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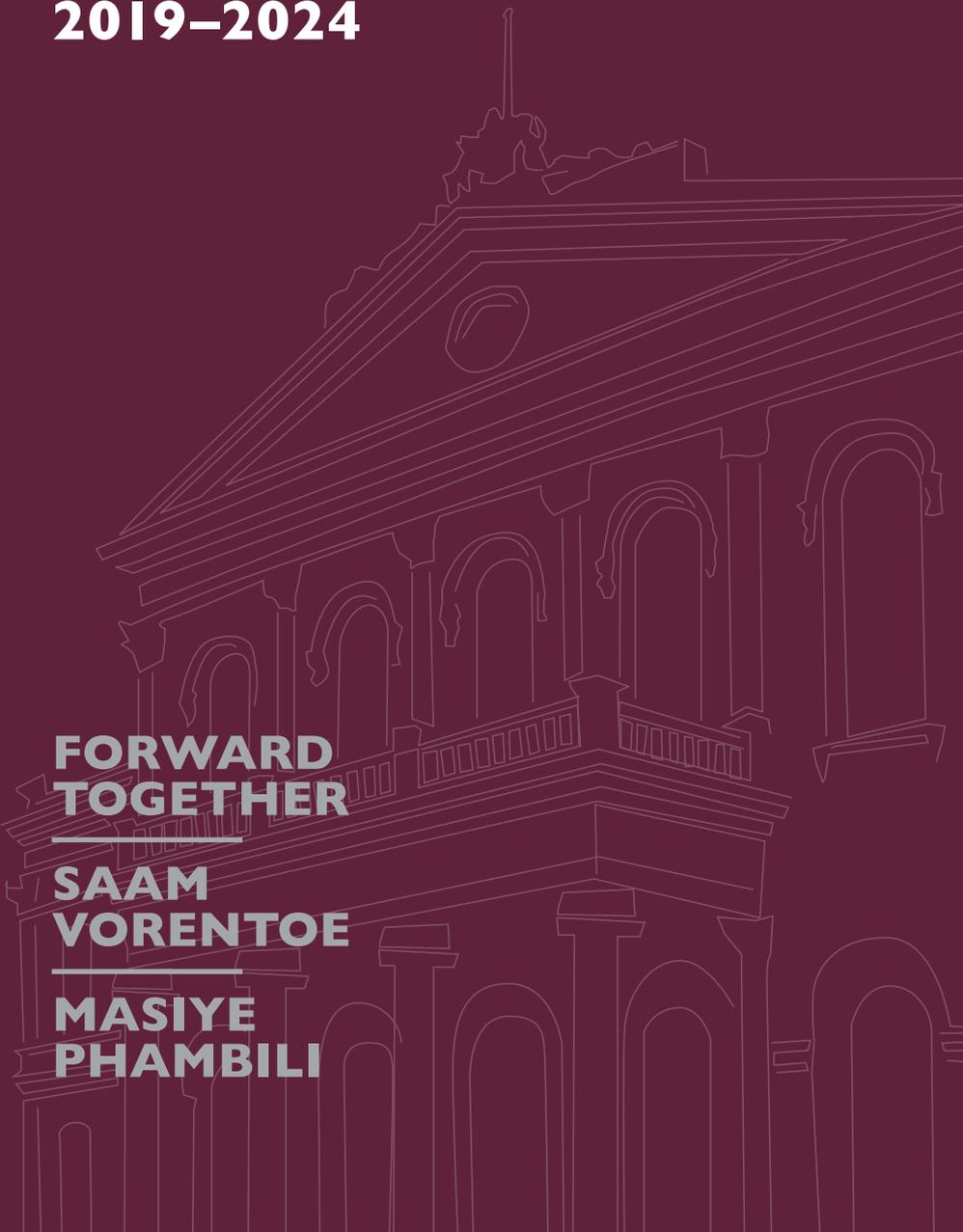
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1918 · 2018

VISION 2040 AND STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK 2019–2024

**FORWARD
TOGETHER**

**SAAM
VORENTOE**

**MASIYE
PHAMBILI**





A CONTEXTUAL LETTER: The continuation of Vision 2040 and the Strategic Framework

Vision 2040 and Strategic Framework 2019-2024 articulate the positioning of Stellenbosch University (SU) as a leading research-intensive South African university in Africa, with a global reach. This strategic framework builds on the excellent foundations established through the *Strategic Framework for the Turn of the Century and Beyond (2000)*, *Vision 2030*, and the *Institutional Intent and Strategy (IIS) 2013-2018*.

Our vision and strategic framework also represent the top tier of our three-tier approach to strategy planning, with the second tier comprising our Strategy Plan, which transitioned in 2025 from its initial phase (2019-2024) to its second phase (2026-2030). In turn, the third tier ensures operational alignment through annual strategic priorities, specific actions and measurable outcomes, as detailed in the Strategy Implementation Plan (SIP).

In 2025, SU affirmed its commitment to strategic continuity by retaining our vision and framework for the subsequent strategic phase. Our vision, mission, values, attributes, enablers and core strategic themes therefore remain unchanged. That means that the original (or source) document, **Vision 2040 and Strategic Framework 2019-2024**, remain unaltered, save for the addition of this contextual letter, which explains modifications that will appear in all subsequent strategy-related documents. The information contained therein is preserved as a historical benchmark.

The following modifications will be implemented in all future strategy-related documents:

1. The temporal designation (2019-2024) has been removed from the vision and framework. This emphasises continuity and foundational strength, whilst recognising progression to a new implementation phase. In future strategy-related documents, we will therefore refer to **Vision 2040 and Strategic Framework**.
2. The six core strategic themes have been repositioned to reflect current institutional priorities.
3. The thematic statements for each of the six core strategic themes have been refined to articulate new institutional goals, whilst maintaining explicit alignment with Vision 2040.

These adjustments ensure that SU's strategic direction remains both historically grounded and dynamically responsive to the evolving higher education landscape.

Prof Deresh Ramjugernath

15 December 2025

OUR VISION 2040

Stellenbosch University will be Africa's leading research-intensive university, globally recognised as excellent, inclusive and innovative, where we advance knowledge in service of society.

OUR MISSION

Stellenbosch University is a research-intensive university where we attract outstanding students, employ talented staff and provide a world-class environment; a place connected to the world, while enriching and transforming local, continental and global communities.

OUR CORE STRATEGIC THEMES 2019–2024



**A TRANSFORMATIVE
STUDENT EXPERIENCE**



**NETWORKED AND COLLABORATIVE
TEACHING AND LEARNING**



RESEARCH FOR IMPACT



**PURPOSEFUL PARTNERSHIPS
AND INCLUSIVE NETWORKS**



EMPLOYER OF CHOICE



**A THRIVING
STELLENBOSCH UNIVERSITY**

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FOREWORD

BY THE RECTOR AND VICE-CHANCELLOR, PROF WIM DE VILLIERS



Universities and their inhabitants are both sources of wonder. Universities are institutions for the ages. Their reputations and cultures are built over centuries and represent much more than the sum of all the individuals that had passed through their doors and halls. Yet, each generation makes an important contribution.

Universities differ from one another in many respects. They differ in terms of the communities they serve, their emphasis on different issues at various points in time, and the challenges and opportunities they face over time. This constant evolution requires circumspect responses from the range of individuals involved in a university at any given moment. The histories of universities are much like epic journeys with many legends and stories. As Stellenbosch University (SU) is entering its second century, it has also built a distinct reputation and culture, with many legends and stories. Individual students, academics and professional administrative support staff (PASS) at all universities are transient, coming and going over time, but the institution itself remains.

