STRATEGY 2020
VISION:

GLOBAL CHALLENGES – REGIONAL SOLUTIONS

Rapid population increases have given rise to significant global challenges related to climate, energy, food production and public health. At the same time, democratic principles are under pressure. Robust regional solutions, based on regional, national and international research cooperation across academic disciplines, are integral to meeting global challenges. Through research, research-based education and communication, Nord University will deliver knowledge that fosters sustainability as well as social and human development.
ACADEMIC STRENGTHS

Nord University’s identity is defined in terms of the three strategic focus areas Blue and Green Growth, Innovation and Entrepreneurship and Health, Welfare and Education. Our identity emphasises our academic strengths and the university’s location in one of Norway’s most important growth regions.

The region is rich in natural resources, supports diverse commercial activity and a large public sector, and represents significant potential within culture and recreation.

Combined, these elements represent the university’s “field laboratory”, a space in which new solutions to global challenges can be tested and implemented. The field laboratory is also an important part of the university’s periphery, in which knowledge gathering, professional practice, innovation and economic development take place.

The university’s structure, with its broad geographical distribution of study locations, demands innovative approaches to communication and provides extensive opportunities to test digital solutions in the academic field laboratory of research and teaching.

A significant aspect of the university’s profile is its role as an important national supplier of professional education. Further and continuing education, such as MBA programmes and professional development courses in aquaculture, also form an important part of the academic profile.

The university will secure its place in the higher education sector, and its mission, by building recognised academic communities within defined professional and traditional academic disciplines. These fields support development of regional communities, and business and industry. At the same time, the university’s knowledge base constitutes part of the global perspective and can be integrated into solutions in other geographical areas.

The university’s strategic profile coalesces with the challenges identified in the Norwegian Government’s Strategy for the High North, and the university will assume an important role in the development and implementation of High North policy.

The Strategy for the High North also encompasses the traditional knowledge, language and culture of the Saami peoples. The university has a unique national responsibility for Lule Saami and South Saami languages and culture. The goal is to strengthen and develop Saami educational programmes, and research and communication within the field, as well as to establish research-based partnerships with others involved in research or teaching related to indigenous peoples.
BLUE AND GREEN GROWTH

SUSTAINABILITY

INNOVATION AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP

HEALTH, WELFARE & EDUCATION
Nord University’s profile is based on the principle of “sustainability” in economic, social, structural and environmental aspects of society. The university emphasises this in the three strategic focus areas. Each of the strategic focus areas highlights the university’s strengths, both academic and geographical. The mutuality of the focus areas is also an important factor in the development of the university’s identity.

Competencies within the strategic focus areas will, through research and education, contribute to increased expertise and commercial activity within the region, as well as nationally. Education at all levels is prerequisite for further development. Primary and lower secondary school teacher education is integral. The university’s particular strength lies within its combination of professional and traditional academic disciplines. By exploiting this strength, the university will ensure that all graduates have knowledge about sustainability and the institution’s strategic focus areas.

Complementarity between doctoral education and the strategic focus areas will ensure that the university operates as a “complete supplier” of research and research-based education, both of which stimulate development in communities, and in business and industry.
BLUE AND GREEN GROWTH

Nord University is among the leading research institutions within research and education on natural resources, contributing to sustainable development within the green shift and a strong circular economy. Cultivation and harvesting of marine bioresources is a topic with increasing relevance. The region presents significant opportunities for further development within aquaculture and other commercial activities; industry that lays the foundation for a robust public sector. Marine resources, combined with the university’s location, provide opportunities for international cooperation, within both research and education. Targeted collection and use of data from the region’s field laboratory strengthens this competitive advantage. Expertise developed at Nord University will also be applicable in other locations.

Growth within the blue and green sectors is based on relevant research results, supported by expertise within innovation and entrepreneurship, contributing to an increase in welfare and a positive foundation for human development and education, which in turn supports good health.
INNOVATION AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Nord University has one of Norway’s leading research and teaching communities within innovation and entrepreneurship, with a strong international position. The university will reinforce and develop this area further in order to encompass a greater portion of the university’s activities.

Through development of new teaching forms, with an emphasis on engaging and participatory educational programmes, candidates will obtain the necessary knowledge and skills to develop future-oriented solutions. In the context of sustainability, all resources are limited, and knowledge about resource management will define this focus area.
HEALTH, WELFARE AND EDUCATION

Nord University’s important national role within the professional disciplines, especially those related to education, and further education, of teachers, nurses and social workers, places the focus area Health, Welfare and Education in a central position within the university’s profile. Integrated with the two other strategic focus areas, this focus area contributes to the development of knowledge and attractive societies.

Research-based teaching characterises the professional disciplines and provides the basis for supplying the health, education and welfare sectors with competent practitioners.

