

A DYNAMIC, INNOVATIVE JOURNEY

2022–2031

# Strategic Plan

IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY  
OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY



**“IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY’S FOCUS ON INNOVATION ENLIVENS OUR MISSION, VALUES AND ASPIRATIONS. THIS PLAN TO EXCEL INFUSES INNOVATION INTO THE ARCHITECTURE OF ISU’S FUTURE.”** WENDY WINTERSTEEN, PRESIDENT

**Iowa State University** comprises a community of students, faculty, and staff who constantly strive to understand our world, impart new knowledge, and solve the most pressing challenges facing humanity today. Our identity as a leading science and technology land-grant university requires us to think innovatively about strategic planning and develop a framework that focuses our future endeavors.

Dynamic and different, the Iowa State University Strategic Plan for 2022 to 2031 was designed specifically to move us forward to achieving what Iowa State truly plans to be in the future. It prepares the university for capturing continuous input, for proving our agility in taking advantage of new opportunities and for sharing our stories of innovation and progress. That’s why the plan takes a longer view — nine years — comprising three-year segments.



# *our* **mission**

Iowa State University will create, share, and apply knowledge to make our students, Iowa, and the world better.

# *our* **vision**

Iowa State University will advance the land-grant ideals of putting science, technology, and human creativity to work.

# *our* **values**

Iowa State University embraces the values of our Principles of Community (Respect, Purpose, Cooperation, Richness of Diversity, Freedom from Discrimination, Honest and Respectful Expression of Ideas), and the values of Access, Excellence, and Integrity.



## **Our Statements of Aspiration**

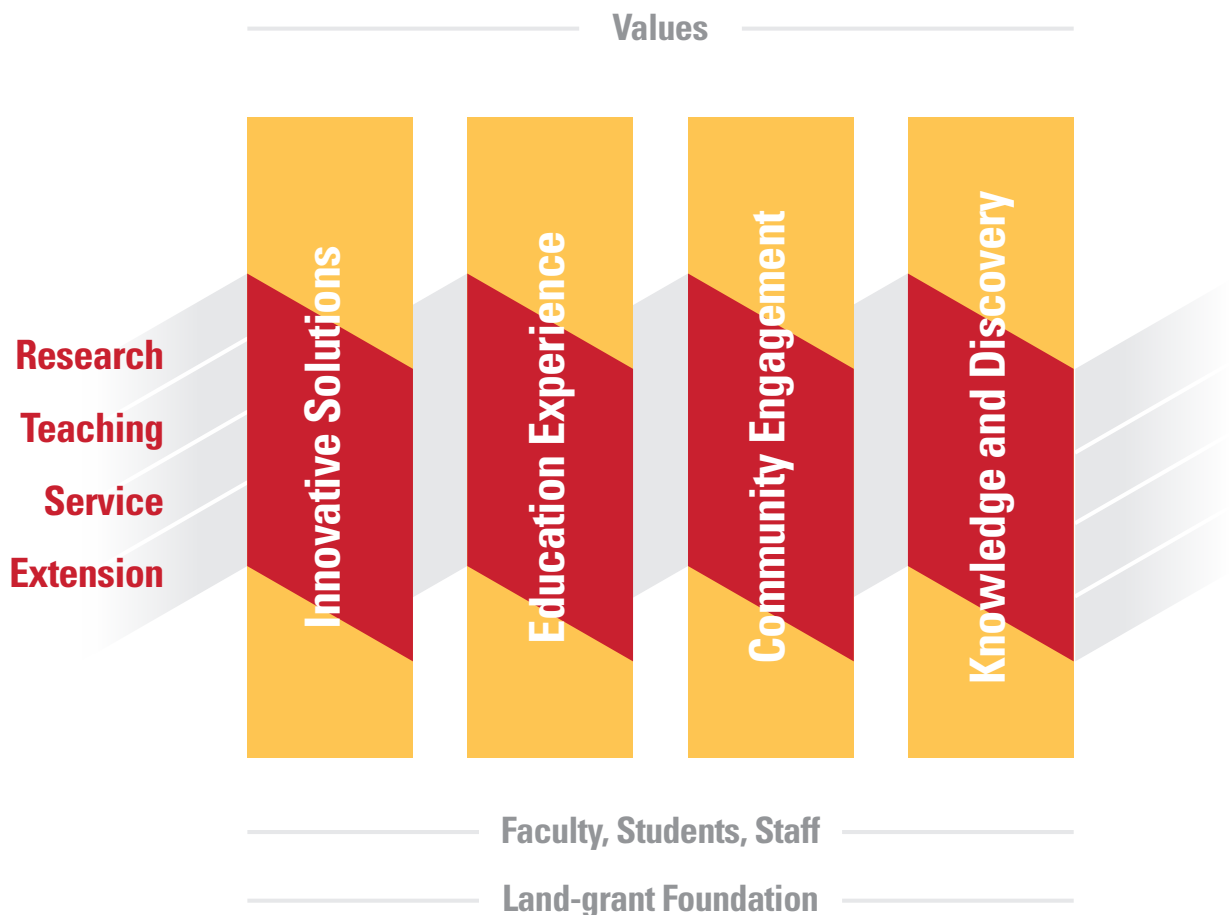
Five aspirational statements define what Iowa State University desires to be and how the university plans to position itself over the next nine years. These “to be” statements will drive an ongoing strategic process of evaluation and investment.

