

TOWARDS WESTERN AT 150

DRAFT Strategic Plan for Review

Strategic Planning Steering Committee (SPSC)

Draft 33 – June 4, 2021 FOR SENATE

LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Western University is located on the traditional lands of the Anishinaabek, Haudenosaunee, Lūnaapéewak and Chonnocton (Neutral) peoples. The Huron-Wendat peoples also have a history of living in this territory. In the London area, there were Treaty 6 London Township, Treaty 7 Sombra Township, and Treaty 21 Longwoods. This land continues to be home to diverse Indigenous Peoples (First Nations, Métis and Inuit) whom we recognize as contemporary stewards of the land and vital contributors to our society. By recognizing First Nations peoples' relationships to the land, we make explicit Indigenous Peoples' presence and rights to self-determination.

INTRODUCTION

As the world moves from pandemic to recovery, its leaders are being asked to take a fresh look at longstanding challenges. Western University is ready to take on this obligation with determination and creativity, to build on our successes, and to work toward a more prosperous, just and inclusive society.

The world needs the very best from its universities. Generations are depending on it. And so, we must take seriously our role in serving the public good.

Western has a distinguished history of doing just that. A history marked by the discoveries and achievements of individual scholars and teachers over the past 140 years, and our collective successes in advancing knowledge and building a thriving community. The result is a strong academic and research environment with world-class faculty and programs and a university that has long provided an unmatched student experience. These strengths have allowed us to attract top students, build state-of-the-art facilities, and raise the resources needed for ongoing support.

We are now poised to build a university ready to mark its sesquicentennial stronger, more energized, more influential, and more inclusive than ever before in its history.

Our commitments, our energy, our plans

We accept the challenge to lead in building a more inclusive world, and we understand that the work we do together toward greater equity and diversity will make Western better and stronger, more fit for the

twenty-first century. These are important commitments on which Western is making progress, and there is an energy in our community to do more.

We also recognize the potential in our academic community to increase the impact of our research, teaching and community engagement, and we seek to unleash that potential—on campus, in London, in Ontario, in Canada, and around the world.

This plan is designed to channel our community’s commitments, our energy, and our aspirations as we approach a milestone anniversary for the university and think creatively, ambitiously, and strategically about Western’s future.

Launched in Fall 2020, the process, led by the Strategic Plan Steering Committee (SPSC), has widely engaged students, faculty, and staff individually and in academic departments and administrative units, our alumni, members of the Senate and the Board of Governors, and members of the public. The plan is the result of an extensive consultation exercise involving all elements of the Western community.

These consultations revealed broad eagerness to advance Western in numerous directions and this plan embraces the multiple and varied ambitions that were raised during our consultations and other ambitions yet to be voiced. It embraces bold action, to experiment, to reach for our aspirations, to take more risks and to pursue achievements even when it seems beyond our grasp.

Out of these consultations, and having considered Western data and other evidence about the postsecondary education environment, the plan has identified three overarching themes:

- **THEME 1 - GREATER IMPACT**
 - Grow strategically
 - Stimulate our research, scholarship, and creative activity
 - Promote teaching and learning for the future
 - Enrich the student experience

- **THEME 2 - PEOPLE, COMMUNITY, AND CULTURE**
 - Advance Reconciliation with Indigenous communities
 - Create a more equitable and inclusive Western
 - Thrive through belonging

- **THEME 3 - WESTERN’S PLACE IN THE WORLD**
 - Concentrate on place, and ...
 - ... Engage the world
 - Sustainability, an imperative

This plan charts the direction the Western community will pursue to reach its aspirations. Detailed work on reaching these goals will come later this year, and in the years ahead, in response to and with ongoing reference to this plan.

This plan expresses great confidence in the energy of the Western community—of *ourselves*, as we chart an innovative and deeply *Western* path toward our next hundred and fifty years.

THEME 1 - GREATER IMPACT

Impact emerged as a key word in our planning.

Universities by their nature are constantly transforming themselves: creating new academic programs, pursuing new avenues of research, welcoming new students, staff and faculty—in short, always changing.

The question for universities is not “should we change” but rather “how should we change?”

There is a strong desire at Western to pursue significant change in key areas of our work: in our research impact, and in our community-engaged research; in our work with London and Southwestern Ontario; in deepening the student experience; in working more closely with our affiliate university colleges; in making more of our relationships with the hospitals and the health care community; and in pursuing partnerships that will allow us to achieve greater impact.

GROW STRATEGICALLY

We concluded it will be difficult for Western to achieve much greater impact without growth in its resources.

Growth is not an end in itself, and is not reductively or simply an increase in enrolment.

Our community wants intentional, strategic, and ethical growth aimed at deepening our ability to deliver on our mission. If we want to increase our impact, we must grow smartly in order to transform the opportunities we have to carry out our mission with greater effect.

Western is ready to be more and do more

Increasing the impact of our collective efforts will require several kinds of coordinated growth, which must also be deliberate and strategic.

