

A Letter From the President

Brock University is rooted in Niagara, Ontario and pursues a global reach through its leadership in experiential education and work-integrated learning; research, scholarly and creative activities; and support for the vibrancy of communities.

Established in 1964, the University today supports the educational and career aspirations of 19,000 students through the efforts of dedicated scholars and staff members across six academic Faculties and numerous administrative units. It offers 150 undergraduate and graduate degrees, is home to 13 Canada Research Chairs and among Ontario's top 5 universities for 3M Awards for Teaching Excellence.

While attracting students and scholars from every continent, the University also sends students, faculty and staff into partnerships and initiatives around the world. At home, Brock contributes approximately \$640-million in annual economic activity to the local region, and has a responsibility to help generate the talent, innovation and network capital to advance community progress and household prosperity.

To help Brock move with certainty into the future, we have a new Institutional Strategic Plan. Titled "Brock University: Niagara Roots – Global Reach", it spans the period 2018 to 2025, including our milestone 60th anniversary in 2024. The Plan was developed through consultation with hundreds of participants from across the University and neighbouring communities, and supported by a comprehensive environmental scan to identify priorities and factors requiring attention. These efforts led to four key strategic priorities being identified in the Plan, namely:

- 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.

The realization of these priorities will result in enhancements in student experience; research, scholarly and creative activities; and community engagement. With enrolment expected to surpass 21,000 by 2025, we are planning for greater graduate academic programming and research activities; increased Indigenous student recruitment and retention; and a higher proportion of international students.

Brock will continue to nurture its excellence in teaching and learning, including co-op and experiential education, as well as flexible and accessible part-time, continuing or professional education. We will continue to advance contributions to regional community and economic development, and maintain research capacity as a leading comprehensive university at the national and international level.

The Strategic Plan speaks to a future that will be defined by the engagement and participation of our students, staff or faculty members, alumni, donors, community or institutional partners. Our Strategic Plan informs and motivates our shared efforts and outcomes. As you read it, we hope you will be inspired to find opportunities to support Brock's strategic priorities and partner in its vision.



Sincerely,
Dr. Gervan Fearon
President and Vice-Chancellor



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1.0 Introduction

Since it opened in 1964, Brock University has overcome growing pains and challenges to become a vibrant institution of more than 19,000 students, with rich academic programs and world-class research. As it was half a century ago, Brock remains a proud partner committed to improving the vitality of neighbouring communities across Niagara even as it extends its global reach.

Today, Brock offers 150 undergraduate and graduate degrees through six academic Faculties, is home to 13 Canada Research Chairs and among Ontario's top 5 universities for 3M Awards for Teaching Excellence.

Brock University is also ranked as one of the best universities in Canada for student satisfaction, and a leader in career success and experiential learning. Two years after graduation, the employment rate for Brock grads is higher than the average for Ontario universities.

As we look to the future, the Brock University Institutional Strategic Plan is intended to help Brock maintain balanced excellence and keep it on a trajectory to become the university of choice for a growing number of students and academics.

The Institutional Strategic Plan describes Brock University's history and its current environment, including challenges and opportunities that this entails. The University's mission, vision and guiding values are outlined, as well as four strategic priorities, each with goals and actions, to be achieved over the next seven years. These will inform the specific tactics and objectives being developed by academic and administrative units. The realization of the strategic priorities will advance Brock as a comprehensive university that offers a transformational and accessible academic and university experience; fosters a culture of inclusivity, accessibility, reconciliation and decolonization; enhances the life and vitality of our local region and beyond; and further builds the University's research capacity.



2.0

Brock yesterday and today: 1964-2018

Brock University began in 1964 as a small undergraduate institution with 142 students attending classes in a church basement and then at a former manufacturing site. It is now a comprehensive post-secondary institution with more than 19,000 students. This diverse population of learners is enrolled in almost 100 undergraduate programs, 50 graduate programs and extensive research activities across six academic faculties on three campuses. Over its 54-year history, Brock has maintained its deep roots in the Niagara communities whose energy and generosity made the University's success possible. Moreover, Brock will increasingly serve as a conduit that brings the world to Niagara, and encourages our students, faculty and staff to reach out globally.

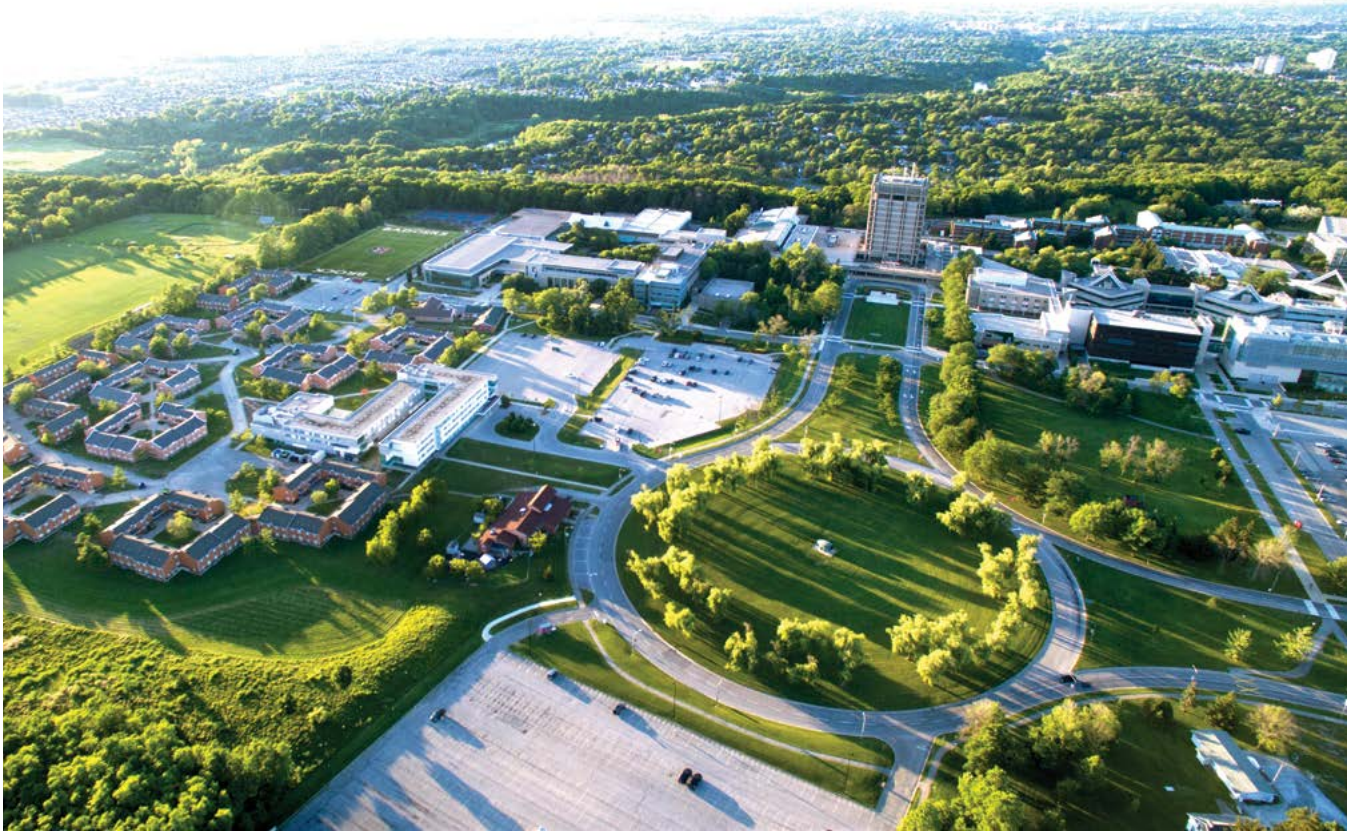
In 2018, Brock celebrated its 100,000th graduate, a milestone reflecting the transformation that has taken place in the institution since its inception. This strategic plan aims to honour this prolific history by having a bold and optimistic view of the University's future possibilities and its capacity to enhance the quality of post-secondary education in Niagara, Ontario, Canada and the world. Brock's future success is grounded in meeting students' needs; supporting faculty and staff achievements; advancing regional community social, cultural and economic development; and promoting global citizenship and social progress.