As the current Rector and Vice-Chancellor, I am proud to lead SU in its Centenary year. I am also very proud of the capable and committed staff and students the University is fortunate enough to have. Together, as responsible stewards, we want to add to the SU legacy for the benefit of future generations.

We want to position SU as the leading research-intensive university on the African continent and a consequential university in the world. To this end, we work to consolidate the strengths, mitigate or even eliminate the weaknesses, explore and exploit the opportunities, and weather the threats, ideally turning them into opportunities. How do we know that we are succeeding? One, although by no means the foremost, indicator of success is the rankings assigned by international higher education ratings agencies. Other measures of success are the satisfaction of those who make use of what we offer (students, parents, employers, partners, etc.) and the professional judgement of external peers. However, these indicators should also be augmented with the high standards we set for ourselves so that we can hold one another accountable in the interest of our University.

Once a generation has set its priorities, it also needs a chart or map to steer by against the backdrop of the current context and in anticipation of the future. For the past five years, the *SU Institutional Intent and Strategy 2013–2018* and its accompanying *Vision 2030* have guided SU's journey. This valuable "road map" expires in 2018. Therefore, this new *Vision 2040* and *Strategic Framework 2019–2024* has been crafted under the competent leadership of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor: Strategy and Internationalisation, Prof Hester Klopper.

Vision 2040 and Strategic Framework 2019–2024 is our contribution for the benefit of future SU generations. It contains six core strategic themes, namely a transformative student experience, networked and collaborative teaching and learning, research for impact, purposeful partnerships and inclusive networks, employer of choice, and a thriving SU. We believe these will guide us towards being a university with an impeccable institutional reputation – being systemically sustainable and transformed – with a focused offering, a collaborative learning and teaching model, research of significance, and an all-encompassing impact, including a strong impact on society.

Vision 2040 and Strategic Framework 2019–2024 was developed taking into account South Africa's National Development Plan, the African Union's Agenda 2063 and the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals. It bears testimony to SU's commitment to being a university that is relevant to its context and is of service to our country and continent – an inclusive, world-class university in and for Africa.

Let us move forward together, using this as our road map.

Prof Wim (WJS) de Villiers



MESSAGE FROM THE DEPUTY VICE-CHANCELLOR: STRATEGY AND INTERNATIONALISATION, PROF HESTER C. KLOPPER



We are pleased to present the Stellenbosch University (SU) *Vision 2040 and Strategic Framework 2019–2024* in the University's Centenary year. While this strategic framework will be our guide for the next six years, it is important to understand that it forms part of a trajectory and builds on previous strategic documents. Leading and coordinating the development of *Vision 2040 and Strategic Framework 2019–2024* has been a challenging yet rewarding experience. It was crucial to approach the process in a manner that would provide the opportunity for extended engagement outside the senior management group who provided continuous input on the various drafts, as well as beyond Council and Senate's approval and acceptance of the vision and strategy. For this reason, we decided on a three-phased approach, namely strategy development (July 2016 to May 2018), strategy uptake (July 2018 to June 2019) and strategy alignment (July 2018 to June 2020). The latter two phases offer the prospect of engagement across the various responsibility centres, faculties and divisions, working collectively to implement the inspiring core strategic themes and goals to set SU apart in the years to come.

The vision and strategy are unapologetically bold, with the aspiration of being Africa's leading research-intensive university that enjoys global recognition. The strategy will stretch us and will require significant investment, but we are confident that it maximises our strengths, while allowing us space to grow. In the words of Malcolm X: "The future belongs to those who prepare for it today."

Forward together. Masiye phambili. Saam vorentoe.

Prof Hester C. Klopper



THE STRATEGIC APPROACH



I. INTRODUCTION

Vision 2040 and Strategic Framework 2019–2024 articulates the positioning of Stellenbosch University (SU) as a leading research-intensive South African university in Africa, with a global reach. The strategic framework builds on the excellent work that followed from the *Strategic Framework for the turn of the Century and Beyond (2000)*, *Vision 2030* and the *Institutional Intent and Strategy (IIS) 2013–2018*. At the same time, it has given us the opportunity to reflect on the way forward and our response to the challenges in higher education in South Africa and beyond.

The aim of this strategic framework is to guide SU's future positioning, direct SU's strategy and illustrate where and how the University is positioned. The core strategic themes for 2019 to 2024 provide a framework for further planning. The detailed planning forms part of the annual Institutional Plan (IP) and serves to integrate and effectively coordinate SU's institutional strategy, priorities and goals. The respective environmental plans of responsibility centres, faculties and professional administrative support services (PASS) will be aligned with this strategic framework and the IP. Clearly, we are embarking on an era of working on cross-cutting themes, thus resulting in a matrix management model. This document is the outcome of phase I of the strategic process, which was conducted from July 2016 to June 2018. It is important to note that this strategic framework is a guiding document that presents the future positioning of the University in light of input received from the various annual planning processes. The detailed contents, including objectives, implementation plans, timeframes and identified champions, will be developed during the strategy uptake process.

2. THE PROCESS OF DEVELOPING VISION 2040 AND STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK 2019–2024

The *Institutional Intent and Strategy (IIS) 2013–2018* outlined the positioning of the University for the 21st century. That positioning was anchored in three strategic priorities, namely broadening access, sustaining excellence and enhancing societal impact, as well as four strategic focus areas, being student success, diversity, the knowledge base, and systemic sustainability. *Vision 2030* featured inclusivity, innovation, future focus and transformation as its main characteristics. The realisation of *Vision 2030* was supported by three strategic priorities, namely broadening access, maintaining excellence, and increasing SU's impact on society. For the 2016–2021 Institutional Plan (IP), internationalisation and enhancing systemic transformation were added, and for the 2017–2022 IP, enhancing systemic sustainability and executing the Campus Renewal Project. Together, these seven institutional strategies have been the guiding framework for the 2018–2023 IP and are embedded in the SU business model.

SU embarked on the process of crafting *Vision 2040* in July 2016, when a task team was established to review the vision and strategy. Planning was initiated and the first opportunity for input was provided at the Institutional Planning Forum (IPF) in February 2017. The two themes of the IPF were “SU within the context of higher education” and “On the way to the new vision and strategy”. The discussion of *Vision 2040* centred on the institution's strategic choices and aspirations, how to make those aspirations a reality, and what needs to change for the aspirations to be realised. A survey conducted amongst the IPF participants during January 2017 in preparation of the February 2017 IPF, included the following key questions:

- If we look 25 years into the future, what will SU be known for in 2040?
- What will take us there?
- What should change to get us to the SU of 2040?
- Are our current values the values that will take us to the SU of 2040?
- What is your understanding, within a university context, of systemic sustainability?
- The higher education landscape is changing for various reasons. What do you envisage the landscape to look like in 20 years?
- Where do you envisage SU being positioned/functioning within this landscape?



At the IPF, five task groups were established to work on certain focus areas that would define the way forward, namely:

- values;
- research themes;
- size and shape;
- bursaries and loans; and
- performance indicators.