In addition to meeting national requirements, graduates will have fundamental knowledge about how blue and green growth, and innovation and entrepreneurship affect the development of societies and industry.

The university has a unique doctoral education programme within studies of professional practice. Through research, the university will develop the professional educational programmes further in order to ensure health, welfare and education services of a qualitatively high standard, based on regional, national and international datasets. This research will promote good health, innovation and service development, in close cooperation with service providers and users. Users’ rights, local conditions and use of modern digital solutions and welfare technologies form a natural part of this work.
Nord University will consistently contribute to solving global and regional challenges through robust academic communities with an interdisciplinary approach to research and teaching.

In the period toward 2020, Nord University will maintain a special focus on solving challenges in order to secure and develop the university’s status in the long-term.

Nord University’s large geographical distribution of study locations presents a special challenge. The campus structure must reinforce the research and teaching strategy, as well as the Policy concerning peripheral activities. As such, the development of a campus plan is significant.

With a basis in NOKUT’s analysis and the Ministry of Education’s letter of allocation, the following areas will be given priority toward 2020:

- Reinforce the systematic quality assurance work within education, and develop the academic portfolio according to academic strategies.
- Develop expertise within defined fields and doctoral degrees in order to increase the percentage of academic staff with associate professor and professor qualifications.
- Develop teacher education programmes based on national requirements and national and regional challenges.
- Develop a campus structure plan that accords with strategic objectives for research and teaching.

The university will refine the academic profile and further develop the strategic focus areas *Blue and Green Growth, Health, Welfare and Education, and Innovation and Entrepreneurship*. 
RESEARCH

Research that supports the university’s doctoral education programmes is the crux of the university’s research. Research affiliated with doctoral education programmes will contribute to the affiliated programmes as well as the strategic focus areas. The university will also ensure activity in, and focus on, creative development work.

Through increased research, publication and production of doctoral candidates and research-based teaching in the strategic focus areas, the university will contribute to recognised research-based solutions that meet global challenges. The university will build a culture for research that integrates students.

The research strategy forms the basis of the university’s strategic ownership and peripheral policies.
STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES AND INITIATIVES IN ORDER OF PRIORITY TOWARD 2020:

1. Attain an academic competencies factor that corresponds to 67 and 24 percent of academic staff at associate professor and professor levels respectively, by 2020:
   • Develop and realise an academic competencies development plan.
   • Allocate strategic funding to academic competencies development.

2. Extract the effect of the academic competencies plan in research by:
   • Developing individual career plans that strengthen the individual's CV and research at the university.
   • Offering courses in developing proposals for research funding applications, with a focus on SFF / SFI / SFU / FRIPRIO / ERC.
   • Offering training for doctoral supervisors, research management and project management for academic staff.
   • Offering training in writing scientific articles, as part of the requirement for increased publication.

3. Reinforce research communities affiliated with doctoral education programmes and the strategic focus areas that have a recognised national and international role:
   • Increase administrative support and expertise associated with research generally and specifically related to the professional disciplines.
   • Establish programmes for emerging research talent.
   • Establish sabbatical and incentive programmes for academic staff who consistently demonstrate excellence in research, publishing and supervision of doctoral candidates.
   • Encourage more extensive, interdisciplinary research proposals.

4. Increase completion of doctoral education within the normal timeframe:
   • Ensure internal supervisor capacity in each of the doctoral programmes.
   • Establish a stronger quality assurance system for doctoral programmes.

5. Increase commercialisation of research results:
   • Build a culture and communication that increases awareness, both internally and in the operational periphery, of the significance of the university's contribution to the establishment of knowledge-based workplaces and economic development.
   • Increase the total number of patents and intellectual property that may be used by third parties, primarily in the university's operational periphery.

6. Increased interaction between education and research and creative development work:
   • Include student activity in applications for external funding of projects.
EDUCATION

Through research-based teaching, Nord University will educate candidates who have a high level of professional confidence, the ability to evaluate critically and ethically, and who are curious and innovative. This will ensure that Nord University graduates have the necessary competencies to contribute to social development and to creating new solutions in working life.

Nord will deliver educational programmes of a high standard, based on systematic work with accreditation and quality, and positive learning environments. Nord will also increase the attractiveness of the professional fields, and reinforce research activity that strengthens educational programmes.

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1. Attain an academic competencies factor that corresponds to 67 and 24 percent of academic staff at associate professor and professor levels respectively, by 2020:
   • Develop and realise an academic competencies development plan.
   • Allocate strategic funding to academic competencies development.

2. Extract the effect of the academic competencies plan in education by:
   • Strengthening research-based teaching.
   • Prioritising increased research activity within fields that support degree programmes.
   • Including students in research projects.

