# BRIDGE STRATEGIC PLAN
## 2023–2025

**WRIGHT STATE**
UNIVERSITY

# Introduction

Wright State University students, faculty, and staff have weathered a tremendous amount of disruption, uncertainty, and change over the past several years as our world and our connection to it have been reshaped by the COVID-19 pandemic. We have shown our strength, commitment, and resilience in the face of great challenges—and we are not yet done. Looking toward a post-pandemic landscape, we laid out a two-year bridge strategic plan to build on our strengths as we continue to understand what the future holds and how that impacts the needs of our students and our region.

Guided by our mission, vision, and strategic priorities of Recruitment, Retention, and Relationships, as well as a continued commitment to fiscal sustainability, we have identified five primary institutional objectives that will move us forward on our path over the next two years while infusing strength and adaptability throughout the institution. Each will be achieved through underlying strategies, projects, and initiatives that enhance the breadth, quality, and diversity of educational experiences and services we provide for our students and community.

## Mission Statement
We empower all students to excel in their lives and chosen careers through integrated learning, research, innovation, and experience.

## Vision Statement
To be a diverse, inclusive university that positively transforms the educational, economic, and social fabric of the communities we serve.

# Institutional Objectives

**I**
Student Success—
Transformational
Student Experience

**II**
Advancing
Knowledge
through Research,
Entrepreneurship,
and Creative
Endeavors

**III**
Forging and
Sustaining Strong,
Collaborative
Relationships

**IV**
Inclusive
Excellence

**V**
Resource Management
and Sustainable
Operating Budget

# Student Success— Transformational Student Experience

Higher education is a primary driver of social mobility and civic engagement. Wright State prides itself on providing access to high-quality educational experiences to students from all backgrounds, meeting each student where they are and helping them build the knowledge, skills, and experiences to achieve life goals.

We will **enhance the student learning experience** through the creation of a culture of continued assessment and improvement.

We will **demonstrate a "students-first" approach** in everything we do and offer seamless service and support to students and families.

We will **provide students with educational experiences** that enable their personal and professional development, in the classroom and beyond.

We will **develop an enrollment management roadmap** that mobilizes the campus community toward attracting and retaining Wright State students.

We will **offer an accessible, empowering, and supportive learning environment** that eliminates barriers to success and drives degree completion.

# Student Success—Transformational Student Experience

We will achieve this objective through the following strategies:

### Strategy 1
### Implement student-centered best practices and ensure institutional policies prioritize students.

Hurdles encountered by students navigating higher education business processes can pose significant challenges to retention and persistence. Embracing a culture of service excellence better supports student progress to degree completion.

Examples of projects and initiatives for this strategy:

- Develop a service excellence training program for all service unit staff.

- Replace outdated, burdensome student-facing processes with new, more convenient digital workflows.

- Form a policy review task force to identify and make recommendations on policies that create barriers to student success.

### Strategy 2
### Create and maintain transformational and relevant academic programs to meet the needs of the region and beyond.

Aligning academic programs with regional and national workforce demand improves post-graduation outcomes for students. To accommodate the needs of today's dynamic student population, flexible delivery options facilitate broader access and timely completion.

Examples of projects and initiatives for this strategy:

- Apply data-driven approaches to assess program offerings and identify areas of growth.

- Increase accelerated programs and identify opportunities to implement micro-credentialing.

- Increase opportunities for collaborations and efficiencies among academic units through common resources, space, and processes.

- Enhance online programs, course recruitment, and marketing.

# Student Success—Transformational Student Experience

## Strategy 3
### Increase community engagement, co-curricular, and experiential learning opportunities.

Learning through doing facilitates stronger connections between concepts taught in the classroom and the application of knowledge and skills throughout the students' professional, civic, and personal activities.

Examples of projects and initiatives for this strategy:

- Create a structure to support, maintain, publicize, and track experiential learning opportunities and community partnerships.