The Executive Planning Forum (EPF) in July 2017 consolidated the core elements of SU's *Vision 2040 and Strategic Framework 2019–2024*. The core themes that had emerged from the IPF questionnaire were extensively discussed. Seven important themes were identified, namely excellence, teaching innovation, research, social impact, internationalisation, student-focused and innovation. The task groups also reported back on their work. The outcome of the EPF was clarity on the University's positioning for the future (*Vision 2040*), an understanding of the identified core themes, and support for the notion "if we change nothing, nothing will change".

The proposed core strategic themes were presented and refined at the Rectorate meeting of 23 January 2018. The refined core strategic themes and draft goals were subjected to a further round of refinement at the annual IPF on 13 and 14 February 2018. The goals per core strategic theme were identified and formulated, and some objectives and performance indicators were suggested for each core strategic theme and goal. A visual summary of the process followed in developing the new vision and strategic framework (2019–2024) is presented in the following flow diagram.



Figure 1: Process followed in developing *Vision 2040 and Strategic Framework 2019–2024*

2016	2017	2018
<p>JULY</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Executive Planning Forum. A task group chaired by the Deputy Vice Chancellor: Strategy and Internationalisation is tasked to initiate process for the review of the vision and strategy. <hr/> <p>NOVEMBER</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Rectorate approves an action plan and timeline. 	<p>JANUARY</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Preparation for Institutional Planning Forum (IPF) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides input regarding the SU of the future and elements for success <ul style="list-style-type: none"> An online questionnaire containing seven questions was sent to all participants prior to the forum. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> If we look 25 years into the future, what will SU be known for in 2040? What will take us there? What should change to get us to the SU of 2040? Are our current values the values that will take us to the SU of 2040? What is your understanding, within a university context, of systemic sustainability? The higher education landscape is changing for various reasons. What do you envisage the landscape to look like in 20 years? Where do you envisage SU being positioned / functioning within this landscape? There was a 60% participation rate, which included executive management, deans, vice-deans, and chief and senior directors. <hr/> <p>FEBRUARY</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Institutional Planning Forum: Discussion of results for January 2017 survey <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Five task groups created to provide input regarding specific aspects of the strategy: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Values The future shape and size of SU Research Themes Bursaries and Loans Strategic Performance Indicators <hr/> <p>JULY</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Executive Planning Forum (Executive Management and Deans) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discussion on the nature, role and positioning of SU based on the thematic analysis of the data obtained from the February 2017 questionnaire and input received by the February 2017 IPF. Discussion of the proposed vision, within the context of the feedback from the task groups. <hr/> <p>SEPTEMBER</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Faculty Management and Professional Administrative Support Services environments provide input via their line management on the proposed values, as well as vision and mission elements. The SU Council provides input on the proposed values, as well as vision and mission elements. <hr/> <p>OCTOBER</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students provide input on the proposed values through an online questionnaire After extensive consultation, the Task Group for Research Themes submits its final report and recommendations. <hr/> <p>NOVEMBER</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff provides input on the proposed values through an online questionnaire. 	<p>JANUARY</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Rectorate finalises and approves the vision and mission elements, as well as the values and discusses proposed core strategic themes for the Strategic Framework. <hr/> <p>FEBRUARY</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The IPF provides input on the proposed core strategies and identifies institutional goals for each of the strategies. <hr/> <p>MARCH</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The proposed core strategic themes and institutional goals are presented to the SU Council. <hr/> <p>MAY</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The following SU structures recommend that the SU Council accepts the proposed new vision and strategic framework: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Social and Business Ethics Committee of Council Institutional Forum Executive Committee of Senate Executive Committee of Council Senate <hr/> <p>18 JUNE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The SU Council approves <i>Vision 2040 and Strategic Framework 2019–2024</i>.

“Nothing we do can change the past, but everything we do changes the future.”

– Ashleigh Brilliant



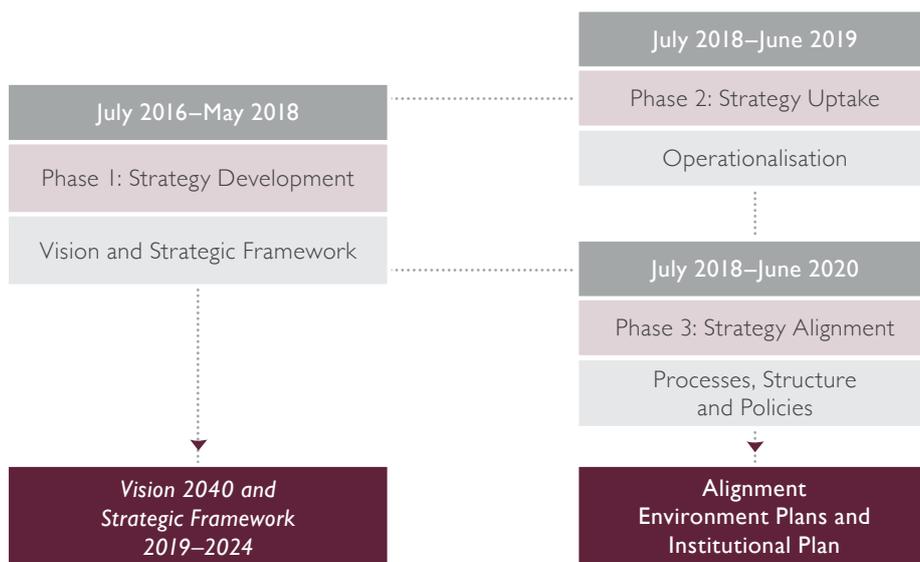
3. APPROACH TO THE STRATEGIC PROCESS

The overarching strategic process consists of three phases. During phase 1, *strategy development* (July 2016 to May 2018), the new vision was compiled, along with the strategic framework that defines the core strategic themes as well as the institutional goals for each strategic theme. This phase also entailed a revision of the University's values.

Phase 2 followed the SU Council's approval of *Vision 2040 and Strategic Framework 2019–2024* on 18 June 2018. During phase 2, *strategy uptake* (July 2018 to June 2019), the core strategic themes and goals will be operationalised by defining context-specific objectives – in essence, a period of sense-making. At this time, we will also finalise operational definitions of key concepts, e.g. 'world-class', 'transformative experience', etc., and adopt relevant theoretical frameworks which will create a basis for shared understanding at SU. This implies interaction with faculties and professional administrative support environments to align the strategic framework and environmental plans.

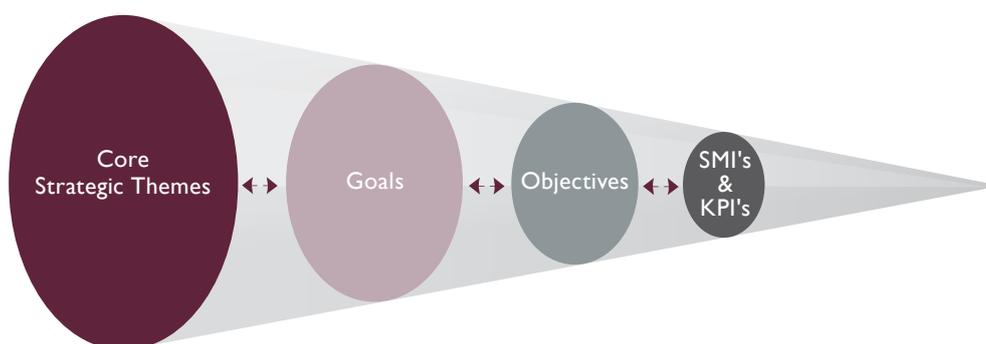
Phase 3, *strategy alignment* (July 2018 to June 2020), overlaps with phase 2. The intent with phase 3 is to close the gap between the planning and formulation of the strategy and the execution of the strategy by aligning and/or streamlining structures, processes and policies. It also implies closing the feedback loop through continuous monitoring and evaluation based on the key performance indicators (KPIs) (which, at SU, are referred to as 'strategic management indicators [SMIs]'). This entails a new approach of integrated planning and execution to ensure an agile, adaptable and responsive organisation. Figure 2 contains a visual representation of the phases and their respective outcomes.