The University's rich and complex history is marked by two major phases. For its first three decades, Brock was primarily an undergraduate institution. The late 1990s and early 2000s witnessed two major changes: the University's decision to move to comprehensive status, and the Ontario government's move to end Grade 13. The first decade of the new century saw a significant increase in full-time faculty hiring, a growing number of graduate programs and concomitant enlargement



of the graduate student body, and a rapid increase in undergraduate enrolment due to the double cohort. During this time, Brock was one of the fastest-growing universities in Ontario, and its burgeoning student body and research activities required additional space. Moreover, the University intensified its commitment to help surrounding communities transform in the wake of significant economic displacement. The opening of the Marilyn I. Walker School of Fine and Performing Arts in downtown St. Catharines, and the construction of the Cairns Family Health and Bioscience Research Complex on the main campus, were evidence of this commitment.

In the past 20 years, the Niagara region has experienced significant economic transformation, with the service, technology, administrative, education and health sectors coming to dominate employment opportunities in the region while the manufacturing sector receded. The University has, therefore, become an important partner in supporting economic growth and community vitality. The Marilyn I. Walker School of Fine and Performing Arts has been a catalyst for urban revitalization in Niagara, while Brock's Co-op education supports business growth through the enhanced access to skilled employees. Other forms of experiential learning and collaboration support local municipalities and social innovation, while research and creative activities of faculty and staff members address economic, social and cultural issues and strategies. The University has enthusiastically supported partnership efforts to attract investment and initiatives to the region, including the 2021 Canada Games.



Brock has always pursued academic excellence through respect for disciplinary-based scholarship, as well as programs of study and research that employ transdisciplinary pedagogy and methods of exploration and creativity to address issues and opportunities.

The University's first Strategic Mandate Agreement (2014-17) with the Ontario government formalized Brock's leadership and commitment to this approach. It also recognized Brock's leadership in student-focused teaching and high-impact learning practices, including an array of innovations in experiential learning.

The second Strategic Mandate Agreement (2017-20), approved by both Senate and the Board of Trustees, contains a series of commitments and metrics related to the Ontario government's five areas of differentiation: Student Experience; Innovation in Teaching and Learning Excellence; Access and Equity; Applied Research and Excellence Impact; and Innovation, Economic Development and Community Impact. It also expresses Brock's intention to increase our nationally recognized excellence in experiential education, our excellence in health-related research and programming that enhances labour market opportunities for our graduates. At the federal level, Tri-Council grants represent a

significant source of research funding that supports scholarly activities of faculty and staff members as well as research activities of Brock students. Provincial and federal programs for infrastructure and regional economic development have also assisted the University in constructing needed facilities. In addition, donors and partners such as alumni, local stakeholders and the Brock University Students' Union have complemented these efforts and helped to define the University.

We take pride in the history of Brock, and work to respect and build on the many accomplishments and contributions of faculty, staff, students, alumni, partners, donors and other members of the growing Brock community. We recognize that to honour this past we must move forward, considering the many challenges and opportunities that lie ahead. We are fortunate to be located on the traditional territory of the Haudenosaunee and Anishinaabe peoples and in a United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organizations (UNESCO) Biosphere Reserve on the Niagara Escarpment, a world-renowned destination. Such an advantage provides us with the platform to reach out to the world to share the knowledge and skills of our students, faculty and staff while we engage with and learn from local, national and global partners.

2.1 Environmental scan

A strategic plan is an opportunity for the Brock community, in collaboration with external partners and stakeholders, to map its future. Correspondingly, any plan must be developed with full awareness of all the circumstances that currently and may in the future determine the opportunities and challenges in the environment in which the University operates. These factors include the following:

- Demographic realities:** In recent years there has been a downward trend in the size of the population comprising traditional university students (18-24 year olds). The severity of this trend and the projections as to when it will stabilize or reverse vary across Ontario. The Ontario population is expected to grow by 30.2% or an average of 1.1% per year, between 2017 and 2041. The number of youth between the ages of 18 to 24 years is expected to increase by 12.3%, or 0.5% per year, during that same time period. The population growth for Ontario is forecast to be centred around the Greater Toronto Area (GTA). The GTA's current portion of the Ontario population is projected to increase from 48.3% in 2017 to 52.3% by 2041. This equates to an anticipated growth of almost 3 million people. It is the only region in Ontario expected to see an increase in its overall percentage of the population. While the total population of Central Ontario (which includes Niagara) is expected to grow by 27.2% between 2017 and 2041, its proportion of the provincial population is projected to decline from 21.4% in 2017 to 20.9% by 2041. Anticipated population growth in Niagara over that same time period is forecast to be 17.0%. This implies a decline from 3.2% to 2.9% of the provincial total by 2041. Similarly, Brock's share of total University enrolments has been slowly declining over the past 15 years from a high of 4.1% in 2005/06 to its current rate of 3.5%. This reflects the slow population growth in the Niagara region and the significant population growth rate in the GTA over the same period.