- Create innovative, career-focused partnerships to attract students and provide expanded experiential learning opportunities.

- Increase learning components within existing curriculum that promote experiential learning, community engagement, and co-curricular programs.

- Develop and implement assessment mechanisms for co-curricular outcomes.

## Strategy 4
### Improve student success and retention rates.

Many students come to higher education institutions with academic and personal challenges that pose barriers to their success. Identifying those students and providing timely, targeted support interventions can significantly improve their retention and persistence to degree.

Examples of projects and initiatives for this strategy:

- Create a High-Risk Retention Task Force to identify and plan interventions for "high-risk" students.

- Provide enhanced professional development for faculty on DFW and retention rates.

- Develop a task force to examine and make recommendations regarding first-year seminar models and bridge programs.

- Review and update academic program requirements, plans, and processes to improve timely degree completion.

# Advancing Knowledge through Research, Entrepreneurship, and Creative Endeavors

Sustaining and sharing excellence in faculty research and creative activity enhances institutional reputation, drives innovation and progress across the region, state, and nation, and produces graduates prepared to drive progress in their chosen professions.

We will **leverage our innovative and creative expertise** in education, research, service, and entrepreneurial spirit to produce graduates who excel in their chosen fields.

# Advancing Knowledge through Research, Entrepreneurship, and Creative Endeavors

We will achieve this objective through the following strategies:

### Strategy 1
### Develop research, scholarship, creative activities, and strategic collaborations that actively engage undergraduate and graduate students.

Excellence in faculty research and creative activity raises the university's national profile and delivers the most recent developments directly to students. Student participation in faculty research further supports students' acquisition of disciplinary skills and knowledge and serves as a high-impact practice proven to increase persistence and achievement.

Examples of projects and initiatives for this strategy:

- Increase undergraduate and graduate student participation in research activity.

- Increase research and creative activity through initiatives supporting faculty development, incentives, and interdisciplinary research collaborations.

### Strategy 2
### Invigorate knowledge transfer, instrumentalization, and commercialization.

As an R2 university, Wright State has the responsibility to serve as a key driver of research and innovation that serves the needs and priorities of the region, state, and nation.

Examples of projects and initiatives for this strategy:

- Conduct a gap analysis to assess current university research capabilities and identify gaps relative to the key focus areas within regional, state, and national priorities.

- Increase the visibility of Wright State University scholarship and resources by improving our online presence.

### Strategy 3
### Expand opportunities for students, faculty, and staff to engage in interdisciplinary research and creative activities with government and private sector partners.

Interdisciplinary collaboration provides new opportunities for innovative research and creative activities that engage a broad range of faculty, students, and external stakeholders.

Example of projects and initiatives for this strategy:

- Strengthen existing interdisciplinary, co-curricular innovation, and entrepreneurship activities and pursue new opportunities.

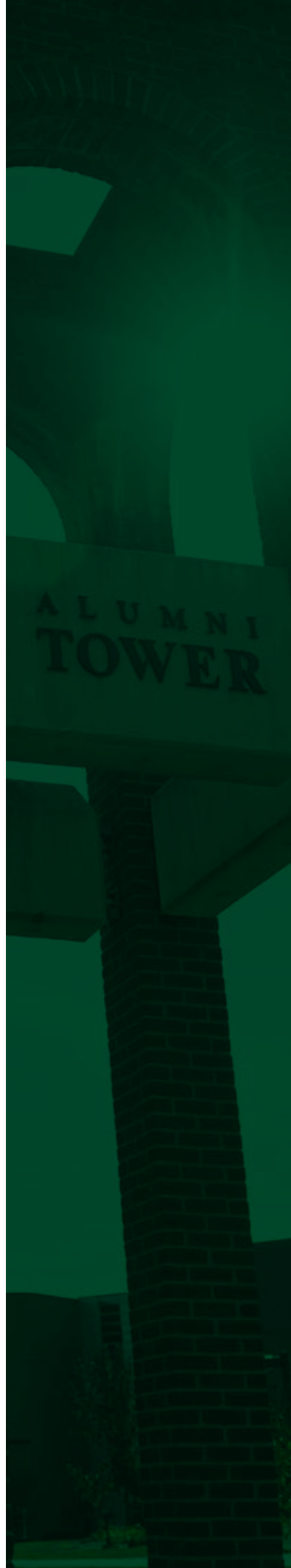# Forging and Sustaining Strong, Collaborative Relationships