Figure 2: The Stellenbosch University strategic approach: the phases and respective outcomes



Our core strategic themes define the broad areas that form the basis of the strategic framework (2019–2024), with institutional goals, objectives and key performance indicators (or SMIs) linked to each theme. The relationship between the components of the strategic framework is demonstrated in figure 3.

Figure 3: Relationship between components of the strategic framework



4. CONGRUENCY AND ALIGNMENT OF STRATEGIES

No vision or strategy is developed in isolation. Instead, it builds on history and connects the past to the future. Table 1 provides a summary of the congruency and alignment of our core strategic themes for 2019–2024 and *Vision 2040* with the strategies for 2018–2023 and *Vision 2030*.

Table 1: Congruency and alignment of strategies

Elements of Vision 2030	Strategies in Institutional Plan 2018–2023	Vision 2040 mission elements	Vision 2040 aspirations	Core strategic themes (2019–2024)
Increase access to new knowledge markets Increase diversity profile (students)	Broadening access	Influence and change the world around us, while being responsive and embracing change ourselves	An impeccable reputation Transformed and integrated academic community	A transformative student experience
Maintain student success rate	Maintaining momentum on excellence	Collaborative learning and teaching	An impeccable reputation	Networked and collaborative teaching and learning
Positioning as the leading research institution in Africa	Maintaining momentum on excellence	Interdisciplinary research	An impeccable reputation	Research for impact
	Expand internationalisation	Connected to the global world	An impeccable reputation All-encompassing impact	Purposeful partnerships and inclusive networks
	Advance systemic transformation	Value-driven	Transformed and integrated academic community	Employer of choice
Committed, visionary leadership Increase diversity profile (staff)	Enhance systemic sustainability Enhance social impact Advance systemic transformation	Innovative institution	Systemically sustainable institution All-encompassing impact	A thriving SU
	Execute Campus Renewal Project	Systemically sustainable institution		



CONTEXT



5. CONTEXT

Understanding the ecosystem in which we operate, and therefore also the context of our university, is important in shaping our vision and strategy. The context is also important to ensure that the opportunities we have identified are feasible.

A recent publication of the Council on Higher Education (CHE, 2016) describes the higher education challenges in South Africa from a local and global perspective. The document (CHE, 2016) identifies three international trends, namely:

- massification and globalisation;
- knowledge; and
- information and communications technology (ICT).

A publication by Ernst & Young in 2012, in turn, noted that “the higher education sector is undergoing a fundamental transformation in terms of its role in society, mode of operation, and economic structure and value”, and identified five key trends based on the Australian university model. These five trends are:

- democratisation of knowledge and access;
- contestability of markets and funding;
- digital technologies;
- global mobility; and
- integration with industry.

In the South African context, modernisation, social justice and the need for the fundamental transformation of the higher education system (including institutions themselves) as well as the global context and internationalisation have been identified as themes and issues (CHE, 2016).

In addition, higher education challenges in South Africa include institutional instability (especially with the student unrest in 2015 and 2016) affecting the academic programme at many institutions, the slow pace of transformation, racism, access to higher education, the need for a decolonised curriculum, public financial constraints and social cohesion in higher education.

De Villiers (2017) cites the following eleven trends that will influence higher education in the near future.

5.1 Complexity and contingency

In a changeable, contestable and, therefore, negotiable world, university managements have to employ flexible and responsive planning frameworks (Lange, 2010). Our complex era requires agility, adaptability and responsiveness. Universities should be involved in “pattern detection” and “scenario building” (Kinghorn, 2011). The characteristics of an organisation should be attuned to the knowledge economy of the 21st century, including complexity awareness, creativity, agility and continuous learning (Kinghorn, 2011).

To accommodate the complexities, we will need responsible leadership in higher education – locally, regionally and globally (Klopper, 2018). Responsible leadership in the 21st century entails five important aspects, namely (i) being able to make informed ethical judgments about existing norms and rules, (ii) displaying moral courage and aspiring to positive change, (iii) engaging in long-term thinking and perspective taking, (iv) communicating effectively with stakeholders, and (v) participating in collective problem-solving (Vogtlin, 2017).

5.2 Knowledge economy and collaborative knowledge production

Knowledge has become “the key strategic resource necessary for prosperity” (Duderstadt, 2000). Universities have a crucial role to play in the knowledge economy. Specialised, disciplinary knowledge has limited capacity to explain and solve complex problems. Complex times call for collaboration across different sets of boundaries: between and across disciplines, across institutional and national borders, and between universities and other sites of knowledge generation. Collaboration around knowledge projects and the co-production of



knowledge is viable and sensible. Bokor (2012) has also noted that “the massive increase in the availability of ‘knowledge’ online and the mass expansion of access to university markets mean a fundamental change in the role of universities as originators and keepers of knowledge”.

5.3 Collaborative learning

The focus should be on *how* students learn instead of on what they learn (Tapscott & Williams, 2010). The current, dominant model of pedagogy (lecturer-centred lectures) has become obsolete. New technology enables us to embrace collaborative learning models. It facilitates a change in the relationship between students and lecturers in the learning process.

Collaborative learning provides the basis for the university to be a learning organisation – an organisation characterised by a shared vision, team learning, systems thinking, mental models and personal mastery (Senge, 2006; 2014)

5.4 Innovation

We need methods of investigation that move away from reporting what has been seen, to creating what has never been seen (Kinghorn, 2011). Creativity and innovation can create unusual products and processes to solve the complex problems of our time. The habit and ability of pattern detection and scenario-building is important to inculcate.

5.5 Pressure on public funds for higher education

Ongoing fiscal restraints applied by national governments as well as shrinking corporate and donor contributions have become a trend in 21st-century higher education (Altbach, 1999). It has serious negative implications for universities, students, academics and academic programmes. This could result in student fee hikes, long-term decisions to cut programmes and academic posts, and the narrowing of institutional offerings. Higher education is increasingly privatised, although this does nothing to address the current pressure to broaden access to higher education. We need an ‘entrepreneurial university’ to find creative and novel funding solutions. In this regard, Bokor (2012) has proposed that universities should build relationships with industry to support the funding and application of research that would emphasise the role of universities as drivers of innovation and growth.

5.6 Massification

Universities played an important part in providing the human resources for industrial expansion after World War II, and continues to provide human and other knowledge resources in the present era. However, South Africa still has an elite higher education system with a participation rate of less than 20%. The ‘massification’ trend has affected many aspects of higher education – from institutional structures and the size and shape of the institution, to the curriculum and pedagogy, modes of delivery, research, demands on academics, and relationships with external communities (CHE, 2016).