Further, Ontario's university attendance rate is at an all-time high and is not expected to increase in the future. That being said, it is estimated that 70 per cent of jobs being created will require post-secondary education. This could cause the college and/or university participation rates to increase.

Approximately 32 per cent of Ontarians (and 28.5 per cent of Canadians) between 25 and 65 have university degrees. In the Niagara region, this level is about 20.7 per cent. Correspondingly, enrolment levels are growing at a faster pace for graduate, part-time, certificate and professional development opportunities as opposed to more stagnant levels for undergraduate degrees. Brock must be attentive to these demographic developments as it charts its future course.

- Increased competition:** The demographic changes described above have led universities to compete for enrolments in addition to monies for research and other sources of public and private support. Although the Government of Ontario recently cancelled funding for three new campuses, all the universities involved said they are still looking to move forward with the planned campuses, albeit on an altered schedule and potentially with differing enrolment numbers. Plans for a new francophone university in Toronto are still active and the nine Aboriginal educational institutions in Ontario have been approved to move towards university status. Ontario universities also face stiff competition from institutions in other parts of Canada, especially the Atlantic provinces. Universities have increasingly looked to international markets to address enrolment challenges and enhance their national and international reputations. While this has been successful in many cases, competition from universities within Canada and globally is intensifying. The most common source nations for international students are rapidly increasing their own post-secondary capacity, and in turn attracting international students to their universities. Additionally, students' choices are driven by the academic and professional programs available at the University, future employment opportunities, students' experiences, institutional location and the University's reputation. At the same time, community colleges in Canada are increasing their applied undergraduate degree programs and applied research activities. These developments have motivated universities to adopt more graduate program offerings, and the growing percentage of the population with undergraduate degrees has moved in the same direction. As students explore and compare the features and qualities of colleges and universities,

the competitiveness of universities is defined by how well they differentiate themselves through undergraduate and graduate academic program offerings, research and creative activities, and student experience. Moreover, university rankings and media reporting increasingly influence parent and student impressions of institutional quality. In 2019, Brock's Maclean's ranking increased from 15th to 13th with top placements among comprehensive universities for student satisfaction. Brock must continue to strive to achieve provincial and national excellence through innovations and improvements to academic programs, intensified research and creative activities, and the student experience to be attractive to students from within the region, across the country or around the world.

- **Technological change:** The increased penetration of and dependence upon advanced information and communication technologies, and the growing digitization of day-to-day life, have significantly altered the context for post-secondary institutions. While the internet is now the dominant medium of scholarly communication, digital information is not necessarily freely, or cheaply, disseminated. Centuries-old print publication paradigms persist even with online publications, with the result that scholarly publication models continue to restrict access and

limit impact. But the scholarly communication model is in the process of a fundamental transformation towards more open forms of digital dissemination. The communications revolution also means that universities' status as the primary source of knowledge production and dissemination, as well as the credentialization of knowledge holders, is challenged. Recent years have witnessed a rapid growth in corporate and non-corporate alternatives for knowledge and credentials (think tanks, corporate and professional associations, non-governmental organizations, participatory-action research, etc.). This evolution has been abetted by online access to information, credentialization programs and digital networks. Students entering universities today are part of the first generation of learners who have always viewed the internet and information technology as a given component of their learning experience. Like all other universities, Brock must use these tools to facilitate teaching, learning, research, scholarship, creative activities and community engagement. It must also acknowledge the potential for new sources of competition in the educational setting from the rapidly evolving digitally-enabled education ecosystem. It is critical that Brock recognize these new sources of competition in the educational setting and look for new opportunities within the rapidly evolving digital ecosystem.



- **Attitudes towards post-secondary education:**

The last 50 years have witnessed a growth in global wealth and increasing inequality in its distribution. The cost of post-secondary education has also grown significantly. Financial pressures, along with concerns about student debt and parental worries about the future prosperity of their children, has shifted student interest more towards professional and career-oriented or infused learning. The traditional pre-eminence of liberal arts and science education has diminished in relative terms, even as employers continue to emphasize the need for critical thinking, writing and communications, and interpersonal skills for career success — skills traditionally developed through liberal arts and science programs. Employers demand new employees enter the workforce as “job ready” to help control costs of training and professional development. Industry- and firm-specific training often involve enterprise or professional credentialing and certification that may engender doubts in potential students about the value of formal post-secondary education, even though research and empirical evidence demonstrate that university degree-level education has the highest rate of return relative to alternatives. Contemporaneously, corporate investment in job training is in decline; increased labour mobility reinforces this trend. Brock must, therefore, actively demonstrate the value of its degree programs and research and creative activities to the career and life aspirations of its students, as well as its relevance to the challenges confronting communities, governments and businesses.

- **Societal expectations and demands:** At one time universities were rather isolated institutions serving a small, privileged segment of society. Today, publicly-supported post-secondary institutions are expected to provide visible and accessible benefit to all of society, even as they maintain academic standards of excellence. They are held financially, economically, socially and culturally accountable through government policy, social pressure and, increasingly, social media. They are expected to serve all members of a society that comprises diverse identity groups with sometimes competing needs and desires. Accountability requirements may be formalized into laws, regulations or agreements. There may also be expectations that reflect changing values in society. These societal expectations are also reflected in government program funding and policy frameworks. An example is the federal government research grant councils’ requirement that universities establish clear



and measurable processes and outcomes around inclusion, diversity and equity among researchers. Another example is provincial government legislation requiring universities to take steps to foster safe campuses and address sexual violence. Brock must recognize its responsibilities and ensure that it is an inclusive institution where all members of society feel welcome, safe and respected, as well as meeting societal expectations with regard to environmental sustainability.

- **Reconciliation and decolonization:** Historical injustices to Indigenous peoples are increasingly recognized and acknowledged across Canada and

around the world. Brock University is situated within the traditional lands of the Haudenosaunee and Anishinaabe peoples, a territory shared with many other First Nations. This territory is covered by the Upper Canada treaties and is within the land protected by the Dish with One Spoon Wampum Agreement. There are international expectations that public institutions, especially educational institutions, will fulfill commitments contained within the United Nations Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, of which Canada is a signatory. The Report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada contains 94 recommendations, approximately one-third of which involve education. Universities across Canada are implementing responses to the report. Indigenous citizens in Canada have much lower postsecondary access and attainment rates than the rest of the population. All of this represents both a challenge and an opportunity for Brock to play a positive, transformative role in the relationship between Indigenous communities and individuals and the rest of Canadian society. Brock must fulfill its part in reconciliation and decolonization within the Canadian context and the principles articulated in the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Call To Action.