What Iowa State University wants to be will compel what Iowa State does — to take action to move us closer to our aspirations. In nine years, Iowa State University strives:

- ▶ **To be the most student-centric leading research university**
- ▶ **To be the university that cultivates a diverse, equitable, and inclusive environment where students, faculty, and staff flourish**
- ▶ **To be the university that fosters lifelong learning**
- ▶ **To be the university that creates opportunities and forges new frontiers**
- ▶ **To be the trusted partner for proactive and innovative solutions**

## Our Pillars

Four pillars encompass the themes of acknowledged university areas of excellence. These strengths are ingrained in the daily work and lives of our faculty, staff, and students, and have been proven time and again throughout Iowa State University's history. Intersected and interwoven throughout the pillars are our land-grant university hallmarks of teaching, research, service, and extension. Most importantly, the pillars give structure and direction on how we make a difference for our state and world in the years ahead. By leveraging these strengths, we will make progress fulfilling our "to be" statements.



**Innovative Solutions.** Innovation, creativity, and an entrepreneurial attitude will inspire the curriculum, decision making and outlook for Iowa State University. We will bring forth expertise, technologies, novel perspectives, and ideas. By striving to bring a creative mindset and unique solutions to the grand challenges of our local and global communities, ISU will be recognized for its distinctive approach to environmental, social, economic, and cultural sustainability, and meeting the needs of society with integrity.

**Education Experience.** Promoting an excellent educational experience focused on student engagement, knowledge growth, transformative educational opportunities, and access to a diverse, inclusive, and welcoming educational environment will create a strong foundation for success and prosperity for a well-educated graduate with life-long relationships to Iowa State University.

**Community Engagement.** Through active participation in and partnership with the local, state, and global communities, Iowa State University advances its land-grant mission to serve society by engaging our stakeholders to understand and address their needs and challenges.

**Knowledge and Discovery.** We will enhance our understanding of our universe and ourselves and create and discover new methods, pedagogies, thought processes, and knowledge. Through deep analysis, research, and collaboration, we will bring forth new technologies, science, perspectives, and ideas to benefit a changing world.



## Our Dynamic Process

Built into the nine-year plan is an innovative process to regularly assess where we stand, infuse new ideas, and respond to a dynamic state, nation, and world landscape. A new Director of Strategic Initiatives will report to the President and will oversee our strategic process, which provides a mechanism for input, reflection, evaluation, review, and decision-making on investments in strategic projects.

This dynamic approach that engages both our campus community and external stakeholders will facilitate how we thoughtfully work to achieve what we aspire “to be.” Our process will gather input that will guide planning, prioritization, evaluation, and measurement of success on an annual basis throughout the strategic plan. Strategic project ideas will be solicited and evaluated based on how they align with the university’s priorities, thematic pillars, “to be” statements, and success factors. Progress and successes will be communicated to the Iowa State stakeholders, where input will be gathered, and the process repeats anew.

