



Strategic Plan 2025-2030

Draft Themes



Lakehead
UNIVERSITY

December 18, 2024

At Lakehead University, the strategic plan serves as our compass, guiding decision-making with a focus on achievement of long-term goals aligned to our mission and vision.

Over the past number of years Lakehead University has successfully implemented its 2018-2023 Strategic Plan, extending it for an additional two years in response to the pandemic and related recovery. Through the implementation of this plan, Lakehead University has achieved many successes that are cause for celebration despite operating in a highly constrained environment.

Last November, the Board initiated development of the 2025-2030 Strategic Plan. Throughout 2024, the Board met with the university community and local partners and conducted an online survey to gain input as we plan for our future. The responses we received informed the development of draft themes, on which we are now seeking feedback.

Lakehead University's draft 2025-2030 Strategic Plan themes have been [posted for your review](#).

Please provide any comments you may have by **Friday, January 17, 2025** to strategicplan@lakeheadu.ca.

Sincerely,

Cathy Tuckwell
Chair, Board of Governors
Lakehead University

STRATEGIC THEME: Expanding Student Opportunity and Success	
Title	Expanding Student Opportunity and Success
Overview	<p>Over the next five years there is a significant opportunity for social and economic growth in the regions where Lakehead operates. However, both Simcoe County and Northwestern Ontario face challenges in realizing these opportunities as their degree attainment rates are below the provincial and national average.</p> <p>Lakehead is committed to changing this. Lakehead will support efforts to increase regional degree attainment rates and develop future changemakers by making high-quality degree-level programming, professional development and lifelong learning opportunities more accessible for students from all backgrounds.</p> <p>Achievement of this goal will require Lakehead to lead cross-functional partnerships, innovative approaches to student engagement, program delivery, student supports and focused initiatives for Indigenous populations.</p>
Aim	Expand the number of individuals who pursue and attain a university qualification in the regions Lakehead serves
Objectives	<p>To meet our aim, we will:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Widen university participation and degree attainment while maintaining exemplary academic standards 2. Deliver high-quality programming with new ways to learn, making sure there's a good mix of online and in-person options for students 3. Provide a personalized student experience to help more students succeed at university throughout their educational journey 4. Establish Lakehead as a regional education centre for Indigenous learners in Northern Ontario
Strategies	<p>Strategies to Support Degree Attainment:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Enhance Strategic Enrolment Management <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1.1. Develop and implement a renewed comprehensive Strategic Enrolment Management Plan 2. Modernize Program Delivery <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2.1. Develop flexible, responsive approaches to degree-level programming across campuses 2.2. Expand and strengthen non-traditional degree pathways 2.3. Expand distance learning program options and supports for remote learners 2.4. Ensure all students have experiential learning opportunities 2.5. Expand non-degree programming 3. Support Indigenous Participation <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3.1. Expand programming and partnerships to increase Indigenous participation and success in university education 3.2. Explore opportunities to broaden recognition of prior learning experience 4. Expand Access Through Community Partnerships <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1.1 Continue to partner with school boards, colleges, universities and Aboriginal Institutes to support long term student outcomes 1.2 Develop local philanthropic networks to support access to education
Metrics	<p>Metrics:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The university participation rate in the regions served by Lakehead 2. Indigenous student enrolment at all levels of study 3. Enrolment of under-represented student groups at all levels of study 4. Number of graduates who participated in experiential learning during their undergraduate degree 5. Seven-year graduation rate