- **Provincial policies on post-secondary education:** Universities are created and governed by Acts of provincial legislatures. The province controls program grant funding, new program approvals, tuition policy and enrolment levels (through enrolment funding corridors). Since 2014, all publicly supported post-secondary institutions in Ontario have had to negotiate Strategic Mandate Agreements with the Ministry of Training Colleges and Universities (MTCU). These agreements outline each institution's defining differentiation focus. This accountable framework and related target policy and measurable outcomes may evolve as government priorities change and societal norms shift. Therefore, like all universities, Brock must be sensitive to government policies and priorities.
- **Financial pressures:** Most of a university's revenues (approximately 82 per cent) are generated by a combination of student tuition and government grants. Base grants for Ontario universities decreased by four per cent since 2010-11, while grants per weighted enrolment decreased by 11 per cent after adjusting for inflation. This means an increasing proportion of university revenues come from tuition. Provincial governments are highly conscious of societal concerns about the rising cost of post-

secondary education. The government has capped overall tuition increases for domestic students at three per cent. Cost inflation at universities has outpaced revenue growth for many years. Universities have responded by prioritizing enrolment growth and/or cost controls in order to achieve financial sustainability. Brock's enrolment plan and budget framework must reflect the University's commitment to excellence in teaching and learning, research, scholarly and creative activities, and community engagement while acknowledging exogenous financial pressures imposed by government's fiscal decisions. Brock, like other universities, must develop and articulate the value of partnerships and innovations that offer solutions to persistent challenges, including cost escalation in the public sector.

- **Geographic factors:** Brock is located in a region of Canada and Ontario that is blessed with world-renowned environmental features, a mild climate within the Canadian context that supports a tender-fruit and viticulture agricultural base, and a thriving tourist industry. Once home to an extensive industrial and manufacturing base in which automotive, steel and chemical industries were core components, the region has experienced significant de-industrialization. As in other such regions around the world, the local population reflects this experience in the form of incomes below the provincial average (albeit with marked inequity in the distribution of income and wealth), below-average university attainment and an overall older population. The benefits and challenges of being on the outer edge of the Greater Toronto Hamilton Area (GTHA) are evident in all the factors that push people to or pull them away from the region. Approximately 70 per cent of Brock's student population originates from outside the Niagara region; thus, the University benefits from its proximity to the population growth of the GTHA metropolis. At the same time, the pull of the GTHA creates challenges for attracting students, staff and faculty to the University. But Niagara is internationally famous. Millions of visitors come to the region annually, making the tourism industry one of the area's economic pillars. Brock is, therefore, well positioned to benefit from and enhance the renown of the region.



- Regional University:** Brock was established as a regional university to meet the local community's post-secondary educational needs. As Brock continues to engage with the local community, students graduating from high school within the region are increasingly viewing Brock as a serious choice for fulfilling their educational aspirations. Thus, Brock's academic programs and student experience must achieve international standards of excellence to continue to position the University as an advantageous option. Brock also has a role to play in contributing to regional economic competitiveness by preparing the employable workforce of tomorrow. If a reasonable number of the 4,000 Brock students who graduate each year find employment within the region, Niagara's population will increase and employers will find the employees their companies need to thrive. Brock must, therefore, meet the expectation of maintaining deep regional roots while acknowledging that national and international engagement, as well as academic excellence, serve as assets and strengths for the local community.
- Internationalization and globalization:** While globalization is not a new phenomenon in a historical sense, the level and intensity of global flows of ideas, information, finances, material goods and people are greater than ever before. Universities' reputations are determined by their international connections and standing. International students, international exchanges of students and faculty, international research and creative partnerships facilitate a university having direct engagement at the global

level. Members of the Brock community who engage at the global level elevate global awareness of what the University and its people have to offer. Brock must continue its growth in internationalization and globalization for the benefit of our students, staff, faculty and the communities we serve.

- Transportation network:** The GO train is slated to provide regular Niagara service to Grimsby by 2021, and to St. Catharines and Niagara Falls by 2023. GO bus and/or GO train service from Toronto and Mississauga (with a total combined population of more than 6.5 million people) to Hamilton, Kitchener-Waterloo and Guelph allow McMaster University, Guelph University, Wilfrid Laurier University and the University of Waterloo to attract students from the Greater Toronto Area (GTA) who may find it more affordable or convenient to continue to live at home. The GO train and/or GO bus (or other commercial transportation service) could support similar opportunities for Brock if academic programming and scheduling are structured to meet these students' needs. Brock must, therefore, continue its engagement and efforts to advance transportation networks and choices for our students, staff, faculty and the communities we serve.

2.2 Consultation process

The institutional strategic plan is the result of the work and input of many individuals and groups from within and outside the University. Since the fall of 2017, there have been numerous formal and informal consultations with individual faculty members, Senate, the Board of Trustees, the Brock University Student Union, the Graduate Students Association, community partners, alumni and others.

6 community round tables  **2** focus groups  **120** people from **96** organizations

 **40** Internal administration consultations

20 Board of Trustees and Senate consultations



Additional internal consultations inside the Faculties



Written correspondence

3.0

University vision, mission and values

Brock of 2018 is being shaped by numerous forces, as outlined by the environmental scan. This analysis serves as a backdrop for defining the strategic focus and priorities of the University within the context of the institutional vision, mission and values adapted and revised from the previous Integrated Strategic Plan, and in light of input received during the 2017-18 consultation process.



VISION

Brock University is a dynamic, comprehensive university that makes a positive difference in the lives of individuals in our Brock community, the Niagara Region, Canada and the world through leadership, innovation and excellence in learning, teaching, research, scholarship and creativity across disciplines.

MISSION

Brock flourishes through the scholarly, creative and professional achievements of our students, faculty and staff. Although we share a common purpose, we recognize and honour knowledge pursued through diverse perspectives and approaches. Our academic mission is to nurture and support our students and faculty in the discovery of knowledge through exemplary scholarship, teaching and service.

We provide undergraduate, graduate and professional education of the highest quality. Our graduate programs enhance Brock's growing reputation for excellence in teaching, research, creativity and innovation. We provide a transformative experience for our students inside and outside the classroom by helping to develop their full potential as educated and engaged citizens in local and global communities. Brock graduates go out into the world as leaders, with a track record of entering fulfilling careers across all disciplines.