To reach our goals, Western’s entire ecosystem must grow as one, even if for planning purposes we divide that growth into three interrelated domains:

- **Increase the faculty and staff complements:** To reach our potential we will need to increase our faculty and staff complements. We need more exceptional colleagues to drive our research enterprise, offer innovative academic programs, secure new partnerships, and engage our students.
- **Expand student enrolment:** We will also gradually increase enrolment, as we have been doing for the past three decades, at all levels of study. Over time, we would expect to reach 50,000 students and learners, including undergraduate, graduate, postdoctoral, and lifelong learners. Students are essential to the effort to deepen Western’s engagement in the world, and they are integral to our efforts to create more impact. As a part of this growth, we will create recruitment programs and student-support programs to deepen the diversity of our student body.

- **Secure resources and building infrastructure:** As we grow in people and activity, we must also ensure our physical spaces and human and material supports are adequate to fulfil our educational and research missions.

Investments in recruiting top faculty and students, and building an impact strategy around talent that is broadly supported by physical and financial resources, reveal our commitment to viewing growth as a long-term prospect. For lasting impact, we need to do growth well, rather than quickly.

STIMULATE RESEARCH, SCHOLARSHIP, AND CREATIVE ACTIVITY

Research, scholarship and creative activity are at the heart of all great universities. They have been a hallmark of Western’s achievements from the origins of the university. We have a proud legacy of “firsts” and a long roster of intellectual achievements that have changed the world.

Western is motivated to serve not only individual disciplines but also the public good—by advancing knowledge and sharing it, with traditional methodologies and interdisciplinary ones and through emerging inventions of new methodologies to meet unforeseen challenges. Some of our research will respond to the issues of the day; other forms of research will be devoted to fundamental efforts for which there may be no immediately obvious applications. But all the work contributes to the sum of human knowledge; and some of it will make the world more beautiful or our lives more fully examined.

To support these core motivations, we will take steps to expand support for research, scholarship, and creative activity. Adding to our faculty, staff, and student complements will be one important first step.

Tackling the grand challenges of our time

While individual, curiosity-driven fundamental research and creative practice across the academic disciplines remain a cornerstone of Western, we will also pursue models of collaborative interdisciplinary research that address the most pressing challenges of our time. Among these are the challenges of sustainability, climate change, systemic racism, socioeconomic inequality, threats to democracy, and the imperatives of citizenship.

We will build on Western’s institutes-model by seeking additional ways to organize our collective research efforts. One will be the Western Academy for Advanced Research (WAFAR), to be launched in Fall 2021. WAFAR will create substantial new opportunities to attract distinguished academics to join our community as visiting researchers to work with our faculty and students on pressing challenges from multidisciplinary perspectives.

To support our research, scholarship and creative activity, we will strengthen core facilities and invest in common resources such as laboratories, libraries, studios and technological infrastructure. We will expand our Western research chairs program and find new ways to recognize and promote the achievements of our academic community. We will also continue to invest in our libraries as foundational for all of Western’s research, scholarship and creative activities.

We will seek out new partnerships both internally and externally, and create a partnership concierge model to facilitate these connections.

Internally, we will be more deliberate in connecting expertise from different parts of our community to pursue common projects. We will shift internal research-organization and budget models to achieve greater plasticity in collaborations across boundaries at all levels.

Working together inside and outside the university

We will sustain extant programs to support research across all of our faculties, and we will review how best to support these programs for the future on an annual basis. These include our new or renewed programs in interdisciplinary research, postdoctoral fellowships, programs to support Indigenous research, and programs to support research in the areas of equity, diversity, and inclusion as well as research on teaching and learning practices.

Externally, we have special opportunities and responsibilities in our partnerships with nearby hospitals and regional health partners, and we aim to revitalize those relationships. The hospitals, health partners and the university have had a long-time synergy that needs to be renewed in terms of research and community service, and the time is ripe for that renewal. As health care undergoes significant transformation as a result of pandemic-induced changes, new and important opportunities will emerge.

We will continue to intensify our engagement with industry and step up our outreach to not-for-profit organizations, charitable foundations, municipalities, and other universities to expand opportunities for researchers and students. One goal will be to address community-based challenges and create opportunities for tangible research impact and service, locally and globally. We will create the infrastructure necessary to turn partnership ideas into actions that bring mutual benefits.

Our goal is to stimulate Western's research output and its impact and to ensure the recognition of Western's work—locally, nationally, and globally.

PROMOTE TEACHING AND LEARNING FOR THE FUTURE

Teaching and learning are ancient practices to be celebrated and adapted for each century. The brilliant ways Western's faculty, staff, and students have risen to the new demands of online learning and teaching during the COVID-19 pandemic remind us that these activities are always changing. Our experiences with distance and hybrid education have shown us some of the techniques developed over the last year may well be worth regularizing even as the university community strongly reaffirms its belief in the virtues of hands-on, face-to-face education as the primary locus for our pedagogical efforts.

