19, and the natural evolution of a new organization on campus.

The Brock LINC Strategic Plan is the product of broad consultation and interviews with faculty, staff, students, alumni and community and industry partners. It also compared Brock’s efforts with universities across Canada to identify norms and best practices to help identify what the University was doing well and opportunities for improvement.

## MISSION, VISION, & GUIDING PRINCIPLES

### Mission

The Brock LINC is the university's centre for creativity, innovation, research, and entrepreneurship. We aim to create spaces, programs and resources for students, researchers, and community members to explore creative concepts, new technology, and ultimately bring creative ideas to life.

### Vision

To inspire and accelerate new ideas, innovations and ventures that improve social, cultural or economic impacts at Brock University, in Niagara, and around the world.

### Guiding Principles

The Brock LINC's activities support key pillars of creativity, innovation, research, and entrepreneurship. The LINC acronym outlines our guiding principles and how we support people on the innovation journey.

<b>Learn</b>	Learning at the Brock LINC is intended to be an active and engaging pursuit that promotes new ideas, new ways of thinking, new skills, and offers opportunities for participants to develop their creative thinking and problem-solving abilities.
<b>Ideate</b>	Everything starts with an idea, and the Brock LINC supports all forms of ideation, innovation and discovery with an open mind, healthy curiosity, probing questions, and the goal to make meaningful impact.
<b>Navigate</b>	The creative or innovative path is often bumpy, winding and unclear. The Brock LINC helps students, researchers and community members navigate some of that ambiguity and uncertainty with programs, resources and one-on-one coaching to help develop a plan.
<b>Collaborate</b>	Great ideas are rarely developed in isolation, and the Brock LINC is committed to cultivating creative collaboration and including diverse perspectives. We connect people together and provide spaces and opportunities for people to meet and to help each other grow.

## STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

### Strategic Priority 1

Foster a culture of creativity and innovation at Brock University

The foundation of Brock LINC activity is centered on integrating creativity and innovation concepts into the fabric of Brock University experiences. Brock LINC fosters a culture that:

- Promotes curiosity and asking questions
- Encourages creative play, experimentation, and exploring new technologies
- Is comfortable with failing, iterating, and trying again
- Supports mental health and wellness as a means to develop creative thinking
- Supports new ideas, innovations and ventures with social, cultural or economic impacts

We aim to foster this culture with targeted activities and partnerships on campus that are focused on providing opportunities for creative ideation and learning.

#### Goals

Enhance the university's reputation for creativity, innovation, research, and entrepreneurship.

Develop partnerships and collaborative projects across campus that embed our core pillars of creativity, innovation, research, and entrepreneurship.

Integrate creativity and innovation experiences in university curriculum in partnership with academic faculties and departments

Shape the creativity and innovation narrative at Brock with stories of the students, researchers, community members and industry partners who are emerging in their fields.

Ensure Brock LINC events and experiences reflect University priorities on inclusivity, accessibility, reconciliation and decolonization.

#### Activities

Utilize our spaces – both physical in the Rankin Family Pavilion, and online – for engaging, inspiring, and thought-provoking events, programs, resources and experiences that develop learned skills around creativity, innovation and technology topics.

Embed creativity and innovation experiences in programs and events that are produced in collaboration with other campus units including Recruitment, Student Experience, International Office, Co-op, Career & Experiential Education, Alumni Relations, and others.

Partner with academic faculties and departments to integrate Brock LINC resources on technology, research, creativity, innovation or entrepreneurship into curricular contexts.

Work with Brock Marketing & Communications to develop marketing and communication support for creativity and innovation stories.



## Strategic Priority 2

Grow innovation and entrepreneurship on campus and in the community

The Brock LINC's second strategic priority moves from ideation to mobilization, and aims to increase the tangible social, cultural, and economic impacts from Brock affiliated ideas, initiatives, and innovations.

A key function of the Brock LINC is to facilitate collaboration and innovation across the university and in the community to achieve these goals. Programs and resources are designed with a vision to generate new ideas and accelerate opportunities for impact.

### Goals

Establish entrepreneurship programs and resources that support ideation and early-stage incubation for students, researchers, and community members.

Link more Co-op, Career & Experiential Learning opportunities to startups in Brock LINC programs and entrepreneurs in the community.

Increase the number of community members engaging the Brock LINC for support across programs and resources.

Support innovation projects on campus and in the community, with a focus on developing new collaborative partnerships and strengthening existing relationships with partners in the community and wider innovation ecosystem.

Support efforts to enhance and improve research commercialization activities on campus.

### Activities

Develop a mix of cohort-based programs and online or standalone resources to support entrepreneurial initiatives.

Work with Co-op, Career & Experiential Education to increase engagement with entrepreneurship co-ops, co-op placements with startups, experiential education projects with startups, and graduate career hires with startups.

Develop community outreach and marketing initiatives to increase individual engagement with programs and resources.

Work with internal partners to facilitate industry connections and research partnerships at the university.

Work with internal partners to encourage researchers to explore commercialization through entrepreneurship.

### Strategic Priority 3

Support research innovation and capacity at the university

The third strategic priority for the Brock LINC is to support research innovation and capacity at the university, with support for digital tools, digital knowledge mobilization, and research skill development through training and professional development opportunities.

#### Goals

Increase researchers' use of digital tools and technology for research development and dissemination.

Build awareness of Brock as a centre for innovative research and research excellence.

Improve Brock's research capacity with training and professional development opportunities for researchers.

#### Activities

Support and promote the use of digital tools and technology for researchers on campus.

Make research at Brock more visible and accessible by strengthening research dissemination through digital channels.

Work with Brock Marketing & Communications to further define Brock's research brand, areas of expertise and differentiation.

Facilitate collaboration with researchers and other partners across the university to mobilize the research insights and innovations developed at Brock.

Identify professional development, training or credentialing opportunities for researchers to improve research skills, capacity and output.

## CONCLUSION

The Brock LINC Strategic Plan provides a foundation that defines the mission, vision, and guiding principles of the Brock LINC, and aligns our work with the strategic priorities of the University. This plan consists of three strategic priorities that will frame the work of the Brock LINC as we plan for the future. The Brock LINC Strategic Plan will guide our work and be the basis for annual goal setting, reporting, and assessment activities.