Brock University works to enhance the economic, social, cultural and intellectual lives of the communities around us — Niagara, Ontario, Canada and beyond — and to demonstrate the vital ways in which we contribute to the health, well-being and betterment of society in the 21st century.

GUIDING VALUES

Brock is committed to the following values as it strives to make a positive difference in the lives of our students, staff, faculty and communities on a daily basis.

- 1. Integrity and respect:** These principles are foundational to all our relationships and to making Brock University an exemplary and nurturing place to study, work and visit.
- 2. A unique student experience:** We are committed to a unique student experience that is characterized by innovative pedagogies, a quality learning environment and high-impact teaching practices such as experiential education and transdisciplinarity.
- 3. Freedom of thought and expression coupled with academic responsibility:** As a university, we serve society through the cultivation of enquiring minds while acknowledging that our freedoms are accompanied by a responsibility to foster civility in critical dialogue.
- 4. The generation and mobilization of knowledge:** Through dynamic teaching, learning, research and creative activity, we develop the intellectual potential of our students, thereby enriching the material, cultural and intellectual dimensions of the communities into which they graduate.
- 5. Innovation through disciplinary and transdisciplinary scholarly activities:** We embrace innovation through disciplinary and transdisciplinary curricular offerings, pedagogy, e-learning, scholarship, research and service.
- 6. Inclusivity, diversity, equity:** We recognize the dignity of each person and their right to live life to the fullest. We build inclusivity and equity through understanding and respect for diverse identities, and reflect this in our approaches to teaching and learning, research and creativity, administration and service provision, and community engagement.
- 7. Reconciliation and decolonization:** We are committed to reconciliation with Indigenous communities and decolonization of the academy through promoting awareness and understanding of Indigenous culture, history and ways of knowing across all University activities.
- 8. Sustainable, accountable, transparent stewardship:** As stewards of public and private resources, we are accountable for our performance and must ensure we evaluate the impact of our actions on our human, financial and environmental resources to ensure that the outcomes will be sustainable and form a solid academic foundation for our future scholarly endeavours.



4.0

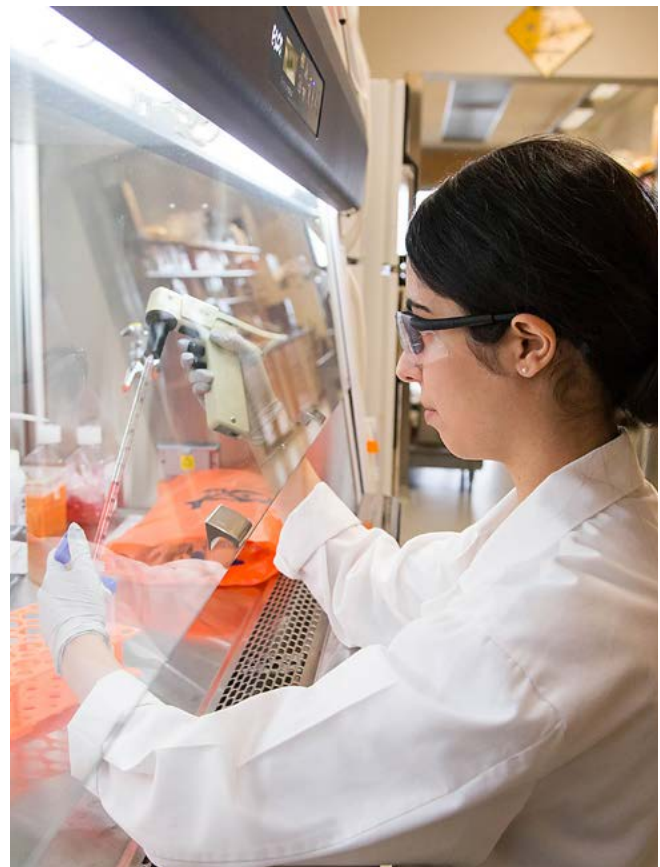
Brock tomorrow: 2018-2025

Preamble:

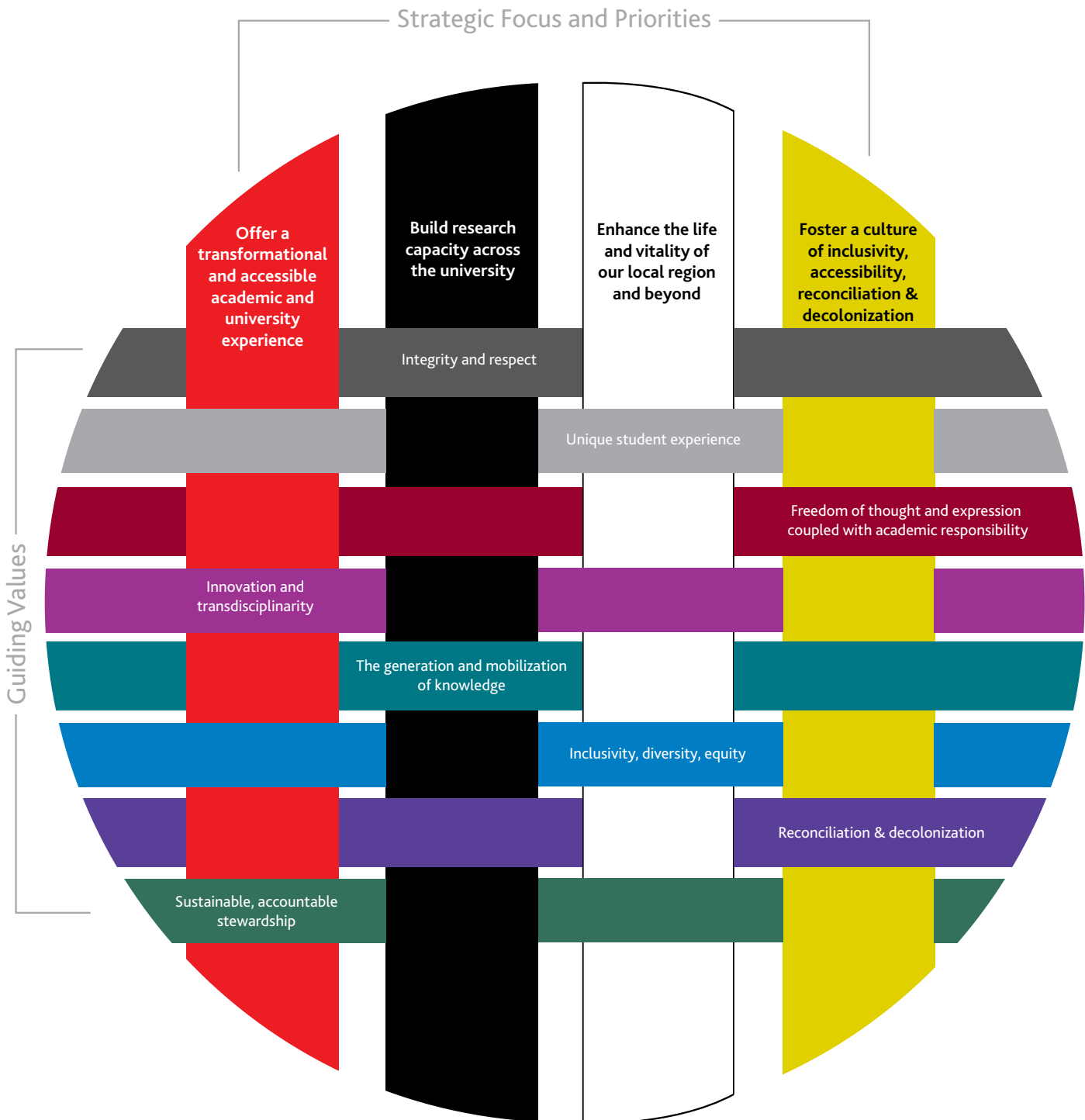
The institutional strategic plan establishes four strategic priorities, along with associated goals and action items, to advance Brock's vision over the next seven years. These priorities focus the University community on fulfilling and strengthening our mission as an engaged, comprehensive university through:

- provide 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.

Our strategic priorities set the University on the path towards greater national and global recognition for its engagement and relevance to students and communities, through enhanced innovation and excellence in teaching, learning, discovery, creativity and the application of knowledge across disciplines.



GUIDING VALUES AND STRATEGIC PRIORITIES¹



¹The 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.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY:

Offer a transformational and accessible academic and university experience

To be a destination of choice for undergraduate, graduate and part-time students we must ensure an academic and university experience that positively transforms our students' abilities, understanding and impact on the world. We teach future-ready students and equip lifelong learners with a zest for knowledge, skills and competencies that will enable them to achieve their full academic, professional, career and life potential. Core to our student experience is the development of engaged citizens who are resilient, involved, career-ready and versatile.

GOAL:

Deliver high-quality programs that meet the interests and needs of students, and support them to achieve their potential in life.

Actions:

- Review and renew academic programs regularly and expeditiously to ensure they reflect students' interests and animate their desire to expand and challenge their abilities and perspectives.
- Increase and enhance programming that leverages the distinct cultures, geography, economic composition and demographic profile of our region.
- Develop programs that meet labour market and societal needs by tailoring them to provide students with the skills required for current and potential areas of growth.
- Map learning outcomes with career and life skills and competencies to facilitate academic program renewal and development and facilitate existing and future academic pathways.
- Increase experiential learning and high-impact practices across all academic programs.
- Improve and enhance pedagogical support and development opportunities for faculty and staff.



GOAL:

Expand Brock's lifelong learning opportunities for our students and members of the community.

Actions:

- Adopt flexible and inclusive courses and program delivery formats, including a tri-semester schedule, to better meet the needs of a broader demographic.
- Expand and formalize responsibilities for lifelong learning such as part-time degree offerings and professional development opportunities.
- Create initiatives that lead from certificate or diploma programs to an undergraduate or graduate credential, further skills for working professionals (micro credentialing) and offer learning opportunities for older adults.

GOAL:

Provide an engaging campus experience that meets students' needs and affords social, cultural and recreational opportunities for all students.

Actions:

- Ensure students receive timely and proactive support services.
- Continue to build capacity in ExperienceBU and the co-curriculum.
- Continue to improve effective and well-integrated student services in order to meet the needs of an increasingly diverse student body.
- Enhance and improve recruitment and other supports to ensure personal and academic success for Indigenous, international and first-generation students.

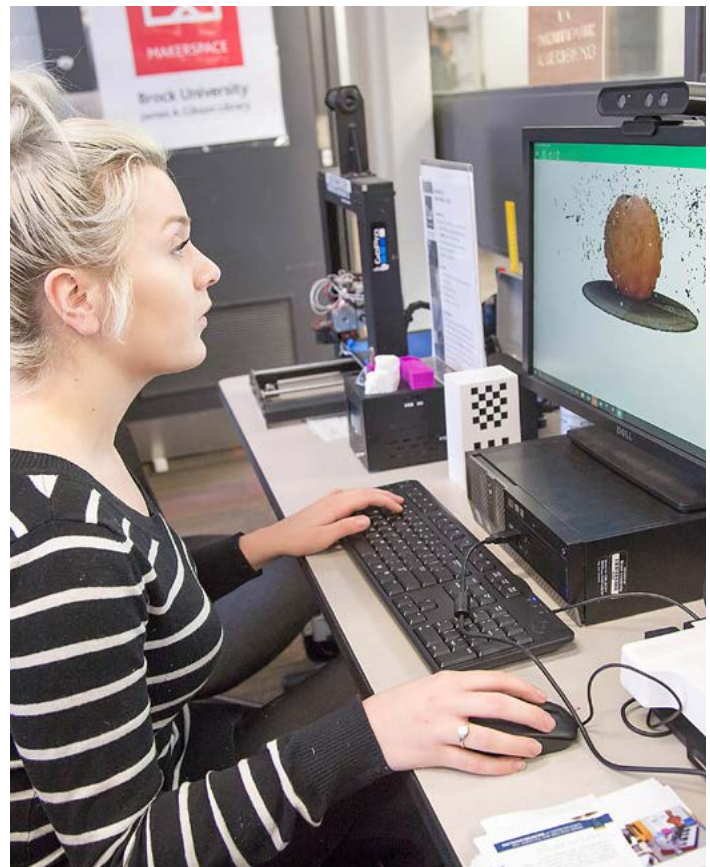


GOAL:

Offer globally-oriented learning and experience opportunities.