Western is a destination university for high-performing students, and our retention and graduation rates show we are meeting or exceeding the expectations of our students. We want to sustain an environment of learning and teaching that celebrates intellectual curiosity and that sets the highest standards of creativity and analytic rigour.

Culture of continuous innovation

We already focus on active learning initiatives such as research opportunities, peer learning, co-curricular activities, work-integrated learning, experiential learning and capstone projects to allow students to engage in their own learning. We have created faculty communities of practice to foster pedagogical innovation, and we have increased our support for international experiences to enrich learning. These activities will continue, new opportunities will arise, and they must be supported.

Western currently invests in the scholarship of teaching and learning, provides opportunities for faculty mentoring, and ensures that these “learning ideals” are shared across the ecosystem. All of this will continue, with renewed vigour and commitment.

In collaboration with Western’s Centre for Teaching and Learning, faculty, staff, and academic units will innovate in curriculum design, instructional strategies, and learner assessment; and we will disseminate our innovation and research work in order to solidify our place as leaders in the renewal of post-secondary education.

As digital advances accelerate, it will be essential for the University’s leaders to be open to and supportive of new pedagogical technologies and techniques as they are proposed and developed by faculty, staff, and academic units.

Recognizing the synergy of teaching, learning, and research, we will deepen the integration of research into the academic programs we offer. We will create space for a “grand challenges” approach to teaching and research for those who would like to organize their efforts in this way.

Personalizing the learning experience

Western offers an unusually flexible set of curricular arrangements that allows students to build their own pathways through their education, especially at the undergraduate level.

We will keep that flexibility. It provides differentiation in our degree programs and makes it possible for Western students to personalize their journey and discover their true passions. This often requires extensive engagement with technology, and we will ensure students have the technological tools they need (and expect) both during their studies and beyond.

We will launch new curriculum projects such as the Interdisciplinary Curriculum Initiatives, to ensure our program offerings continue to respond effectively to the current needs of our students. We will invest new resources to strengthen our academic advising program and work jointly with students to understand their needs as we create Canada’s best career preparation program.

Recent experience with the Western Summer Student Internship program has shown the value of student participation in course and program development. We will expand the opportunities for students to partner with faculty in this work.

We will continue to expand our data strategy initiative, recognizing that teaching and learning will always be engaged in the digital world, almost regardless of discipline. Students from across campus must have access to new developments in data analytics, and our data strategy initiative will provide significant opportunities for learning complementary new skills.

Lifelong learning will also accelerate in the coming years, which creates a major opportunity for Western.

At present we serve those learners who want to return to school primarily through the Ivey Academy and our Continuing Studies unit, which offers only courses that bear no academic credit. We will revisit our model for lifelong learning, in collaboration working with the faculties, to better meet the needs of contemporary adult learners seeking to expand their knowledge and skills for professional or personal aspirations with degree-granting credits.

The quality of Western’s graduates has long been a reason for the University’s external reputation. We must continue to ensure that our students are brilliantly prepared for their future. Our impact depends on their impact.

ENRICH THE STUDENT EXPERIENCE

The Western student experience is robust, and a source of great pride. Western graduates are highly sought-after throughout their careers. In part they are in demand because they have acquired exceptional skills as leaders during the course of their studies. These skills are built in our classrooms, libraries, studios and labs, but also in our student clubs, on our sports teams, during intramurals, through the arts, within student government, and across the whole student experience.

The large majority of our students come from outside London, and our first-year residence experience is highly valued. We have invested significantly not only in the facilities used by students but also in the programs that promote the wellness of students, including in mental health services. We will continue to build on our model of “thriving” that is at the heart of our student experience. It is a community of care.

The university hosts hundreds of meaningful co-curricular experiences, student clubs, intramural and varsity sports, music and theatre performances and other creative efforts. As we move forward, we will continue to invest in these opportunities. They contribute greatly to student life.

To sustain this core strength and make it even stronger, we want to integrate more fully the transformative social experiences of our students with other kinds of opportunities—such as the experiential opportunities of work-integrated learning, research with a professor, engagement in entrepreneurship and professional preparation. These engage students in the central work of the university.

We challenge ourselves to understand what it means to complete an academic program in this century, what social and physical elements play in that education, how the digital revolution will alter the opportunities open to our graduates, and how our community may best support our students and prepare them for lives as productive citizens.

We serve multiple populations of students. Their needs may differ depending on their circumstances and aspirations, and we want to revisit how we can best serve our students, whether they are traditional-aged undergraduates, mature students, graduate students or professional students.

Learning by doing

Western will put a new focus on multiplying the avenues students have to pursue a broad array of experiential learning opportunities that contribute to their holistic development and that dovetail with their academic programs. We will:

- Invest in more hands-on applications including more work-integrated learning;
- Fund summer research opportunities for undergraduates; and,
- Extend our current offerings in entrepreneurship to students in all programs.

The aim in all of these forms of experiential learning is to expand the options available to students to enrich their education, and to give students multiple opportunities to experience the joy of research invention, and of exercising the knowledge and skills they are acquiring during their Western experience.