5.7 Diversity

Worldwide, 21st-century universities increasingly have to cater for greater diversity and new majorities (Lange, 2010). This includes diversity in terms of gender, class and ethnicity, as well as age and abilities. The traditional view of university students being middle and upper-class recent school leavers is being challenged. Older persons, females, members of the working class and previously disadvantaged individuals have a growing presence in student bodies globally. In recruiting students, therefore, universities have to look in places other than the traditional ones alone.

5.8 Network society

Formal and informal networks are a feature of the 21st century (Lange, 2010). In a time of resource scarcity and complexity, relationships are prime. Organisations have to team up with others who share their goals and objectives so as to pool resources. Because of increasing complexity and globalisation, organisations have no choice but to collaborate within networks to address different aspects of the challenges they experience.



5.9 Internationalisation

An “international market place, not only for conventional products, but also for knowledge professionals, research and education services” has emerged (Duderstadt, 2000). Individual institutions form part of a worldwide higher education system. Student and staff exchanges, global ‘big science’ collaborations, international joint ventures, research teams and partnerships are integral parts of this worldwide higher education environment. Against this backdrop, higher education will be increasingly internationalised going forward. The corporatisation of the university will continue, external grounds of validation (e.g. league tables and rankings) will continue to wield power, and the pressure towards uniformity will persist. According to Bokor (2012), global mobility will grow for students, academics and university brands, and will create global partnerships and broader access to students and academics. Thus, it will be important to establish strategic and valued partnerships that can result in multilateral agreements and networks of common purpose (Klopper, 2018).

5.10 Sustainability

Sustainability theorists emphasise three aspects: economic, ecological and social. ‘Economic’ includes financial restraints, the entrepreneurial university and innovative funding models. ‘Ecological’ pertains to ecological elements, both in curriculum and operations, while ‘social’ refers to inclusion, student and staff wellness, corporate citizenship and social cohesion.

Furthermore, it is important to note that Africa will experience the sharpest population growth globally this century. By 2030, Asia will still dominate in terms of the number of people in the age bracket 15–35, with sub-Saharan Africa in second place. Yet by 2100, most of the world’s young people will be from our continent (United Nations, 2015). Strong population growth is anticipated in Southern and Eastern Africa in the next 15 years (Du Plessis, 2017).

The reputation of the South African higher education system relies on the postgraduate system (Cloete, 2017). South Africa should therefore maintain and strengthen the new-knowledge-producing subsector of higher education.

5.11 Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR) and technology

For many years, universities worldwide have been arguing that the digital revolution will substantially challenge the way universities function (Tapscott & Williams, 2010). It has been said that “a new generation of students requires a different model of higher education” (Tapscott & Williams, 2010). Weiss (2002) indicated that classrooms would be transformed from spaces of delivery to spaces of active inquiry, authorship and ownership. Johnson, et al. in the *NMC Horizon Report* (2013) lists the key trends of the use and application of technology in higher education as follows:

- People expect to be able to work, learn and study whenever and wherever they want to.
- Technologies are increasingly cloud-based, and notions of IT support are decentralised.
- The world of work is increasingly collaborative and is driving changes in the way student learning and projects are structured.
- The abundance of resources/relationships via the internet are increasingly challenging educators to revisit their roles.
- Education paradigms are shifting to include online learning, hybrid learning and collaborative models such as blended learning.

In summary, SU is committed to a journey of becoming a transformed, inclusive institution and fit-for-purpose university. The University should meet the needs of Africa’s growing population. To serve these students, learning should occur not only through the residential model, but also on digital platforms. SU’s focus will be on the competencies and skills we need to impart to students to equip them for the future. SU will produce knowledge of Africa, in Africa and for Africa, while ensuring that our work has a global reach.



VISION 2040



6. VISION 2040

“Vision is the art of seeing the invisible.”

– Jonathan Swift

In response to all the challenges and opportunities, our vision guides us in our endeavour to achieve our future aims.

6.1 Vision 2040

Our vision defines what we want to become by 2040. It is an aspirational description of what we would like to achieve in the long term. Our vision is that, by 2040:

Stellenbosch University will be Africa’s leading research-intensive university, globally recognised as excellent, inclusive and innovative, where we advance knowledge in service of society.

SU’s aspirations for the realisation of *Vision 2040*

- An **impeccable reputation** as a proud African knowledge hub that serves the continent through research, innovation and education
- A **transformed and integrated** academic community that celebrates critical thinking, promotes debate and is committed to democracy, human rights and social justice with an outward, international and future focus
- Having an **all-encompassing impact**¹ on the social, financial and environmental well-being of the town, region, country and continent, with a global reach
- A **systemically sustainable** institution in economic, social and environmental terms, as a national asset that serves the diverse needs of our communities

^{*1} All-encompassing impact implies taking a holistic view of social, environmental, fiscal and economic dimensions (the big picture). It is about looking beyond inputs and outputs to also consider outcomes and their impact – i.e. understanding our entire footprint.



6.2 Mission

Our mission supports what we strive to achieve and how we intend to do it. It defines us as a university, why we exist and our reason for being. To achieve our vision, the mission is as follows:

Stellenbosch University is a research-intensive university where we attract outstanding students, employ talented staff and provide a world-class environment; a place connected to the world, while enriching and transforming local, continental and global communities.

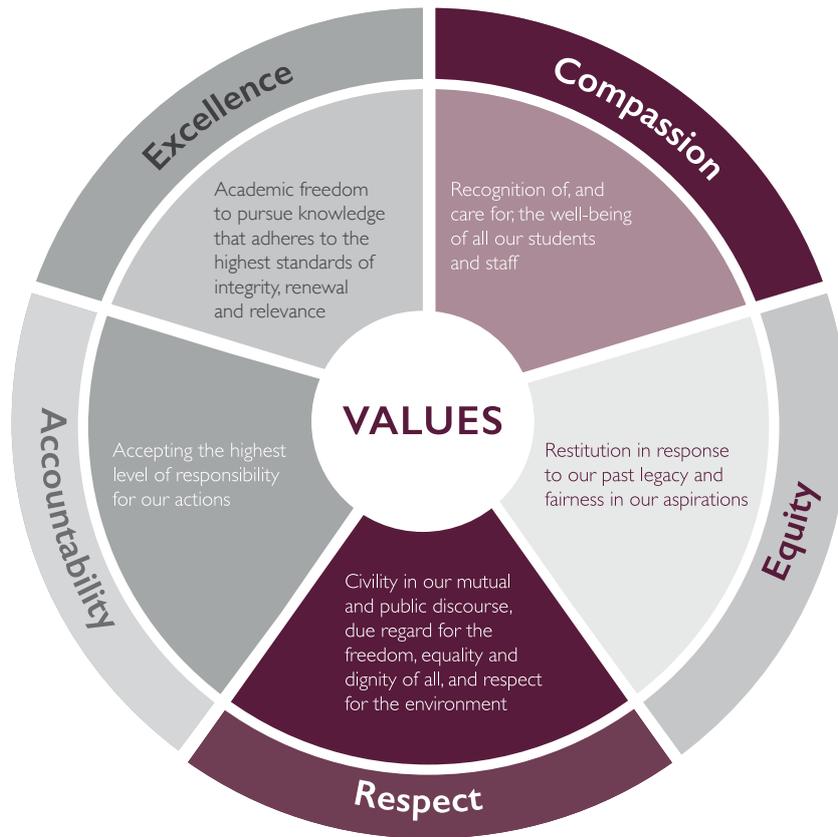
To achieve our mission, we:

- strengthen **interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary research** to advance, deepen, transfer and implement knowledge;
- are **innovative** and share our innovations with the world;
- nurture close **relationships** with our stakeholders through engagement, collaboration and mutually beneficial partnerships;
- share our knowledge offering through **networked and collaborative teaching and learning;**
- build an academic community of **shared values;** and
- **influence and change** the world around us, while being responsive and embracing change ourselves.



