

Acadia 2025

Transforming lives for a transforming world



Strategic Plan

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President's Message

"The future isn't what it used to be."

It might seem strange to open a university strategic plan with a quote from Yogi Berra, yet his famous words have never been more appropriate than they are today. The rate of change in society has never been faster. Global climate change combined with the evolution of "exponential" technologies such as Artificial Intelligence are increasing the degree of economic and social change at a rate never before seen in human history. This social change, particularly in relation to reconciliation with Indigenous peoples, and the increasing diversity of our population are redefining the narratives used to describe our society and global political, social and economic priorities.

Today, students entering university know that the world they will graduate into will be significantly different from when they started their studies, and that they will need to be prepared for dealing with rapid, continuous change and disruption throughout their lives. This is the first generation of students who will graduate into a world that is physically transforming at a rate never before seen in the human experience. Not only the human world is changing, but the planet itself is transforming before our eyes.

Since its founding over 180 years ago, Acadia has built a reputation for providing the finest undergraduate education experience available anywhere. Today, it is a renowned university that personifies the very essence of a liberal education for our 21st century society and economy. Acadia not only fulfils the core mandate of universities around the world to preserve and create knowledge through research and teaching, but also delivers on that mandate within a stimulating and enriched learning environment that is uniquely beneficial to its students. Because we care deeply for our students, an Acadia education is not simply a transactional experience, it is a transformational experience; and that is what is needed for graduates to be prepared to thrive in a transforming world.



Acadia's approach of educating the whole person has never been more relevant than it is in today's rapidly changing society, where an increasingly complex combination of skills, knowledge and capabilities are required in order to succeed and thrive. Critical thinking, creativity, problem-solving, self-motivation, resilience, determination, numeracy, literacy, and the ability to work both individually and in teams are essential components of the character that an Acadia education builds. In today's transforming world, managing change, experiential learning, digital and technological competencies, international experiences, engagement with truth and reconciliation, and active learning prepare students for the world of work and the global society of the 21st century. At Acadia, students learn how to live and thrive in community.

Acadia 2025 recommits our university to the region through collaboration, outreach, partnerships. Acadia prides itself on having one of the best town-gown relationships in Canada, and we are grateful for the support of the communities of Wolfville and the surrounding Valley region. We recognize the important role that Acadia plays in making our region one of



the most attractive places in Canada to live, work, learn and play. Acadia's growing partnership with the Mi'kmaw communities of our region is one of the most exciting areas of development as we seek to make our contribution to truth and reconciliation.

As a learning community, we care deeply for our students, our employees and our planet. Environmental stewardship has always been a fundamental value of Acadia, and in today's growing climate emergency, it has never been more important to ensure that we learn, teach, and practice our commitment to the environment and sustainability of our world. Developing and implementing a strategic plan in a time of financial stringency is very challenging, but without a strategy the task of identifying priorities to direct scarce resources is difficult and often results in simply treading water rather than moving ahead. We are very conscious that everything we do going forward must adhere to fundamental principles of balanced budgets and no increase in debt. Therefore, we have identified priorities for directing our efforts within the current financial

situation as well as increasing revenues and, where appropriate, reallocating resources to move forward on our strategic directions and goals.

I wish to thank every member of the extended Acadia community who contributed their ideas, challenged our assumptions, and helped develop this plan. Acadia 2025 will provide the guidance and direction that will ensure that the liberal education that has been the central core of the Acadia experience for over 180 years will continue to be relevant to educating students for the rapidly changing world of the 21st century, and that the transformative experience that characterizes an Acadia education will flourish well into the future.

Dr. Peter J. Ricketts

President and Vice-Chancellor

Acadia 2025 Planning Process

The Acadia 2025 planning process began in March 2018 with a Town Hall presentation and publication of a Strategic Framework document. It then proceeded through three stages: Ideas for Acadia, Strategic Directions, and Plan Development.

- **Ideas for Acadia:** The ideation stage saw the creation of the Acadia Ideabook, a product of consultations and input from over 200 individual and group submissions.
- **Strategic Directions:** A Strategic Planning Task Force comprising members from across the Acadia community and external representation engaged in a community-wide consultation process to identify key strategic directions for shaping the plan. The Task Force report, *Acadia 2025: Charting a Course*, identified where we must concentrate new efforts such that by 2025, Acadia further differentiates itself from its competitors in a manner that amplifies the university's contribution to regional and provincial social, cultural and economic prosperity.
- **Plan Development:** A number of working groups comprising members of the Task Force and the Acadia leadership team produced an initial draft plan which was refined and re-drafted after further consultation with the Board of Governors, the Senate, and the Acadia community.
- **Plan Finalization:** The final draft plan was subjected to further consultation phase and was approved by the Board of Governors at its meeting on March 6, 2020 and approved in principle by the Senate on March 9, 2020.