We aim to ensure that every Western student is able to graduate having had at least one intense opportunity for experiential learning.

Enhancing the student experience in this way will help them connect their time at Western to their lives to come.

The expansion of experiential learning recommended in this plan will require robust partnerships outside Western with those organizations prepared to engage our students. We will establish a model of “360-degree” partnerships with companies and organizations on initiatives of mutual benefit such as work-integrated learning, internships and applied research. We will look to our alumni network to help forge many of these opportunities.

For graduate and professional students, we aim to improve access to teaching and research experiences, provide more support for those who wish to complete part of their programs abroad, attract more matriculants from distinguished universities from around the world, and expand recruitment efforts and support for equity-deserving scholars. We will explore boosting the number of professional master’s programs and we will expand the number of master’s and doctoral students on campus. We will make investments in pathways to professional careers for doctoral graduates.

THEME 2 - PEOPLE, COMMUNITY AND CULTURE

Western aspires to lead in the creation of a more just society.

Universities are not a collection of buildings but a community of people—students, faculty, staff, and graduates. This plan has emerged in extraordinary times that have reminded us in so many ways of the importance of community, of genuine belonging, of the relationship of inclusion to equity, and of the power of working together.

Of all the aspirations voiced by the Western community through this planning process, the expectation of a more-inclusive Western stood out, and progress toward this goal will be foundational to our success in reaching the other goals articulated in the plan.

ADVANCE RECONCILIATION WITH INDIGENOUS COMMUNITIES

Western has embraced Universities Canada’s principles with respect to Truth and Reconciliation among Canadian universities, and we will continue to implement our Indigenous Strategic Plan. We renew our commitment to increase Indigenous voices and presence across all levels of community life, work, study and research.

The Western campus is established on the traditional territory of the Anishinaabek, Haudenosaunee, Lūnaapéewak and Chonnocton (Neutral) peoples. Their distinct rights are an important part of our institutional responsibility to Reconciliation, and they are essential partners as we look to the future.

We will increase the recruitment of Indigenous students at all levels as well as faculty and staff, as a part of the university’s efforts to promote Reconciliation. We support efforts of our faculty and staff to consider how to incorporate Indigenous ways of knowing into our curricula and our services to the community.

CREATE A MORE EQUITABLE AND INCLUSIVE WESTERN

To lead our efforts to improve the diversity and equity of our community, we will recruit an Associate Vice-President (Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion), who will be supported by our new Advisory Council on EDI and our EDI Action Network. The Associate Vice-President (EDI) will be a key strategist in helping us develop new efforts and in measuring our effectiveness.

Evolving as a university also means learning from our past. Creating a more welcoming and inclusive experience, particularly for people of colour, and Indigenous peoples, will be critical.

We will continue to strengthen bursary and scholarship programs, fortify existing pathways and create new ones to ensure access to the Western experience for individuals who historically may not have had access to Western. We will review our recruitment and admission strategies alongside our financial aid programs and outreach to equity-deserving groups. We will work to ensure our students see themselves in the leadership of our community. We will strengthen the diversity of our Canada Research Chairs.

These efforts will require new resources, not only for bursaries but also for staff support to strengthen our outreach efforts.

We will embark on a formal program of strategic enrolment management for undergraduate recruitment that will, among other things, attract and retain strong applicants from equity-deserving groups. We will explore a non-traditional approach to evaluating potential in those who may have been overlooked by traditional admissions criteria.

We will provide ongoing opportunities for faculty and staff to develop and learn important practices related to equity, diversity, inclusion and Reconciliation.

We will continue to invest in our ongoing commitments against racism and all other forms of discrimination, including taking next steps following the Anti-Racism Working Group Report of 2020.

In 2021 the university received an external report analyzing the accessibility of our campus and services, including physical accessibility, and the report identified a significant number of improvements that are needed. We will fund new initiatives designed to make accessibility the standard across Western.

Going forward, Western will strive to ensure that our community, our campus, our programs, our research, our outreach, and our self-representation will be more inclusive. We pledge to combat all forms of discrimination. The new Associate Vice-President (EDI) will work collaboratively with the Associate Vice-President (Indigenous Initiatives) and with other campus leaders to achieve measurable progress in these key areas. We will create and fund an EDI Strategic Plan for Western.

Western needs to be more inclusive, and through this strategic plan it will be.

THRIVING THROUGH BELONGING

We will work hard to create an environment that supports all of us in our well-being, our mental and physical health, and our professional and personal development, across all the roles at the university.

The university will continue to mount effective workplace programs and services to support the career and professional development of its staff and faculty. Among these workplace programs are leadership

programs and workplace training that promote safety and well-being, mental health and wellness supports.

Feeling a sense of belonging where you learn and work is so important. In particular, for international students, we recognize that moving to a new country, being away from family and friends, and sometimes learning in a second language can be isolating. Western will stay attentive to the needs of our growing international student population by expanding existing services and supports. Together, we will create a sense of community that makes Western a home away from home.