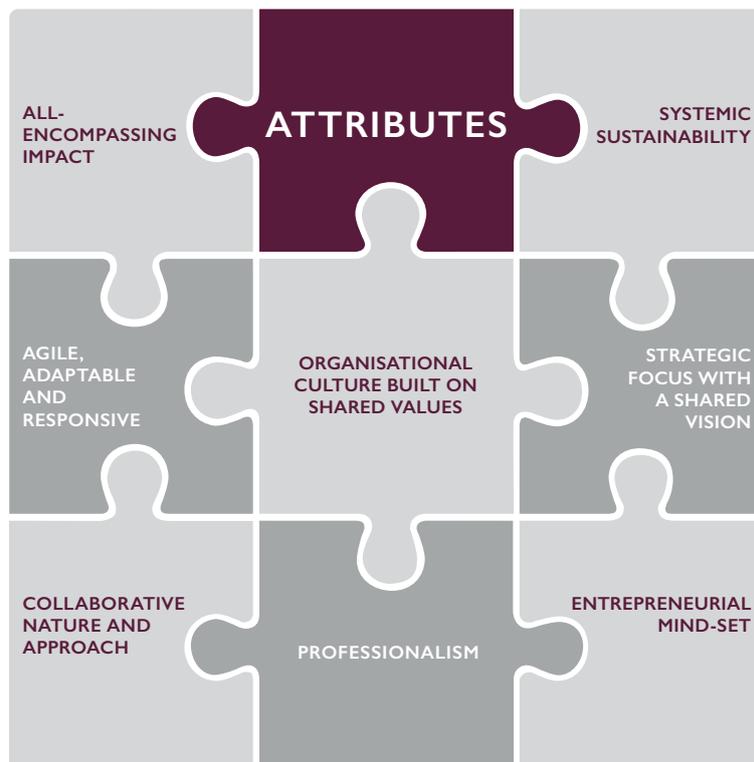
6.3 Values

Our values relate to the beliefs and attitudes that guide our behaviour ('our action guides'). All of the values are equally important, are interconnected and will inform SU's ethics code.



6.4 Attributes

Our attributes define the qualities and characteristics of the University. The following eight attributes embody what we stand for:



6.5 Enablers

Enablers are the elements that make everything possible. They describe the capabilities, forces and resources that contribute to SU's success. Achieving our vision and mission and implementing *Strategic Framework 2019–2024* will not be possible without the enablers of:

- people (staff and students);
- purpose;
- technology;
- infrastructure;
- sound finance;
- good governance; and
- good communication.



STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK 2019–2024



7. STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK 2019–2024

Strategic Framework 2019–2024 articulates our vision, mission and strategic choices, and provides a broad framework within which the University positions itself as a leading research-intensive university. It accentuates the critical review of our approach to research, teaching and learning, social impact as well as our processes throughout the University to attain the goals articulated in the framework. The purpose of the document is, firstly, to provide a framework within which further planning and implementation will be essential. The framework states neither detailed objectives nor mechanisms for operationalisation. Secondly, through a process of participation, we can unpack how each core strategic theme will be operationalised across the various functions and entities of the University. This will be followed by the development of the contents into detailed initiatives and programmes. Thirdly, the framework affords responsibility centres, faculties and professional administrative support environments the opportunity to contextualise the document in their respective environments, generate context-specific objectives and develop the contents into detailed initiatives and programmes that are reflected in the annual environment plans. This approach allows for an annual review and revision of the objectives, while providing the flexibility to adapt to changing national and global trends, policy imperatives and market needs.

*“If you change nothing,
nothing will change.”*

– Tony Robbins

CORE STRATEGIC THEMES



**A TRANSFORMATIVE
STUDENT EXPERIENCE**



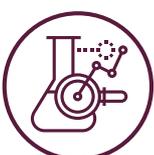
**PURPOSEFUL PARTNERSHIPS
AND INCLUSIVE NETWORKS**



**NETWORKED AND
COLLABORATIVE TEACHING
AND LEARNING**



EMPLOYER OF CHOICE



RESEARCH FOR IMPACT



**A THRIVING
STELLENBOSCH UNIVERSITY**



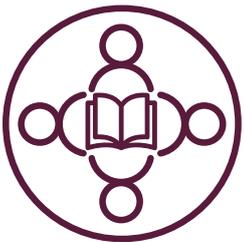


7.1 CORE STRATEGIC THEME 1: A TRANSFORMATIVE STUDENT EXPERIENCE

At SU, we value our students and are committed to delivering a transformative student experience to each one of them. With this intention, we want to ensure that SU is accessible to qualifying students from all backgrounds, including to students who face barriers to participation in university education. We regard it as a journey – from our first contact with prospective students until they graduate and embrace the role of alumni. A transformative student experience is predicated on the provision of opportunities for growth to all undergraduate and postgraduate students, including guidance, support and services from SU to enable their success.

Institutional goals to achieve a transformative student experience

- 7.1.1 Provide a unique, personalised student experience that serves as a catalyst for transformational change amidst opportunities for engagement and development through a first-class academic offering, which prepares graduates to lead and excel in a diverse world.
- 7.1.2 Develop our students' graduate attributes so that they can be 21st-century citizens and achieve their full potential.
- 7.1.3 Strengthen strategic enrolment management to enhance access and inclusivity.
- 7.1.4 Enhance our student success rate through educational innovation.
- 7.1.5 Deliver comprehensive, premium-quality support services to our student community.
- 7.1.6 Enhance and expand engagement opportunities for our substantial alumni community.
- 7.1.7 Create relevant opportunities for work-integrated learning towards a successful career and positive societal impact.



7.2 CORE STRATEGIC THEME 2: NETWORKED AND COLLABORATIVE TEACHING AND LEARNING

SU is embarking on a journey of networked and collaborative teaching and learning through the creation of learning communities where students, staff and alumni can experience meaningful learning. The University promotes a learning-centred approach to teaching that focuses on learning as a partnership, where students are seen as co-creators of knowledge and learning environments. Within a learning-centred approach, teaching activities facilitate knowledge-building and actively engage students in their own learning.

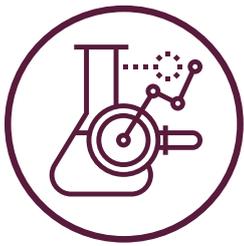
In addition, the University has a holistic understanding of teaching and learning, which includes both individual and social benefits. SU's teaching practices are deeply embedded in, shaped by and responsive to the contexts in which they take place.

These approaches shape the University as a learning organisation, enabling the emergence of learning communities among students, staff and alumni in various configurations. Networked and collaborative learning creates an environment that encourages intellectual inquisitiveness, being an essential skill for sustained critical and creative thinking.