Foundational Statements

The framework within which the strategic plan is considered are the overall principles and ideals of the Acadia that have been tested time and again. Each of Acadia's mission, vision and values statements have been nuanced and updated to create strategic statements for Acadia 2025, but they remain true to the reasons why the institution was founded more than 180 years ago. Informed by the Acadia 2025 consultations.

Strategic Directions, Goals And Objectives

In 2025 Acadia will be a university that is clearly differentiated within the Canadian post-secondary landscape. Its faculty will be known as leading researchers in their disciplines and the value to students, alumni, and potential employers of its liberal education model will be widely recognized. It will be an acknowledged leader in reducing its environmental footprint and will be known as a leader in teaching all students how to be stewards of our environment. Acadia will be an excellent place to work and its campus culture rooted in inclusivity and equity will provide students with a learning environment in which they can excel. Beyond its campus, Acadia will be known by its Mi'kmaq neighbours and Canada's Indigenous Peoples as a place where truth and reconciliation matters and by regional entrepreneurs, artists, athletes as a place where they can achieve their dreams of success. Acadia will be a model partner to the Valley region and its communities, welcoming community members to participate fully in its campus and rewarding its students for engaged learning.

To achieve this bold vision, Acadia 2025 has five overarching Strategic Directions that are of equal and interchangeable value, each with supporting Goals, Objectives and Key Performance Indicators (KPIs). Acadia 2025 is a strategic framework designed to guide decision-making, priority-setting, and, finally, resource allocation. Resource scarcity in universities places a premium on the quality of every decision and its direct connection to institutional outcomes. Choices ranging from capital improvements to new faculty hires to student recruitment plans need to be made in the context of both long- and short-term institutional goals.

Phased Implementation Plan for Acadia 2025

The implementation of Acadia 2025 will be accomplished in a phased approach to ensure that all aspects of the plan are developed and implemented within the fundamental principles of balanced budgets and no increase in Acadia's debt load. This will require an up-front emphasis on those aspects of the plan that we can work on within existing financial restrictions and those components of the plan that are aimed at generating new revenues. Other aspects of the plan will be implemented subject to availability of resources and capabilities.

Acadia 2025: Foundational Statements

“Because we care deeply about our students, an Acadia education is not simply a transactional experience; it is a transformational experience, and that is what is needed for graduates to be prepared to thrive in a transforming world”

Strategic Vision

Acadia University is the top choice for students seeking a transformative university experience dedicated to unleashing their potential to prepare them for a transforming world.

Strategic Mission

Acadia University provides an unparalleled learning experience through a liberal education model based on personalized attention, expanding the boundaries of knowledge, experiential learning, community engagement, environmental stewardship and global citizenship, and engaged research and innovation delivered by a passionate, dedicated and nurturing community within a beautiful and historic campus environment.

Strategic Values

- Caring for Our Students
- Educating the Whole Person
- Critical Thinking, Creativity, Emotional Intelligence, Resilience, Entrepreneurial Spirit and Technological Competence
- Global Citizenship and Responsibility
- Passionate Community Engagement
- Diversity, Inclusivity, Equity and Respect
- Excellence in Academic, Research, Scholarly, Professional and Personal Achievement
- Environmental Stewardship and Sustainability
- Truth and Reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples of Canada
- Concern for Social Justice the Common Good
- Engaged Partnerships and Outreach for Regional Development
- Authentic Relationships with Community and Alumni
- Responsible Management and Allocation of Resources