For our students at all levels of study, the university will offer a broad range of supports both within and beyond our academic programs to encourage thriving and belonging as individuals and collectively. We will continue to pursue the “thriving” model adopted by Western’s Student Experience team. The model focuses on engaged learning, academic determination, positive perspective, diverse citizenship, and social connectedness.

THEME 3 - WESTERN’S PLACE IN THE WORLD

CONCENTRATE ON PLACE, AND . . .

The ever-more digital world raises the question of whether to invest in our physical environment, including academic and research buildings, residences, performance halls, sports facilities, and the like. The response from our community is a resounding *Yes*. We will continue to prioritize a residentially intensive campus for both teaching and research.

London is home

Western is proud to be located in London. We are grateful for all that London contributes to Western’s success. We are an integral part of the community and take the responsibilities that brings seriously. We will continue to contribute to the development and well-being of our city and our region, and to benefit from the great opportunities in working with these communities of which we are an inextricable part.

To that end, we will strengthen our institutional partnerships with the City of London, local and regional schools and hospitals, health care partners, industry, community organizations, and nearby Indigenous communities.

While we will remain a community committed to carrying out our mission primarily face-to-face in London, Western will move vigorously to ensure that we possess all the digital assets we need in order to pursue our mission at the highest level. New technologies will allow us to operate both close to home and far away.

The physical structures and spaces that comprise the Western campus are among our most valuable assets. We want some of our gathering spaces to be less institutional—more funky and distinctive.

We will increase the space for students to gather, improve the quality of study spaces, and create more “collision spaces” such as a newly contemplated “student hub” and the recently approved building devoted to entrepreneurship and makers’ spaces, and a sports fieldhouse to lighten the burden of those long winters and contribute to students’ well-being and good mental health.

We will continue to move forward with the Open Space Strategy to create a safer, more pedestrian- and bicycle friendly, and biodiverse campus. We will launch a new biodiversity project that will bring together our expertise in ecology with the teams that care for our campus and environs, including the river that runs through campus, so that our efforts may become more sustainable and sensitive.

We will complete work on the Thames Hall Wellness Centre and the Indigenous Learning Centre in the Althouse Building. We plan to build a new interdisciplinary research facility to create space for new programs of teaching and research that will also include much-needed new core facilities.

We will engage our affiliated university college partners in a new dialogue about how together we may strengthen our partnership.

We will establish a new presence in downtown London. Likely to be in the core of downtown, the project could house galleries, public-facing clinics, and assembly space in which Western could deliver courses, public lectures, concerts, and poster sessions that share research with the public. We will work with local leaders to define its purpose.

... ENGAGE THE WORLD

Western gets its strength from its roots in Southwestern Ontario, but the curiosity that drives us all also compels us to look to the horizon.

Beyond our main campus and a new downtown London presence, Western (through the Ivey Business School) currently maintains a physical presence in downtown Toronto and in the city centre of Hong Kong. The Schulich School of Medicine & Dentistry maintains a campus in Windsor.

We also anticipate launching or expanding a larger physical presence in downtown Toronto. Its purpose is to deliver advanced professional education and training; to connect with our alumni; and to offer some of our lifelong learning programs and community outreach efforts face-to-face.

Working internationally

The energy that led Ivey to create its Hong Kong campus two decades ago still animates us. As the effects of globalization of higher education continue to deepen, we will see universities investing in physical presences far beyond their main campuses.

We will develop a model to allow us to establish a temporary presence in various international locations, whether field schools, advanced seminars for professionals, or other mechanisms that would make it possible to operate on the international stage in ways that bolster opportunities for our academic community and also contribute to international partnerships with universities and NGOs.

In continuing our work internationally, we will work to deepen existing teaching and research partnerships with international colleagues and promote research mobility. We have pursued student mobility paths for many years, and we will review those paths to ensure that we are offering to our students the most robust international experiences for learning and research.

All serious research-intensive universities strive to attract students from abroad. Great educational experiences require a mix of domestic and international students. That mix makes for the best of both the academic and social experiences for students and brings diverse research strengths and multicultural

perspectives to the entire community. We will attract 20 to 25 per cent of our students from abroad, increasing in particular the ratio of undergraduate students, having already achieved 25 per cent graduate students. We will create a new strategy for international recruitment and aim to populate our academic programs more evenly. These were goals of our previous plan, and we aim to continue them now.

We will invest new resources to ensure success in our broad international efforts. Through these efforts, in part, Western will continue to graduate leaders who can influence and create change around the world.

SUSTAINABILITY, AN IMPERATIVE

Sustainability is one of the grand challenges of our times. It particularly calls out for everyone to collaborate, innovate, experiment—to seek bold and brave solutions.

The maxim “think globally, act locally” applies well to these challenges of sustainability. As a research-intensive university Western is already engaged in a broad swath of internationally significant research projects that link us to a sustainable universe in all of our faculties. At the same time, acting locally, members of the Western community participate in many projects in London and nearby that aim to preserve, protect and nourish the local environs. Our students and faculty are deeply engaged in local social service agencies, schools, hospitals and other sites of important community-engaged learning and research.