3. Develop and implement a new quality assurance system for education:
   • Systematise work with accreditation.
   • Implement improved systematisation and workflow in quality assurance.
4. Consolidate the academic portfolio:
   - Review the academic portfolio annually and consolidate the portfolio with a focus on degree programmes affiliated with active research communities.
   - Consolidate the academic portfolio with a focus on programmes that provide competencies within the strategic focus areas, and that provide a coherent study trajectory from bachelor level to master level and further to the doctoral level.
   - Develop the academic portfolio further in cooperation with society, and business and industry, in order to ensure that educational programmes are attractive for students and meet society’s needs.
   - Develop the academic portfolio in a manner that exploits the campus structure in order to increase recruitment.

5. Develop the professional programmes further with special emphasis on primary and lower secondary school teacher education.
   - Make primary and lower secondary school teacher education more attractive in order to increase demand.
   - Increase research activity within fields encompassed by teacher education programmes.
   - Develop specific profiles for all professional programmes.
   - Undertake further development of cooperation with working life and public administration on further education of practitioners.

6. Increased completion, internationalisation and quality in educational programmes:
   - Systematise pedagogical professional development among staff members and develop a merit system for pedagogy.
   - Facilitate increased international mobility in degree programmes.
   - Develop the “First Semester” programme further, in order to ensure rapid academic and social integration of new students.
   - Exploit experience and research from the two Norwegian Centres of Excellence to facilitate more participatory teaching.
   - Increase use of digital examinations.
COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Through active engagement with society, business and industry, Nord University will contribute to regional and national development within the strategic focus and doctoral education areas. Community engagement will strengthen the relevance of the university’s product, in turn increasing the university’s competitiveness regarding research funding and recruitment of staff and students. By active engagement with local business and industry, Nord University will motivate graduates to remain in the region.

Nord University will contribute to the public debate through active research.
1. **Link teaching and research more closely to society, and to business and industry:**
   - Implement the Policy concerning peripheral operations and the Policy concerning ownership.
   - Develop cooperative bodies with municipalities and regions further, including the “Council for cooperation with working life”, and create a forum for regional economic development.
   - Formalise cooperation with business and industry, health agencies, municipalities and counties.
   - Formalise cooperation with upper secondary schools concerning education and supervision of research projects.
   - Include working life in the long-term development of educational programmes.

2. **Increase the percentage of externally funded research activity in cooperation with community, and business and industry:**
   - Cooperate with community, and business and industry, on research grant applications.
   - Realise a greater number of research projects comprising industry and publically funded doctoral positions.

3. **Increased continuing and further education, financed by third parties, that stimulates mutual development:**
   - Analyse demand for continuing and further education within the strategic focus and doctoral areas, regionally and nationally.
   - Develop a separate degree-based continuing and further education portfolio and position it in order to recruit candidates.

4. **Strengthen the culture and infrastructure of innovation and entrepreneurship:**
   - Carry out the FORNY project as a step in establishing a technology transfer office for strategic use by Nord University and partners.
   - Stimulate a culture of innovation at Nord University.

5. **Through communication and close cooperation, raise awareness of the university’s contribution to economic development through innovation and entrepreneurship:**
   - Increased communication of research results and their economic potential.
The university’s core activities are research, education, communication and innovation. A professionally managed organisation will contribute to achieving strategic objectives.

The university’s organisation integrates principles of uniform academic leadership and robust administrative support, as well as environmental responsibility.

The university is under continual development based on changes in the nature of its mission and operating parameters, a situation that demands the ability to change and adapt.

The university’s activities will develop positive research and educational leadership.

The working environment will be characterised by trust and confidence, in which university leaders are responsible for ensuring health, the environment and safety, in close cooperation with the general staff and students.

In order to ensure a culture of transparency, the leadership model at Nord University will be participatory and characterised by cooperation with students and employee organisations.

Attainment of recognised national and international status within the doctoral programmes and strategic focus areas is decisive for Nord University. This demands highly competent and motivated people in both academic and administrative positions. The university will recruit both nationally and internationally. Cultural diversity and gender balance will contribute to a creative environment, which will characterise both research and education.
STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES AND INITIATIVES IN ORDER OF PRIORITY TOWARD 2020:

1. The university’s leaders will develop a culture that fosters enthusiasm, and which is characterised by the ability to set goals and stimulate development of academic and administrative competencies:
   - Establish a leadership programme for managers at all levels, with a focus on managers within research and education.
   - Establish a human resources policy that contributes to positive working and learning environments, with an emphasis on recruitment, staff development, and equality.

2. The university will safeguard the internal and external environment:
   - All external activities will be subject to environmental impact assessment prior to commencement.
   - Health, environment and safety will be developed further and implemented on all levels.

3. The university will reduce administrative expenses:
   - Increase efficiency in administrative systems.
   - Develop effective administrative services and support systems in order to ensure that students and staff can focus on their primary tasks.