Acadia 2025: Strategic Plan Framework

Strategic Direction and Goals				
Caring for our students and employees	Caring for our planet	Revitalizing our academic core	Maximizing our impact regionally and globally	Sustaining our institutional future
<p><i>Goals:</i></p> <p>Transformational student experiences focused on academic and personal success</p> <p>An inclusive and supportive community campus culture</p> <p>A campus culture passionate about professionalism, inclusion, service excellence, and leadership</p> <p>Caring for our community's safety, health and wellness</p> <p>Msit No'kmaq - Advancing Acadia's contributions to truth, reconciliation and decolonization</p>	<p><i>Goals:</i></p> <p>Environmental stewardship and sustainability are signature institutional features of Acadia</p> <p>Make measurable progress and establish a target date for achieving net carbon neutrality</p>	<p><i>Goals:</i></p> <p>Embrace a 21st century liberal education model that is central to Acadia's vision and mission</p> <p>Enhanced support for teaching and learning excellence</p>	<p><i>Goals:</i></p> <p>New partnerships and collaboration to drive regional development and educational opportunities</p> <p>Leadership and impact in environmental, rural and coastal research and innovation</p> <p>Acadia's research is impactful regionally, nationally and globally</p>	<p><i>Goals:</i></p> <p>Achieve optimal rates of student enrolment to ensure institutional and campus community sustainability</p> <p>Establish a culture of sustained fundraising and giving</p> <p>Enhance infrastructure renewal and campus development to meet priority needs</p>

“Acadia 2025 will provide the guidance and direction that will ensure that the liberal education that has been the central core of the Acadia experience for over 180 years will continue to be relevant to educating students for the rapidly changing world of the 21st century, and that the transformative experience that characterizes an Acadia education will flourish well into the future.”



caring for our students and employees

Caring For Our Students and Employees:
By Enriching the Acadia Learning and
Working Experience

“At Acadia, students learn how to
live and thrive in community”

Goal: Transformational Student Experiences That Focus on Student Academic and Personal Success

Key Objectives:

- A comprehensive Strategic Enrolment Management and Student Affairs (SEMSA) approach
- Improved student employment and career success
- Improved data and information management systems
- Increase student international opportunities
- Collaboration with the Maple League on retention and success

Goal: An Inclusive and Supportive Campus Community Culture

Key Objectives:

- Student support services responsive to the increasing community diversity
- Increase access and support for Indigenous and African-Canadian, and students from minority and disadvantaged communities
- Develop and implement an accessible campus strategy
- Initiatives to promote respect, inclusivity, and professional collegiality

Goal: A Campus Culture Passionate About Professionalism, Inclusion, Service Excellence, and Leadership

Key Objectives:

- Promote a culture of leadership and excellence in professional development for staff and faculty
- Progress towards equity and diversity in Acadia's workforce, including gender, sexual orientation, and visible minorities

- Improve efficiencies, effectiveness and excellence in service delivery
- Progress towards optimum staffing levels in areas of greatest need
- Collaborate with the Maple League in supporting professional development and engagement

Goal: Caring For Our Community's Safety, Health and Wellness

Key Objectives:

- Valuing the “whole person” through a culture of Health and Wellness
- Ensuring a safe, healthy and respectful learning and work environment for all
- Support government programs to address sexual violence and mental health issues within the student community
- Increase the use of locally grown, sustainable food on campus
- Promote greater fitness and wellness across campus

Goal: Msit No'kmaq - Advancing Acadia's Contributions to Truth, Reconciliation and Decolonization

Key Objectives:

- Continue to implement the recommendations of the President's Advisory Council on Decolonization
- Work with the Maple League to support Indigenous student experiences
- Develop new partnerships and collaborations with regional Mi'kmaq communities
- Seek external sources of funding to support truth, reconciliation and decolonization

“Acadia will be known by its Mi'kmaq
neighbours and Canada's Indigenous
Peoples as a place where truth and
reconciliation matters”



caring for our planet

Caring For Our Planet:

By Leading, Educating and Researching in
Environmental Stewardship, Climate Change
and Sustainability

“This is the first generation of
students who will graduate into a
world that is physically transforming at
a rate never before seen in the human
experience. Not only the human world
is changing, but the planet itself is
transforming before our eyes”

Goal: Environmental Stewardship and Sustainability are Signature Institutional Features of Acadia University

Key Objectives:

- Promote awareness of climate change, environmental stewardship, and sustainability as focal elements of every part of our institution and community
- Incorporate Indigenous Traditional Knowledge of sustainability and environmental stewardship across the campus
- Build environmental responsibility and sustainability into all aspects of campus development, planning and infrastructure renewal:
- Align with applicable UN Sustainability Development Goals (SDGs) as guiding principles for Acadia's development
- Adopt an appropriate Sustainability Performance Index

Goal: Make Measurable Progress and Establish a Target Date for Achieving Net Carbon Neutrality

Key Objectives:

- Update the Acadia Sustainability Assessment and include a campus carbon-footprint analysis in order to determine an appropriate target date for achieving carbon neutrality, ideally by 2030:
 - Develop an appropriate monitoring system to measure carbon footprint reduction
- Incorporate sustainability and carbon footprint reduction into all infrastructure investments and activities at Acadia
- Find new opportunities for Increased use of alternative energy production and energy efficiencies

“Environmental stewardship has
always been a fundamental value
of Acadia, and in today's growing
climate emergency, it has never
been more important to ensure that
we learn, teach, and practice our
commitment to the environment and
sustainability of our world”



revitalizing our academic core

Revitalizing Our Academic Core:

Through Compelling and Impactful Programs,
Experiential Learning and Inspired Teaching to
Prepare Graduates for 21st Century Careers

“Acadia’s approach of educating the whole person has never been more relevant than it is in today’s rapidly changing society, where an increasingly complex combination of skills, knowledge and capabilities are required in order to succeed and thrive”

Goal: Embrace The 21st Century Liberal Education Model That is Central to Acadia’s Mission

Key Objectives:

- Ensure that Acadia’s liberal education experience focusses upon academic and research excellence and remains at the leading edge of undergraduate education in Canada
- Remove institutional barriers and increase opportunities for interdisciplinary learning:
 - o Develop new strategic interdisciplinary/multi-Faculty programs with a focus on positively influencing student recruitment

- Embed High Impact Practices (HIPs) as hallmarks of an Acadia undergraduate experience, including research, experiential learning, international experiences, community engaged learning, innovation and entrepreneurship experiences:
 - o Every Acadia Undergraduate Student will have at least one research experience and at least one additional HIP experience upon graduation
 - o Increase student participation in international experiences abroad and international student engagement on campus
- Incorporate Indigenous Traditional Knowledge and ways of knowing across the curriculum
- Build environmental responsibility and stewardship, and concern for climate change and sustainability into the academic core
- Engage Alumni directly in supporting student success and mentorship

Goal: Enhanced Support For Teaching and Learning Excellence

Key Objectives:

- Realign Open Acadia into a Centre for Teaching and Learning
- Create new learning spaces to support innovative teaching, active learning and High Impact Practices
- Develop an online learning strategy for Acadia
- Increase internal recognition of teaching excellence, external teaching awards, and funding to support teaching and learning professorships at Acadia
- Work with the Maple League on collaborative initiatives to support teaching and learning excellence



maximizing our impact

Maximizing Our Impact Regionally and Globally:
Through Engaged Research, Innovation, and
Collaborative Initiatives for Community Cultural
and Economic Development

“Acadia prides itself on having one
of the best town-gown relationships
in Canada, and we are grateful for
the support of the communities of
Wolfville and the surrounding
Valley region”

**Goal: New Partnerships and Collaborations to
Drive Regional Development and Educational
Opportunities**

Key Objectives:

- Create the Most Integrated University-Town Model in Canada:
 - o Maximize collaboration opportunities with the Town of Wolfville and the ASU under our 2017 *Memorandum of Understanding*
 - o New collaborative community initiatives and partnerships to support economic, social and cultural development
- Strategically align Acadia's external facing units to maximize economic and social development and research opportunities to:
 - o Deepen collaborations with economic development organizations, government agencies and industry associations, and
 - o Increase support for start-ups, new, and established companies interested in engagement opportunities
- Develop a “Great Valley Initiative” (GVI) in partnership with the Nova Scotia Community College (NSCC) to increase learning opportunities for the Valley Region
- Increase number of students engaged in internships with industry, co-op programs and other work-integrated learning opportunities

**Goal: Leadership and Impact in Environmental,
Rural and Coastal Research and Innovation**

Key Objectives:

- Engage with regional organizations and communities to further develop partnerships for research, innovation and entrepreneurship
- Highlight Acadia's signature world class facilities, such as the K.C. Irving Environmental Science Centre, the David Huestis Innovation Pavilion, and the Acadia Entrepreneurship Centre to increase opportunities for industry and community partners
- Continue to contribute to the Valley Region's success in achieving the One Nova Scotia and Atlantic Growth Strategy goals
- New opportunities for students to engage in applied research and commercialization initiatives with industry and community partners

**Goal: Acadia's Research is Impactful Regionally,
Nationally and Globally**

Key Objectives:

- Promote and showcase faculty and student research across campus and to the external community
- Nomination of high performing faculty and students for awards and prizes related to research contributions and impact
- Encourage the development of research teams and other collaborative initiatives
- Increase external research funding and seek funding for new research professorships to support graduate and undergraduate programs
- Take a leading role on research initiatives in the Maple League



sustaining our institutional future

Sustaining Our Institutional Future:

Through Optimizing Enrolment, Fundraising
and Campus Infrastructure Renewal

“The Acadia learning environment is one that is increasingly rare within Canadian university education, and it is shared by all Acadia students and not just select groups or cohorts”

Goal: Achieve Optimal Rates of Student Enrolment to Ensure Institutional and Campus Community Sustainability

Key Objectives:

- A controlled and measured approach to increase overall undergraduate enrolment by at least 10% by the conclusion of the Acadia 2025 Plan
- Increase African Nova Scotian and Indigenous student enrolment as a percentage of domestic student enrolment
- Increase international student enrolment to at least 20 percent of the overall undergraduate enrolment
- Increase student retention and graduation rates to exceed regional averages for Maritime universities with a longer-term goal of being in the top quartile for Canadian universities

Goal: Build a Culture Of Fundraising to Continue Beyond the Successful Completion of Campaign for Acadia

Key Objectives:

- Successfully complete Campaign for Acadia by reaching or exceeding the \$75 million goal
- Develop an ongoing fundraising strategy to be in place following completion of Campaign for Acadia
- Set annual goals for ongoing fundraising

Goal: Enhance Infrastructure Renewal And Campus Development To Meet Priority Needs

Key Objectives:

- Revise and update the Acadia Campus Master Plan to Align with the Priorities of Acadia 2025
- Continue fundraising for infrastructure priorities with emphasis upon:
 - o SUB Renewal/Centre for Student Success
 - o Renewal of the Vaughan Memorial Library and BAC
- Generate and allocate increased financial resources to deferred maintenance and IT infrastructure renewal
 - o Continue strategic upgrading of information systems
- Develop a space policy that reflects current infrastructure capacity, academic and community priorities, and more efficient and effective allocation and use of space on campus

Phased Implementation Plan For Acadia 2025

The implementation of Acadia 2025 will be accomplished in a phased approach to ensure that all aspects of the plan are developed and implemented within the fundamental principles of balanced budgets and no increase in Acadia's debt load.

This will require an up-front emphasis on those aspects of the plan that we can work on within existing financial restrictions and those components of the plan that are aimed at generating new revenues. Other aspects of

the plan will be implemented subject to availability of resources and capabilities. It is understood that some parts of the plan involve stretch goals and objectives and may not be implemented due to lack of resources or will be only partially implemented in accordance with available resources. Three years into the plan, we will assess progress and make adjustments to the plan if necessary. The planned phased implementation of Acadia 2025 is shown below.

Acadia 2025: Phased Implementation Plan		
<p>PHASE I: Student success and building resources 2019/20 - 2020/21</p>	<p>PHASE II: Building and sustaining 2021/22 – 2022/23 Mid-Plan Review June 2022</p>	<p>PHASE III: Investing for the future 2023/24 – 2024/25</p>
<p><i>Priority goals:</i></p> <p>Transformational student experiences focused on academic and personal success</p> <p>Achieve optimal rates of student enrolment to ensure institutional and campus community sustainability</p> <p>Embrace a 21st century liberal education model that is central to Acadia's mission</p> <p>Environmental stewardship and sustainability are signature institutional features of Acadia University</p> <p>Msit No'kmaq - advancing Acadia's contributions to truth, reconciliation and decolonisation</p>	<p><i>Priority goals:</i></p> <p>Enhanced support for teaching and learning excellence</p> <p>New partnerships and collaboration to drive regional development and educational opportunities</p> <p>Determine a date for and make measurable progress towards achieving net carbon neutrality</p>	<p><i>Priority goals:</i></p> <p>Enhance infrastructure renewal and campus development to meet priority needs and reduce our accumulated deferred maintenance deficit</p> <p>Establish a culture of sustained fundraising and giving</p> <p>Acadia's research activities and outcomes are known regionally, nationally and globally</p>
<p><i>Incremental goals:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An inclusive and supportive community campus culture • A campus culture passionate about professionalism, inclusion, service excellence, and leadership • Caring for our community health and wellness • Acadia recognized for leadership and impact in rural and coastal research and innovation 		

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.



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