In 2020 and in 2021, Western was recognized by the Times Higher Education Impact Ranking as one of the greatest contributors to sustainability research and teaching on the planet.

The Western community wants greater visibility for these efforts, and wants to do more.

We will model sustainable processes in our own operations and apply our research, teaching, learning, and community engagement to support London and Southwestern Ontario in our collective efforts to become the Canadian centre of gravity for sustainability thought leadership and the application of innovative sustainable practices.

Western embraces its responsibility to be stewards of the natural environment. We will launch a collaborative research initiative that will make Western a Canadian and international leader in helping others with research to reduce their own carbon emissions.

We commit to rethinking the care of our campus to encourage greater biodiversity, and to extend efforts to make our campus more of a laboratory for our academic community. We will pursue partnerships with local and regional municipalities whose own projects concentrate on challenges with areas such as water, waste, transportation, and biodiversity.

For years, the university has pursued efforts to reduce its own carbon footprint. These include efforts from food waste to geothermal heating. We will continue to prioritize energy retrofits and maintain our commitment to sustainability for new construction with an aim of net-zero in new facilities.

Western University will achieve net-zero emissions for campus operations by 2050 and at least a 45 percent reduction (over 2005) by 2030. We will incorporate existing initiatives to reduce the impact of campus operations with new initiatives focused on green innovation.

Western researchers, students and staff engage with local communities to assist with socioeconomic challenges related to education, poverty, and health, both in terms of research and services that make a better world for everyone. Western commits to intensifying its engagement with local and nearby municipalities across all of these grand challenges.

The university will survey its academic units to establish the current range and breadth of our curricular offerings in the various areas of sustainability, and we will engage our students as full partners in efforts to ensure that these offerings meet their needs.

Sustainability research happens in all of our faculties and in many research centres across the university. The university commits to significant new sustainability-research funding over the life of this plan to encourage interdisciplinary research that prioritizes opportunities to engage with local and regional municipalities (and/or related service agencies) and that prioritizes experiential learning for our students.

In all of these efforts we will consider how the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals may guide our work.

Western has the capacity, desire, and duty to discover, develop, and advocate for approaches to make our world more sustainable, particularly in the areas of climate change, biodiversity, equity and social justice in which the university has expertise.

SOME MILESTONES AND METRICS

The digital age reminds us that change is constant. As a community we must be attentive to the forces of change and approach our work with a willingness to adapt, adjust, and alter course when necessary.

Some of the milestones and metrics set out below will remain constant. Others will become more specific over time as this plan unfolds.

GREATER IMPACT

- Expand faculty and staff complements commensurate with student growth
- Expand student enrolment to 50,000 by 2030 (undergraduate, graduate, postdoctoral, and lifelong learners) – in areas of demand and societal need and with deliberate intention to be equitable and inclusive
- Secure resources and invest in infrastructure for new buildings, renovations, and Western’s Open Space Strategy
- Increase our national share of funding awarded from each of the Federal Tri-Councils
- Add, and support for ongoing success, 50 research chairs in areas of existing or emerging strength – by 2030
- Increase the number of faculty and staff members who have won national and international awards and similar distinctions for their work in their respective disciplines
- Achieve the highest student retention and graduation rates among Canada’s leading research-intensive universities
- Invest in state-of-the art information technology infrastructure
- Enhance the learning experience by providing a community-based experiential learning opportunity, an international learning opportunity, or a research learning opportunity for all undergraduates who wish to pursue one as part of their degree

- Increase the availability of paid summer research opportunities for students
- Expand and improve lifelong learning offerings (credit and non-credit) to increase our overall cadre of learners at various stages of their lives and careers
- Extend our current offerings in entrepreneurship to students in all programs
- Improve student satisfaction with academic advising
- Increase student utilization of and satisfaction with career development services
- Maintain our stellar graduate employment rate
- Launch the most ambitious fundraising and alumni engagement campaign in the University's history. Build institutional capacity with the goal of increasing annual fundraising to \$100M per year.

PEOPLE, COMMUNITY, AND CULTURE

- Establish a baseline of demographic information for students, faculty and staff to set goals for increased representation among members of equity-deserving groups
- Invest in additional financial supports for students from equity-deserving groups
- Build additional relationships with equity-deserving groups in the local community (e.g. community-facing clinics and services, public lectures, arts and culture events, etc.)
- Increase diversity among our faculty and staff, including the recruitment and retention of Indigenous peoples and members of equity-deserving groups
- Create learning opportunities for faculty and staff on important EDI practices, targeting a 90% participation rate within 5 years