STRATEGIC THEME: Sustainable Economic and Community Development and Entrepreneurship	
Title	Sustainable Economic and Community Development and Entrepreneurship
Verbiage	<p>As a strategic economic anchor, Lakehead is integral to supporting regional economic stability and advancing the pursuit of future-oriented economic growth in Northwestern Ontario and Simcoe County.</p> <p>Over the next 5 years, Lakehead will be an active partner in advancing common priorities including emerging labour market needs, northern societal issues, sustainable resource extraction, and reconciliation through alignment of University resources and capabilities and collaborations with industry, municipal, community and Indigenous groups.</p> <p>In addition, through its commitment to validating Indigenous contributions and initiatives throughout the institution and the curriculum, Lakehead is making space for Indigenous knowledge, modelling and inviting knowledge exchange for the betterment of society.</p>
Aim	Maximize Lakehead's positive regional economic and community impact
Objectives	<p>To meet our aim, we will:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Propel regional economic transformation through people, place, innovation, and civic engagement 2. Develop a skilled talent supply to support industry growth in Northern Ontario and Simcoe County 3. Advance regional economic development in partnership with Indigenous groups 4. Develop university-led entrepreneurial ecosystems tailored to local needs
Strategies	<p>Strategies for Maximizing Regional Impact:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Strengthen Industry and Community Partnerships <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1.1. Develop programs and research collaborations with local industries, community agencies, cultural groups, and Indigenous partners to meet local labour market and community needs 1.2. Align experiential and work integrated learning with local employer needs to help address local issues and support student career transitions 1.3. Actively participate in Regional Innovation Clusters in Simcoe County and Northwestern Ontario 1.4. Establish strong local partnerships in support of advancing shared community goals 2. Enhance Academic and Research Capacity <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2.1. Expand the Lakehead Orillia campus to deliver expanded academic programs, research opportunities, student supports goals 2.2. Develop a STEM Hub in Barrie 2.3. Build and expand collaborations with other education providers to deliver joint and interdisciplinary programs aligned to regional demands 2.4. Attract highly skilled international learners and researchers to Lakehead 3. Leverage Alumni and Global Expertise <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3.1. Engage Lakehead's vast alumni network to connect global expertise with local initiatives 4. Promote Economic Development and Innovation <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4.1. Maintain the University Economic Development Association Innovation and Economic Prosperity Designation in support of regional economic development 4.2. Renew the university's commercialization strategy
Metrics	<p>Indicators of success include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Lakehead's economic impact 2. The number of graduates with work integrated learning experience 3. Lakehead's graduate employment rate 4. The cumulative number of international students studying at Lakehead 5. The number of graduates who stay in the local regions served by Lakehead upon graduation 6. Commercialization and entrepreneurship activity

STRATEGIC THEME: Advancing Our Societal Impact	
Title	Advancing Our Societal Impact
Verbiage	<p>Many of the grand challenges facing the world today including access to education, poverty, climate change, access to clean water and Indigenous truth and reconciliation have a local dimension in Northern Ontario and Simcoe County.</p> <p>Through innovative academic programming, focused research and scholarly activity, Lakehead's talented faculty, researchers, administrators, and students are uniquely positioned to help address these significant societal challenges.</p> <p>By embracing an enhanced civic role that includes sharing of resources, knowledge and expertise, Lakehead will forge stronger partnerships with all levels of government, industry, Indigenous groups, and global partners with the goal of co-creating solutions for the betterment of society.</p>
Aim	Advance solutions to grand challenges affecting society through quality research and scholarly activity
Objectives	<p>To meet our aim, we will:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Continue to lead Lakehead's Truth and Reconciliation efforts in post-secondary education through partnerships with Indigenous communities 2. Position Lakehead as a local and global leader in sustainability, climate leadership, social justice, and Indigenous education 3. Co-create solutions to grand societal challenges through innovative, integrated partnerships 4. Continue to be a trusted source of quality research and scholarly activity
Strategies	<p>Strategies for Advancing Place-Based Leadership and Partnerships:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Deliver Academic and Research Excellence Reflecting Regional Needs <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1.1. Deliver academic programs and conduct research, creative and scholarly activity that address social and environmental priorities unique to the regions served by Lakehead 2. Champion Indigenous Worldviews and Partnerships <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2.1. Expand Indigenous content, teachings, and ways of knowing across academic and non-academic programs 2.2. Establish dedicated, centralized spaces on Lakehead campuses that better support Indigenous teaching, learning, research, cultural activities and archiving 2.3. Partner with local First Nations, Indigenous groups, and all levels of government to establish a centralized cultural gathering place in Thunder Bay 2.4. Support Indigenous-led initiatives 2.5. Collaborate on becoming a major repository of archeological heritage 3. Co-Create Solutions through Civic Partnerships <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3.1. Lead collaborations with local municipalities and civic partners to define shared priorities and develop action plans to achieve common goals for the betterment of society 4. Advance Sustainability Leadership <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4.1. Develop a regional knowledge hub to share research and emerging practices addressing major societal challenges, including Truth and Reconciliation, climate leadership and sustainability 4.2. Develop and implement a refreshed Sustainability Plan, including a long-term vision for Lakehead in a post-carbon world
Metrics	<p>Indicators of success include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Lakehead's societal impact 2. The research impact of the university 3. The number of active Indigenous partnerships 4. The number of multi-stakeholder partnerships designed to accelerate progress in achieving the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals

STRATEGIC THEME: People and Culture
(Previously: People, Systems and Culture)

Title	People and Culture
Verbiage	<p>The people at Lakehead are at the core of its ability to deliver high-quality education, conduct research, creative and scholarly activity, and engage with the community. Their commitment ensures that the university remains a regional transformative force that educates and supports students and fosters research, innovation and entrepreneurship.</p> <p>Over the next five years, Lakehead will continue to rely on excellent faculty and staff to advance its priorities and recognizes the importance of providing an excellent employee experience to achieve these goals.</p> <p>This requires not only ongoing alignment across all functions of the university but also development of an employee-focused culture that is equipped to support the University's civic role and to drive innovation across the entire institution.</p>
Aim	Establish Lakehead as a top employer
Objectives	<p>To meet our aim, we will:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Realize a positive, aligned and purpose-driven Lakehead culture across all campuses 2. Establish Lakehead as a recognized employer of choice in the regions served by the University 3. Make meaningful progress towards decolonization and Indigenization of the institution
Strategies	<p>Strategies for Strengthening the Lakehead Community:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Enhance Talent Development and Retention <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1.1. Develop and implement an iterative strategic talent management plan with a focus on succession planning and career development 2. Cultivate Lakehead's Culture <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2.1. Focus on cultivating a shared Lakehead culture across campuses 3. Prioritize Workplace Wellness and Well-Being <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3.1. Implement a refreshed wellness strategy for the University community 4. Advance Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4.1. Implement a refreshed Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Action Plan to promote a more equitable and inclusive environment 4.2. Conduct a policy review within the context of universal design, equity, diversity and inclusion, decolonization, and sustainability
Metrics	<p>Indicators of success include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Improved employee engagement 2. The number of Indigenous faculty and staff 3. The number of racialized faculty and staff

STRATEGIC THEME: Financial Sustainability	
Title	Financial Sustainability
Verbiage	<p>Amid growing complexity and fiscal constraints, Lakehead is committed to building a strong, resilient, and financially sustainable institution that can withstand economic downturns, shifts in funding policies, and demographic changes.</p> <p>By securing its financial sustainability, Lakehead will reinforce its capacity to fulfill its role as a civic university advancing regional educational, social and economic priorities while enhancing the well-being of Northwestern Ontario and Simcoe County.</p> <p>Achieving this goal requires ongoing operational efficiencies and improvements that drive transformative change across the institution combined with innovative revenue strategies that support the University's mandate.</p>
Aim	Ensure Lakehead's long-term financial sustainability
Objectives	<p>To meet our aim, we will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustain the financial health of the university • Achieve operational efficiencies through integrated planning, strategic decision making and digital transformation • Advance the development of a strengthened model for universities in Northern Ontario
Strategies	<p>Strategies for Financial Sustainability and Strategic Growth:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Strengthen Financial Sustainability <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1.1. Advance the work of the President's Advisory Committee on Financial Sustainability 1.2. Develop and sustain operational and capital budgets at a level to sustain Lakehead by: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Increasing enrolment b. Diversifying revenue streams beyond government grants and regulated tuition c. Realizing operational efficiencies through process redesign, digital transformation, and functional reviews of internal structures d. Continuing the implementation of Lakehead's Philanthropic Campaign Plan 2. Enhancing Strategic Planning and Budgeting <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2.1. Implement a revised integrated planning and budgeting model to promote strategic alignment and operational transparency 2.2. Advance the development and implementation of an iterative campus plan 3. Advocate for a Northern Ontario University Model <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3.1. Collaborate with partner organizations and the government to inform and develop a strengthened model for universities in Northern Ontario
Metrics	<p>Indicators of success include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Increased enrolment 2. Lakehead's financial health metrics 3. The proportion of operating funding that originates from non-governmental sources 4. The total amount raised by 2030 will be in alignment with the Philanthropic Campaign Plan