Wright State University influences the economic and cultural landscape of Southwestern Ohio. Successful relationships with industry and community partners drive the timely development of relevant educational programs to meet the needs of our region.

We will **create strategic, innovative engagements/partnerships** with business and organizations that are focused on serving the needs of our local community.

We will **engage with regional business partners** to identify and respond to emerging skill needs and develop a curriculum in collaboration and consultation with the industry sector.

# Forging and Sustaining Strong, Collaborative Relationships

We will achieve this objective through the following strategies:

### Strategy 1
### Build relationships with defense, engineering, and technology partners.

With its proximity to Wright-Patterson Air Force Base and leading companies in the defense, engineering, and technology industries, Wright State is positioned to serve as a key partner to support technological advancement and produce a highly skilled workforce to meet industry needs.

Examples of projects and initiatives for this strategy:

- Develop educational programs that meet the workforce needs of the region's defense industry and Wright-Patterson Air Force Base.

- Offer industry partnership seed grants.

- Designate a liaison for small business engagement.

- Form a micro-credentials roundtable.

### Strategy 2
### Forge health care partnerships to meet regional needs.

With critical health care shortages across the nation and especially in rural areas, it is vital to build pipelines that will produce the workforce to meet the allied health needs of our communities.

Examples of projects and initiatives for this strategy:

- Develop and lead a regional health care workforce task force.

- Support the expansion of medical education programs (M.D. and GME) in rural regions, particularly those in the Lake Campus region.

- Establish a Wright State/Boonshoft School of Medicine regional simulation/clinical skills training center.

### Strategy 3
### Foster intentional connections with P–12 education partners.

Increasing the college-readiness of high school graduates is driven by collaborative, reciprocal communication and support between P–12 and higher education communities.

Examples of projects and initiatives for this strategy:

- Hold partnership outreach-focused events to create meaningful connections with student and professional stakeholders.

- Form an advisory group of education partners to surface mutually beneficial learning and development opportunities.

# Inclusive Excellence

Diversity of cultures, abilities, ideas, backgrounds, and experiences that enrich the academic and professional environment. Attracting and retaining a diverse community of students, staff, and faculty through an inclusive excellence lens will enhance the educational experiences provided and strengthen the communities we serve.

We will be **an inclusive and welcoming community**.

We will **develop focused recruitment plans** for students, staff, and faculty.

We will **support retention of diverse** students, staff, and faculty.

# Inclusive Excellence

We will achieve this objective through the following strategies:

### Strategy 1
### Create an inclusive campus environment that is nurturing, supportive, and welcoming for all students, faculty, and staff.

Fostering a sense of belonging and safety supports the overall well-being of students, staff, and faculty and improves retention, performance, and attainment of academic and professional goals.

Examples of projects and initiatives for this strategy:

- ☑ Conduct a campus-wide climate survey to assess where diversity, equity, and inclusion improvements are needed.

- ♀ Create intentional and ongoing educational opportunities centered around diversity, unconscious bias, and microaggressions.

- 👥 Develop a plan to recruit a diverse workforce and student body reflective of our communities and the broader national society.

- ⚙ Examine policies and institutional processes that are counterproductive to diversity and inclusive excellence.

- 💬 Increase help-seeking behavior of students, staff, and faculty.

### Strategy 2
### Develop a robust plan to recruit and retain students from underrepresented minoritized populations (URMs), locally, regionally, and in other untapped markets.