WESTERN'S PLACE IN THE WORLD

- Enhance Western's campus by investing in the quality, accessibility and beauty of our physical environment – showcasing campus as a biodiverse living laboratory (e.g. student gathering/collision spaces, sports facilities, entrepreneurship space, enhanced green space, etc.)
- Establish a new physical presence in London's downtown core
- Establish a larger physical presence in Toronto
- Create and measure the efficacy of having a temporary presence in various international locations (e.g. field schools, advanced seminars for professionals, international partnerships with universities and NGOs, etc.)
- Increase our international undergraduate student population to 20% and out of province students to 15% and provide on-campus supports to ensure their success
- Reduce carbon emissions for campus operations by 45% (over 2005) by 2030 and net zero by 2050
- Create a sustainability research fund (initially at \$1M) that prioritizes our local and regional partnerships and that creates new experiential learning opportunities for students

CONCLUSION

Western has a proud history. We strive to be excellent stewards of our past successes and achievements. As we look to the future, we will push ourselves to increase our impact and move Western to the next level. That impact will come from a renewed research enterprise, a strengthened student experience, a more inclusive community, and more and better partnerships in London and around the world.

This plan closes with a call to action – an invitation to every member of our community to determine how they can contribute to advancing these ideals. Reimagine your program. Rethink your workplace. Strengthen your purpose.

The uncertainty of the global recovery from the pandemic is an invitation to think – and to do – differently. The world needs its leaders to act boldly in the face of seemingly intractable problems and find innovative solutions to them.

In it together

The world's best universities cannot go it alone. They work in partnership to be more creative, more curious, and more innovative. They collaborate to accelerate progress and make positive change.

To achieve the ambitious goals set out in this plan we will need the support of our graduates, our community, and other collaborative teachers and researchers locally and around the world.

In thinking ahead towards Western's 150th anniversary, we are planning today for Western's—and the world's—future.

Join us.

TOWARDS WESTERN AT 150: A SUMMARY OF COMMITMENTS

To grow strategically, we will:

- Expand the faculty and staff complements
- Expand student enrolment
- Secure resources and building infrastructure

To stimulate our research, scholarship and creative activity, we will:

- Strengthen core facilities and invest in common resources such as labs and studios
- Pursue more and deepen existing partnerships locally, nationally, and globally
- Adjust internal organizational structures and the budget model to promote and fund interdisciplinary research and seek greater elasticity in our interdisciplinary mechanisms
- Create a partnership concierge model to open up a portal to serve external partners

To achieve Western's teaching and learning goals, we will:

- Launch curriculum renewal projects to develop new programs that will inspire students
- Improve academic advising and career development support
- Respond to the needs of 21st century learners by executing our online learning strategy
- Ensure technology resources for a changing world are provided

To enrich Western students' experience, we will:

- Offer every undergraduate intensive experiential learning opportunities
- Invest in career development services for undergraduate, graduate and professional students, and postdoctoral scholars, taking Ivey's career services as our inspiration.
- Examine Western's admissions process to ensure we attract a diverse group of students
- Invest in more hands-on applications including more work-integrated learning
- Fund summer research opportunities for undergraduates
- Extend our current offerings in entrepreneurship to students in all programs

To invest in people, community and culture, we will:

- Unite our community through a sense of belonging for all students, faculty, staff and alumni
- Address structural and systemic barriers in support of a more inclusive environment
- Continue our commitment to increase Indigenous voices and presence across all levels of work, study and research
- Create new bursaries for students from equity-deserving groups
- Craft pathways with local and regional school boards and other community organizations to increase our opportunities to recruit students from equity-deserving groups
- We will strengthen the diversity of our Canada Research Chairs
- Create learning opportunities for faculty and staff on important EDI practices

To concentrate on place, we will:

- Strengthen our relationships with nearby communities, agencies and services
- Pursue the Open Space Strategy
- Create a safer, more pedestrian- and bicycle-friendly, biodiverse campus
- Increase the number and quality of student gathering spaces
- Establish a new presence in London’s downtown core to provide service to the community, and enrich arts and culture

To engage the world beyond our London campus, we will:

- Establish a larger physical presence in downtown Toronto
- Increase our international student population to 20-25%
- Double the number of international experiences for our students
- Offer a variety of learning experiences in strategic locations around the world

To deepen our commitment to sustainability, we will:

- Achieve net-zero emissions for campus operations by 2050
- Prioritize and invest in retrofitting existing buildings with energy-saving technology
- Engage with UN Sustainability goals to help guide our work
- Position Western as a global leader in interdisciplinary sustainability research
- Create a new sustainability research fund that prioritizes our local and regional partnerships and that creates new experiential learning opportunities for students

SUMMARY OF CONSULTATIONS

Between September 20, 2020 and April 8, 2021, the Strategic Planning Steering Committee engaged the Western community in more than 90 facilitated consultation sessions to solicit input on Western’s next strategic plan, including multiple opportunities in several faculties and units.