Institutional goals for networked and collaborative teaching and learning

- 7.2.1 Focus on a learning-centred approach to teaching, whilst promoting a holistic understanding of teaching and learning.
- 7.2.2 Foster interdisciplinary and interprofessional teaching and learning by empowering students to participate in a learning community where staff and students work together to learn, solve problems, research and innovate.
- 7.2.3 Create an institution of continuous learning that is skilled at co-creating and sharing knowledge and insights.
- 7.2.4 Promote the professionalisation of academics in their teaching role, and the scholarship of teaching and learning.
- 7.2.5 Develop a digital strategy to provide the basis for digital fluency and the meaningful integration of learning technologies towards a networked University that engages and inspires students, staff and alumni.
- 7.2.6 Expand on SU's knowledge offering to serve new student markets.
- 7.2.7 Promote the continuous renewal of the University's academic programmes by means of a systemic process with clearly assigned roles and responsibilities for the various role-players.



7.3 CORE STRATEGIC THEME 3: RESEARCH FOR IMPACT

Research for impact at SU implies optimising the scientific, economic, social, scholarly and cultural impact of our research. Our focus is on interdisciplinary research that benefits society on a national, continental and global scale. At the same time, we are committed to basic and disciplinary research excellence, as it forms the basis for applied and translational research.

Institutional goals for research for impact

- 7.3.1 Develop a research agenda derived from SU's values, societal needs and the sustainability imperative.
- 7.3.2 Conduct research of significance based on selected, focused strategic research areas.
- 7.3.3 Inform the future research agenda and strategically involve our stakeholders.
- 7.3.4 Conduct collaborative and interdisciplinary research that addresses the grand challenges of society.
- 7.3.5 Create an embedded culture of innovation and entrepreneurship in our research.





7.4 CORE STRATEGIC THEME 4: PURPOSEFUL PARTNERSHIPS AND INCLUSIVE NETWORKS

As part of our mission, we at SU have declared our willingness to influence and change the world around us through collaboration, as well as to be responsive and embrace change ourselves. Central to the mission is the notion that what happens in the world shapes our research, teaching and learning as well as our engagement, and that what happens at our university matters to the world. As a university, we are committed to South Africa and Africa. At the same time, we are intensely aware of our role in and relation to the international arena. In order to inspire and be inspired, SU will engage and collaborate with stakeholders, the communities we serve, industry, government and our university partners at a local, regional, continental and global level. Our collaboration and engagement approach is congruent with our values, with specific reference to respect, compassion and equity.

Institutional goals for purposeful partnerships and inclusive networks

- 7.4.1 Develop a framework of principles to ensure local relevance, regional impact and a global reach to enable transactional partnerships and promote transformative partnerships.
- 7.4.2 Promote a deep connectedness and interaction with business, industry and government to leverage our strengths, which will include work-integrated learning, continuing professional development, collaborative research, consulting, licensing, spin-out companies and commercial ventures.
- 7.4.3 Embrace the communities we serve to bring about social, cultural, environmental and economic development and change.
- 7.4.4 Enhance and expand engagement opportunities for, and foster our relationship with, our substantial alumni community.
- 7.4.5 Build effective collaborations through partnerships, alliances and networks with other universities, institutions and organisations, where such collaboration contributes to excellence in teaching and learning, outstanding research and social engagement and impact.
- 7.4.6 Foster distributed, networked and reciprocal partnerships that are nurtured by both institutional structuring and personal relations.
- 7.4.7 Establish appropriate partnerships with institutions in all societal sectors, including the spheres of civil society, public discourse, public opinion-formation and public policy-making.



7.5 CORE STRATEGIC THEME 5: EMPLOYER OF CHOICE

In support of SU's vision, mission, values and aspirations, it is imperative to support the health and well-being of our people. In SU's pursuit to be the employer of choice, we envisage an enabling environment that includes the principles of co-creation and appropriate participation, and embodies the characteristics of an inclusive campus culture.

Institutional goals for employer of choice

- 7.5.1 Develop a comprehensive people strategy for SU that embraces diversity and equity, leverages unique talents and strengths, promotes life-long learning and celebrates achievements.
- 7.5.2 Enhance the well-being of our people by creating and promoting an enabling, inclusive, equitable, healthy and safe working and learning environment that encourages our diverse staff to maximise their productivity, and where they feel valued and contribute to SU's excellence.
- 7.5.3 Improve human resource processes through the application of technology and digitalisation.
- 7.5.4 Develop and execute a game-changing talent acquisition and talent management plan, which includes equitable remuneration, the management and rewarding of performance, the identification of competencies and the development of talent and leadership throughout the career cycle of each SU employee.
- 7.5.5 Support the development of SU as a learning organisation that is responsive to both individual and organisational needs.



7.6 CORE STRATEGIC THEME 6: A THRIVING STELLENBOSCH UNIVERSITY

To make SU a thriving² organisation, we envisage a vibrant, prosperous and systemically sustainable university. SU recognises the major challenges associated with developing into a thriving university. We acknowledge that we need to be both responsive and proactive in shaping the future of the University. We are committed to systemic sustainability, which includes people, place (social), prosperity (economic) and the environment and compels responsible corporate governance.

Institutional goals for a thriving Stellenbosch University

- 7.6.1 Cultivate an SU characterised by inclusivity, deep and intentional transformation, and diversity.
- 7.6.2 Create opportunities for the advancement of multilingualism in academic, administrative, professional and social contexts, whilst recognising the intellectual wealth inherent in linguistic diversity.
- 7.6.3 Change the size, shape and mix of our student population and of our academic programmes to mirror the strategic direction of our vision.
- 7.6.4 Create a financially sustainable organisation.

* ² Thriving is defined as "being successful or making steady progress; prospering; flourishing".



- 7.6.5 Raise the standard of the University's facilities and infrastructure to that of a world-class research-intensive university, while embracing visual redress.
- 7.6.6 Bring about profound and sustainable change and regeneration in all facets and functions of SU to be agile, adaptive and responsive.
- 7.6.7 Aspire to be a leading, research-intensive university ranked amongst the top world universities by 2024.
- 7.6.8 Create an entrepreneurial culture that advances innovation institutionally.



STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT INDICATORS



8. STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT INDICATORS

8.1 Principles for developing strategic management indicators

SU uses the term 'strategic management indicator (SMI)' for a key performance indicator (KPI) that measures performance against the University's core strategic themes and goals. The indicator should be defined in such a way that it can appropriately measure progress towards achieving the set goal. The goal, in turn, should be defined in such a way that suitable variables for measurement can be identified. The existing body of literature on this subject has long established that KPIs should be 'SMART', i.e. should display the characteristics of being **S**pecific, **M**easurable, **A**ttainable, **R**elevant and **T**ime-bound. Lately, another two characteristics have been added to this list, extending the acronym to 'SMARTER'. Although the added 'E' and 'R' may be assigned several suggested meanings, **E**xplainable and **R**elative best fit SU's purpose.