Actions:

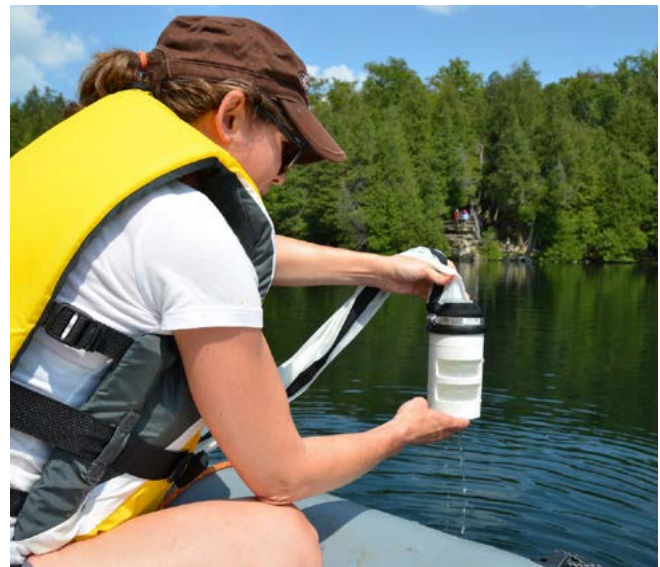
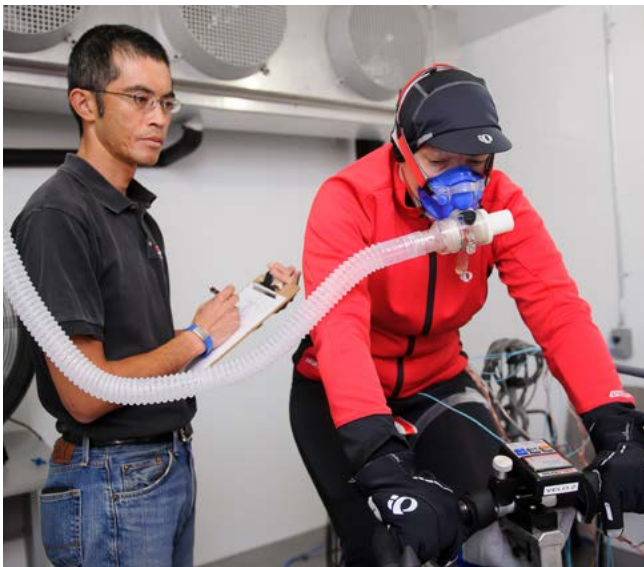
- Attract world-leading scholars to Brock.
- Increase active partnerships with highly reputable international academic institutions and global organizations that facilitate opportunities for student and faculty engagement and collaboration.
- Encourage faculty and students to be actively engaged in research, scholarship and academic studies in other countries and bring their learning and perspectives back to Canada to share within local communities.



STRATEGIC PRIORITY:

Build research capacity across the university

Our research focus is central to our identity. Brock will invest in building a world-leading research institution, grounded in scholarly excellence and strong graduate and post-graduate programs. We will leverage our strengths within and across disciplines to enhance research impact.



GOAL:

Nurture a culture of research and creative excellence.

Actions:

- Integrate research, knowledge and creative values and processes into policy, governance and administration, and create a culture aimed at output, uptake and impact.
- Grow application rates, success rates and overall income for grant applications.
- Enhance recruitment of excellent graduate students, post-doctoral researchers and visiting scholars within Canada and internationally.
- Connect research and scholarly activities conducted by members of the Brock community to global issues.
- Explore expanded undergraduate research and creativity opportunities.

GOAL:

Invest in research infrastructure and support to ensure sustainable and accessible research services for the Brock scholarly community.

Actions:

- Identify and invest in strategic initiatives with the greatest potential to enhance Brock's research intensity.
- Integrate research and experiential education, in part by developing BrockLINC's capacity to enhance student innovation, entrepreneurship, research and commercialization.
- Invest strategically in major research tools and associated infrastructure.
- Increase internal research funding supports and small grants.



GOAL:

Enhance transdisciplinary research and high-impact research practices.

Actions:

- Support collaborative research activity across disciplines and academic institutions, as well as non-academic partners.
- Build on Brock's institutional experience of transdisciplinary research.
- Enhance and promote awareness of transdisciplinary, impact-focused and problems-based research.
- Develop and promote areas of strategic focus on research, balancing specialization with diversity in strategic research development.

GOAL:

Build awareness of Brock University as a centre of research excellence.

Actions:

- Promote awareness of Brock as a research, training and mentorship destination for excellent graduate students and postdoctoral researchers.
- Enhance international research activity and partnerships.
- Create strategies and practices for the celebration and recognition of scholarly accomplishments of research faculty, students, visiting researchers and staff.
- Facilitate global knowledge exchange by participating in and hosting international symposia.
- Highlight the global impact of research and scholarly activities conducted by members of the Brock community.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY:

Enhance the life and vitality of our local region and beyond

Brock is committed to working with the communities in Niagara, Ontario, Canada and the world. Through local and global connections, we increase opportunities for the residents of Niagara. By responding to the needs of society and supporting its growth and development, we strengthen community vitality and vibrancy.

GOAL:

Increase and enhance enriching opportunities for our students, alumni, faculty and staff to engage with the community.

Actions:

- Establish a mechanism to create and sustain long-term, mutually beneficial community partnerships that will:
 - Expand knowledge mobilization and application through collaborations, both on and off campus.
 - Develop Brock-Niagara community-based accessible programming and resources.
 - Support celebration events that acknowledge our community connections.
 - Encourage active participation in student life ranging from volunteer and employment opportunities to clubs, intramurals and Brock Sports.
- Encourage and enhance community use of University services and facilities by:
 - Continuing to make Brock resources more accessible to the community.
 - Creating purposeful opportunities for the community to visit Brock.
 - Supporting the development and maintenance of facilities where people learn and live.
 - Ensuring communications and marketing efforts are reaching and understood by the wider community.

GOAL:

Support regional economic, social and cultural vitality.

Actions:

- Support entrepreneurship, commercialization and innovation by:
 - Encouraging entrepreneurial-minded students, faculty and community members to start businesses by providing knowledge, resources and space through BrockLINC programming;
 - Fostering creativity and curiosity through engagement with technology and new digital methods through Brock’s Makerspace and Digital Scholarship Lab; and
 - Increasing the volume, diversity and impact of commercialized IP and innovation.
- Increase access to programs that are in high demand from students and by society that will increase the employability of graduates.
- In partnership with our communities, anticipate and respond to societal needs through the co-creation of knowledge of local and global opportunities and challenges.



GOAL:

Enhance engagement with Indigenous communities in the spirit of reconciliation.

Actions:

- Continue to build a welcoming and respectful environment on and off campus.
- Promote two-way dialogue between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people.
- Enhance programming, courses, research and creative activities that promote the understanding of Indigenous pedagogies, systems of knowledge, cultures and histories.