General Consultations

Board of Governors
Don Wright Faculty of Music
Facilities Management
Faculty of Arts & Humanities
Faculty of Education
Faculty of Engineering
Faculty of Health Sciences
Faculty of Information & Media Studies
Faculty of Law
Faculty of Science
Faculty of Social Science
General Student Forums (4)
Hospitality Services
Housing & Ancillary Services
Human Resources
International Student Forums (3)
Ivey Business School
Leaders’ Forum
Office of Faculty Relations
Office of the Registrar
PMA Executive
Police Services and Fire Safety
Professional Network Forum
School of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies
Schulich School of Medicine & Dentistry
Senate
Senate Committee on University Planning
Student Experience
University Advancement
UWOFA Board
UWOSA Staff Forum
Western Communications
Western International
Western Libraries
Western Research
Western Technology Services

Theme Group Consultations

Alumni Association
Associate Deans Research
Centre for Teaching and Learning
Climate Action London
Climate Crisis Coalition
City of London (Mayor, City Manager, selected Councillors)
City of London Sustainability Managers
Department of Geography and Environment Council, Staff and Student Representatives
Director, Western Sustainability
EDI Action Network
Equity and Human Rights Services
Envirowestern
Executive Director, Network for Business Sustainability
Faculty of Education Curriculum Specialists
Faculty of Social Science Graduate Council and Staff
Indigenous Faculty Advisory Group
Indigenous Postsecondary Education Council
Indigenous Student Centre
London Chamber of Commerce
London Community Foundation
London Economic Development Corporation
Office of Indigenous Initiatives
Pillar Nonprofit Network
President's Advisory Committee on Environment & Sustainability
Research Officers
Residence Council Presidents
Residence Managers
Society of Graduate Students Executive
Special Advisor on Faculty Employment Equity
Special Advisor to the Provost (Indigenous Initiatives)
Students in Gender, Sexuality and Women's Studies course
Students with Accessibility Needs (focus groups)
Teaching Award Recipients (focus group)
Teaching Fellows
Thames Talbot Land Trust
Undergraduate Engineering Society Sustainability Committee
United Way Elgin Middlesex
University Research Board
Vice-Provost (Academic Planning, Policy & Faculty)
Western Continuing Studies
Western Mustang Athletes (focus group)

Surveys

- 1 general survey – January 20 to March 17
- 7 theme-based surveys – January 27 to March 31
- 2 Housing and Ancillary Services staff – March 22 to April 1
- 1 Facilities Management staff – March 22 to April 1

Written Submissions

- 12 written submissions were received from groups and individuals

By the Numbers

- More than 3,700 inputs via consultation participation or surveys
- Over 90 facilitated consultation sessions via Zoom
- More than 700 online surveys completed
- 650+ students engaged
- 2,800+ faculty and staff engaged
- 200+ alumni engaged
- 40+ community members engaged

STRATEGIC PLANNING STEERING COMMITTEE

Thank you to the 37 members of the 2020-21 Strategic Planning Steering Committee. Their unwavering dedication, contributions, insights, and guidance during an already challenging time will have a significant impact on the future of Western University.

Kenisha Arora	Michael Milde
Sue Bennett	Eunice Oladejo
Camryn Bonn	JB Orange
Mark Brown	Adam Pacyga
Jason Brown	WG Pearson
Candace Brunette-Debassige	Sarah Prichard
Matt Davison	Matt Reesor
Keith Gibbons	Lesley Rigg
Alison Hearn	Jennifer Robinson
Volker Hocke	Clare Robinson
Sharon Hodgson	Sophie Roland
Andy Hrymak	David Sandomierski
Nicole Kaniki	kirstyn seanor
Dayana Kibilds	Alan Shepard, Chair
Abdel-Rahman Lawendy	David Simmonds
Deishin Lee	Kasey Van Hedger
Christopher Lengyell	Nadine Wathen
Isaac Luginaah	Chris Watling
Beth MacDougall-Shackleton	

The Strategic Planning Steering Committee was established in October 2020. It included 21 members selected through an open nomination process and approved by Western’s Senate and 15 members appointed *ex officio* or elected by other bodies.

(a) Twenty-one members nominated by an open nomination process and approved by Senate:

- Eleven members representing faculty, ensuring representation from every Faculty
- One member representing postdoctoral scholars
- Three members representing staff
- Two members representing research leaders
- Three members representing the University Students’ Council (USC) (in addition to the *ex officio* member listed below) - *These three positions were open for nominations (including self-nominations) for any undergraduate students, including those in second-entry programs (Business, Law, Education, and Medicine & Dentistry).*
- One member representing the Society of Graduate of Students (SOGS) (in addition to the *ex officio* member listed below) - *This position was open for nominations (including self-nominations) for any graduate student.*

(b) Ten appointed or elected members:

- One member elected by Senate (in addition to the *ex officio* member listed below)

- Two Deans appointed by the Provost
- Two members elected by the Alumni Association
- Two members elected by the Board of Governors
- Three members named by the Chair in consultation with the Chair of SCUP and senior leaders, one of whom will represent the London-Middlesex Community

(c) Six *ex officio* members:

- President & Vice-Chancellor (Chair)
- Provost & Vice-President (Academic)
- Vice-President (Research)
- Chair of SCUP
- President of USC
- President of SOGS