To support the management of the University and improve the usefulness of SU's performance measures, the SMIs should ideally also have certain additional characteristics. These are (i) the availability of historical data for SMI variables, (ii) the ability to 'break down' an SMI for application in other organisational units of the University, such as faculties and departments, or in other, related entities, such as academic programmes and modules, and (iii) the 'manageability' of SMI variables. With regard to characteristic (i) above, historical data should be available for SMIs to measure trends over time. This is especially useful when the University defines a new set of SMIs, as it allows historical trends to be visualised, based on which desirable future outcomes, and thus SMI values, can be determined. Characteristic (ii) requires that an SMI that applies at the highest strategic and organisational level should ideally also be definable at lower levels, while those at lower levels should be capable of being 'rolled up' or 'aggregated' to higher levels. A simple example is the number of full-time equivalent students (FTEs) enrolled and associated with a particular programme. If the number of FTEs enrolled in the programme increases, this also increases total FTE enrolment at the University. Similarly, the SMI can be 'rolled down' from the strategic level to reflect a similar measure at a lower level, i.e. if the University wants to increase its total FTE enrolment, FTE enrolment in certain programmes will have to increase. Characteristic (iii), in turn, refers to the effect of management decisions on SMI variables. Ideally, SMI variables should be a direct reflection of management decisions, rendering the strategic goal 'manageable'. Returning to the above example of FTE enrolments, for instance, if a management decision is taken to increase enrolments, the FTE variable should directly increase for a rise in enrolments and decrease for a decline in enrolments.

Vision 2040 and Strategic Framework 2019–2024 includes six new core strategic themes and accompanying goals. During phase 2 of the strategic process, specific objectives will be developed for each of the goals. Once completed, a representative group will finalise a new set of SMIs and KPIs to measure progress towards achieving the strategies, goals and objectives.

As is evident from the process highlighted above, this is work in progress. Yet, in the section below, we present some initial views concerning the measurement of SU's proposed core strategic themes and goals. Currently, SU has 16 SMIs that have been in effect since they were approved by Council in December 2014. These SMIs are included in the University's Institutional Plan, along with appropriate definitions and goals. They also form part of SU's Annual Performance Plan and Mid-Year Performance Report submitted to the Department of Higher Education and Training as required by the revised Regulations for Reporting by Public Higher Education Institutions in terms of sections 41 and 69 of the Higher Education Act 101 of 1997.

A few high-level measures are proposed below to shed some light on the potential and eventual measurement of each of the six newly defined core strategic themes. Note that some of the measures apply to more than one core strategic theme and have therefore been repeated.



8.2 High-level measures for six core strategic themes

8.2.1 A transformative student experience

The following SMIs fit in well with this theme:

- SU alumni survey (How well did SU prepare you for your professional role/the job market?)
- Student participation rate in the co-curriculum
- Distribution of international students enrolled full-time, part-time and on exchange visits, by country of origin
- SU student participation rate in international activities and exchanges
- Number of students actively participating in SU's BeWell mentor wellness project (and other, similar initiatives aimed at addressing wellness in terms of the physical, emotional, intellectual, occupational, social and spiritual dimensions)
- Composition of total student body in terms of socio-economic score distribution
- Composition of total student body (percentage of coloured, black African, Indian, Asian and white students)
- Undergraduate first-year retention rate
- Student success rate (module, undergraduate and postgraduate; HEMIS-based)
- Throughput rates:
 - Percentage of students who complete their qualifications within the prescribed time plus two years
 - Graduate completion rate of master's degrees in minimum time plus one year
 - Graduate completion rate of doctorates in minimum time plus one year
- Number of degrees awarded, by level
- FTE students, weighted with study level, per FTE-CI staff member
- Achievement of graduate attributes
- Survey on students' experience of SU's student services

8.2.2 Networked and collaborative teaching and learning

No existing SMIs link up with this core strategic theme. The following indicators may be considered as potential measures:

- Elements of the co-curriculum
- Number of module credits of students enrolled for Mode 2 programmes as a percentage of all enrolled module credits
- Number of enrolments for staff development courses as a percentage of the permanent and fixed-term staff member headcount
- Number of short-course enrolments
- Average percentage of academic programmes renewed in past five years
- Ratio of accredited research publications on scholarship of teaching and learning to all SU research publications



- Ratio of academic modules with a networking or collaborative learning experience to all modules taught
- Ratio of academic modules that provide online material or a digitalised learning experience to all modules taught
- Number of staff participating in networking events (professional bodies, conferences, communities of practice) at a national/international level

8.2.3 Research for impact

The following existing SMIs are a good match for this core strategic theme:

- Percentage of permanent CI staff with a doctorate
- Weighted research outputs per FTE-CI staff member
- Number of actionable disclosures of inventions per year
- Third-stream income as a percentage of SU's total income
- Percentage of staff remuneration not afforded from the main budget
- Percentage of funded proposals with principal investigators from multiple departments/schools/faculties
- Number of collaborative or interdisciplinary research publications
- Number of publications produced in collaboration with strategic or preferred international partner universities
- Percentage of master's and doctoral degrees awarded that entailed industry involvement
- Percentage of research contracts that entailed industry involvement
- Number of research chairs
- Number of postdoctoral fellowships
- Number of citations of papers produced in collaboration with strategic or preferred international partner universities
- Median of H-index for professors and associate professors
- Impact of research on societal challenges in the domains of politics, industry, the natural environment, civil society, public discourse and the forming of public opinion

8.2.4 Purposeful partnerships and inclusive networks

The following SMIs fit in well with this core strategic theme:

- Points for partnerships in Africa per FTE-CI staff member (expressed as a percentage) and points for other regions of choice
- Percentage of staff remuneration not afforded from the main budget
- Appropriate indicators or a combination of indicators for measuring social impact, such as the number of training opportunities offered per year and their participation rates, as well as participation in University-supported social impact activities, including Woordfees and SU Choir performances, to name only two
- Number of non-research contracts (specify type of contracts)
- Percentage of international students enrolled at SU
- Percentage of joint degrees awarded
- Percentage of master's and doctoral degrees awarded that entailed industry involvement



- Percentage of research contracts that entailed industry involvement
- Number of students participating in Study Abroad (all categories)
- Percentage/number of partnerships in the domains of government, industry and civil society
- Number/percentage of CI and C2 staff participating in (professional) staff exchanges/benchmarking visits/professional bodies/communities of practice within predetermined parameters (e.g. only specific preferred institutions/within existing partnerships, etc.)

8.2.5 Employer of choice

The following SMIs might work well to measure this core strategic theme:

- Percentage of academic staff and PASS staff with doctorates (PhDs)
- Composition of permanent (including fixed-term) staff (percentage of coloured, black African, Indian, Asian and white members)
- Composition of permanent (including fixed-term) staff, such as percentage of female staff
- FTE students, weighted with study level, per FTE-CI staff member
- Number of enrolments for staff development courses, i.e. leadership development, transformation competencies, awareness of rape culture, etc., as percentage of the permanent and fixed-term staff member head count
- Percentage of permanent (including fixed-term) staff hailing from other countries
- Number of academic staff members inducted into national or international academies
- Feedback on level of comprehensive staff well-being as measured in, amongst others, regular staff climate and culture surveys

8.2.6 A thriving Stellenbosch University

The following SMIs fit in well with this core strategic theme:

- Weighted research outputs per FTE-CI staff member
- FTE students, weighted with study level, per FTE-CI staff member
- Percentage of staff remuneration not afforded from the main budget
- Third-stream income as a percentage of SU's total income
- Fourth-stream income as a percentage of SU's total income
- Fifth-stream income as a percentage of SU's total income:
 - Annual giving campaigns
 - Annual donors
 - Endowment
- Suitable indicators of environmental sustainability, such as water and electricity usage, and ratio of spending on facilities maintenance
- Suitable indicators of good governance practices (that contribute to the sustainability of the institution more broadly, e.g. with regard to risk mitigation, sound decision-making, legal compliance, etc.)
- Position on selected international rankings
- Innovation and entrepreneurship activities:
 - Spin-out companies
 - Commercialisation agreements



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