GOAL:

Cultivate outstanding relationships with our alumni starting with their earliest interactions with the University.

Actions:

- Enable graduating students to transition to active alumni status through new initiatives and communication strategies.
- Enhance outreach to alumni and develop additional ways to be involved and recognized in campus life.
- Celebrate the accomplishments and significance of our graduates.
- Build experiential learning, research and community engagement partnerships with alumni.



STRATEGIC PRIORITY:

Foster a culture of inclusivity, accessibility, reconciliation and decolonization

At Brock, we believe that a diverse and welcoming learning community is built upon the foundation of exceptional students, faculty, staff and alumni. This requires that Brock be attractive and welcoming to people of all identities, and accepting of the unique histories and experiences of Indigenous people within the Canadian state.

GOAL:

Strengthen relationships of trust with Indigenous communities and partners across all sectors and activities of the University.

Actions:

- Enhance and improve recruitment and learning as well as other supports for Indigenous, international and first-generation students.
- Actively recruit outstanding students from Niagara as well as from diverse regions and backgrounds from around the world.
- Enhance programming for underrepresented or marginalized groups that introduces them to the University.



GOAL:

Promote effective human resource practices and philosophies that improve inclusivity, accessibility, reconciliation and decolonization.

Actions:

- Ensure that university-wide structures best serve the values and strategic priorities of the university.
- Provide training and support for search committees on the principles of equity, diversity, inclusion and cultural competency.
- Broaden the scope of training programs for new and continuing Chairs and Directors.
- Use recommendations from the report of the Brock University Human Rights Task Force, including a workplace climate survey and equity census.
- Communicate the efforts and impacts of the President's Advisory Committee on Human Rights, Equity and Decolonization across the campus on a regular basis.
- Foster internationalization across the entire campus so that students from all parts of the world feel welcomed and supported in achieving their academic goals.
- Recruit and retain a diverse group of outstanding staff by providing rewarding and fulfilling careers.
- Develop ongoing training and expand programs for professional development.
- Continue to provide competitive offers of employment, compensation and benefits to ensure a quality work life.



GOAL:

Further celebrate the success of our faculty, staff, students and alumni.

Actions:

- Provide better communication as well as career and recognition opportunities for faculty, staff, students, alumni and sessional instructors.
- Increase scholarship and award opportunities for exceptional students who have demonstrated excellence academically, socially, culturally and/or athletically.
- Ensure that reporting mechanisms and communications with external university ranking organizations reflect the strengths of the University as a post-secondary institution and the accomplishments of faculty, staff, students and alumni.



5.0 Brock at 60

In 2024, Brock will celebrate its 60th anniversary. The realization of the strategic priorities will lead to enhancement in teaching and learning; research, scholarly and creative activities; and community engagement aimed at advancing Brock as a comprehensive university of choice for students, faculty and staff as well as alumni, partners and other stakeholders. Improvements in the student academic and university experience; growth in the quantity, quality and impact of inquiry, knowledge and originality; and expanding and intensifying bonds with local and global worlds will increase Brock's reputation. The stage will be set for future success as Brock University enters its seventh decade.

It is anticipated that these developments will be reflected in Brock's enrolments and the metrics being established through the Enrolment Management Plan as part of the integrated strategic planning framework of the University. Specifically, Brock expects to increase its degree seeking enrolment from its 2017/18 level of 18,071 to 21,282 by 2024/25, representing an average 2.4 percent annual growth over the seven year period. This growth rate exceeds the anticipated 1.0 percent growth in total enrolments at the provincial level. It is anticipated that this would result in Brock's total share of enrolments in Ontario increasing to 4.0 percent over this same period. It is planned that this growth will be characterized by a greater rate of increase in graduate (+32%) over undergraduate (+16%) enrolments reflecting further growth in research and scholarly activities at the University. Similarly, it is planned that international student enrolment will increase from the current level of 10 percent to 12 percent of total Brock enrolment levels. The University will increase the effective use of its facilities by supporting activities that attract enrolment in all three terms with the Spring/Summer term being integrated as part of the regular academic schedule at the University.



6.0 Conclusion

The Brock University institutional strategic plan presents the strategic priorities and supporting goals and action items for the next seven years. They, and our shared vision, mission and values, comprise the warp and weft of the material from which we will craft our collective future.

Brock University has been on a trajectory of growth and development, transforming from a small, primarily undergraduate institution into a mid-sized, nationally recognized comprehensive university. Programs now span a wide range of liberal arts, sciences, transdisciplinary, career-oriented and professional options. In addition, an extensive variety of disciplinary, transdisciplinary, pure and applied research and creative activities are undertaken by faculty, staff members and students. The strategic plan will be realized through the alignment of Brock's financial and human resources, as well as our physical infrastructure and technology, with

the University's guiding values, including integrity and respect, sustainable accountability and stewardship, and freedom of thought and expression coupled with academic responsibility. The strategic plan will inform development and advancement initiatives and the unit-level operational plans developed to achieve Brock's strategic priorities, goals and actions.

The strategic priorities described in the document will strengthen Brock's position as an engaged, comprehensive university that enhances economic, social and cultural vitality and well-being within the Niagara region; as well as promoting the University's national and international prominence.

Our local roots, national prominence and global aspirations work together to provide a positive transformational experience that fulfils the needs and desired outcomes of our students; builds a nurturing workplace for our faculty and staff; contributes to the vitality and lifelong learning interests of our communities; and attracts people from across Canada and around the world to Niagara to learn, live and thrive.



Next steps

This institutional strategic plan sets the overall values and strategic priorities that define the direction for Brock University. This is, however, only the beginning. Brock University is a complex institution with multiple academic and administrative units, each with its particular areas of focus and responsibility. Implementation of the strategic priorities, goals and actions identified in this institutional plan happens at the unit level. In support of the institutional strategic plan, the following plans have been or are being developed:

- Faculty plans
- Research implementation plan and CFI/CRC strategic research plan
- Teaching, learning and student success plan
- Library plan
- Enrolment management plan
- Budget plan
- Internationalization plan
- Marketing and promotions plan
- Fundraising and advancement plan
- University information technology plan
- Infrastructure plan
- Human resources plan
- University-community engagement plan

Each plan will include priorities, goals, actions, objectives and metrics. Furthermore, background documents are being developed to ensure the elements of this institutional strategic plan address items identified in the environmental scan and serve all members of the Brock community. Progress will be tracked annually and a midterm report prepared in 2022.

People

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