A diverse student body strengthens students' ability to think critically and prepares them to productively engage with people from different backgrounds.

Examples of projects and initiatives for this strategy:

- 📋 Design a recruitment plan targeting minoritized populations using creative and technology-forward strategies.

- 👥 Leverage culture and identity centers and bridge programs to improve retention rates for underrepresented student populations.

# Inclusive Excellence

### Strategy 3
### Integrate inclusive excellence into the curriculum.

Embedding inclusive excellence into the curriculum validates the potential of all learners and lays a foundation for graduates to carry inclusive practices into their personal and professional lives.

Examples of projects and initiatives for this strategy:

- Collect and share best practices for teaching inclusive excellence within the existing curricula.

- Develop recommendations for including inclusive excellence in Wright State Core or Core Curriculum.

- Sustain and enhance the Center for Faculty Excellence (CFE) Equity Champions to promote equity, diversity, access, and inclusion in classes to facilitate implementation of DEI pedagogy and reform activities in academic units.

### Strategy 4
### Attract diverse faculty and staff through effective recruitment, inclusivity, and retention strategies and cultivate an equitable workplace environment to retain its talent.

Student, faculty, and staff sense of belonging is enhanced when they see themselves reflected in their academic and professional environment. Engaging a diverse set of backgrounds and perspectives within an inclusive higher education community enhances our ability to address regional, national, and international issues.

Examples of projects and initiatives for this strategy:

- Adopt faculty and staff recruitment strategies focused on the inclusivity of our applicant pools and succession plans.

- Create a work environment in which faculty and staff feel valued and supported and are able to perform at their best.

- Enhance and expand diversity, equity, and inclusion programs, events, resources, and services available to students, faculty, and staff.

# Resource Management and Sustainable Operating Budget

Wright State University's sustainable operation and commitment to affordability are incumbent upon our careful stewardship of resources and ability to develop strong, dependable revenue sources.

We will **maintain student enrollment targets**.

We will **diversify revenue streams**.

We will **increase efficiency and effectiveness** of operations supporting the academic mission.

# Resource Management and Sustainable Operating Budget

We will achieve this objective through the following strategies:

## Strategy 1
### Optimize state share of instruction.

Maintaining affordable tuition and fees for students is facilitated by optimizing other sources of revenue to the institution. As a performance-based award and our largest alternative revenue source, optimizing state share of instruction (SSI) benefits students both financially and academically.

Examples of projects and initiatives for this strategy:

- Launch an SSI education campaign to increase understanding of its composition and underlying drivers.

- Implement policy and curricular changes that optimize SSI.

- Identify and promote associate and master's degrees that can be awarded to bachelor's and doctoral seeking students.

## Strategy 2
### Strengthen international enrollment.

International students are a vital component of the university's student body. They globalize our campus and enrich the experiences for all students. Expansion to these markets fortifies institutional revenue streams while answering international demand for high-quality education and professional pathways.

Examples of projects and initiatives for this strategy:

- Diversify our sources of international student enrollment.

- Expand the number of programs that recruit international students.

# Resource Management and Sustainable Operating Budget

## Strategy 3
### Diversify and strengthen revenues to support student financial assistance and services.

Social mobility is an increasingly important factor in driving economic health and reducing socioeconomic inequality. As a leader in social mobility, Wright State will enhance its support for students by increasing availability and utilization of need-based aid and support services.

Examples of projects and initiatives for this strategy:

- Collaborate with the Wright State University Foundation to support student scholarship funding.

- Empower students by increasing their knowledge of and access to financial aid.

## Strategy 4
### Engender a culture of data-informed decision making and develop the infrastructure to support it.

Within a framework of fiscal discipline, data-informed decision making will guide university leaders to invest in high-demand programs, support workforce development, and foster key relationships.

Example of projects and initiatives for this strategy:

- Create a culture of institutional reporting and sharing to drive efficient and effective use of university resources.