## Strategic Process for Success



# Our Success Factors

Tracking progress on our “to be” statements will involve measuring success factors for each and creating consonance with university investment strategies. For each statement, the university will track metrics that align with the broader priorities and specific objectives in the Iowa Board of Regents’ 2022-2027 Strategic Plan, as well as success factors unique to the programs at Iowa State. A table of specific goals and metrics is found in Appendix 1.

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## A. TO BE THE MOST STUDENT-CENTRIC LEADING RESEARCH UNIVERSITY.

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### A.1 Retention and graduation rates

Iowa State will monitor graduation and retention rates for our students, with goals to increase first to second year retention for all students and to close the gaps of graduation rates for traditionally underrepresented students.

### A.2 Students participate in high-impact practices

The education experiences of our students will be enhanced by expanding and tracking access to high-impact practices and increasing the access to and participation in those practices by all students.







### **A.3 Accessibility and affordability**

Accessibility and affordability will be monitored by tracking the average student loan debt and the percent of students who graduate with debt. Increasing accessibility for low-income families will be achieved by increasing scholarship funding through proactive fundraising. Tactical tools such as increasing the use of open educational resources and completion grants will be evaluated.

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## **B. TO BE THE UNIVERSITY THAT CULTIVATES A DIVERSE, EQUITABLE, AND INCLUSIVE ENVIRONMENT WHERE STUDENTS, FACULTY, AND STAFF FLOURISH.**

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### **B.1 Faculty, staff, and student demographics: Access to excellence**

Aligned with A.1, the university will take action to recruit a diverse student body and track and examine demographic gaps. The university also will take actions to recruit and retain a diverse faculty and staff, and track and examine demographic gaps.

### **B.2 Faculty, staff, and student retention: Success**

Aligned with A.1, the university will monitor student, staff, and faculty demographics, develop professional training and development programs for employee career advancement, promote safe and inclusive learning and working spaces, and attract and retain world-class faculty and staff. Specifically, gaps in one-year retention rates for underrepresented students will be monitored with a goal to reduce the gap by 40%.

### **B.3 Campus climate**

The university will regularly assess and report on the campus climate for different populations in our campus community through regular surveys and other relevant tools. In addition, long-standing participation in the COACHE survey to assess faculty well-being will continue.

### **B.4 Faculty/staff salaries**

Faculty salaries will continue to be tracked and compared to peers. Staff salaries will be reviewed through conventional market-based benchmarks through University Human Resources.

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## **C. TO BE THE UNIVERSITY THAT FOSTERS LIFELONG LEARNING.**

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### **C.1 Expand online learning environment**

Iowa State will deliberately expand online programs to meet student, industry, and state needs in partnership with our strategic industry partners and our community partners statewide. The goal is to increase online enrollment by 30% and develop new degrees or credentials to meet workforce needs.

## **C.2 Learning across Iowa**

As a commitment to service to Iowans and our Community Engagement thematic pillar, Iowa State will continue to monitor and enhance its learning opportunities across the state by tracking and reporting outcomes of our Extension and Outreach, continuing education, and professional development programs, and growing access to those programs in underserved communities.

## **C.3 Continued learning by ISU graduates**

Complementing the online, C.1, and extension education, C.2, efforts, Iowa State will track continuing education needs and opportunities for alumni, early engagement of pre-baccalaureate students, and certificate/badging participation of nondegree seeking professionals.

## **C.4 Engaging new students/student pipelines**

Iowa State students, past, present, and future, expect excellence and innovation in their education experiences. New student pipelines will be created as programs expand to meet demand.

### **C.5 Enhancing ISU human capital through career development**

Enabling our campus community to flourish with lifelong learning and professional development for faculty and staff will be regularly assessed, and new opportunities will be developed.

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## **D. TO BE THE UNIVERSITY THAT CREATES OPPORTUNITIES AND FORGES NEW FRONTIERS.**

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### **D.1 Innovation in curriculum**

Iowa State is committed to providing innovations in the classroom, studio, laboratory, or field, whether in person or through other delivery mechanisms. Iowa State will develop new curricula, expand entrepreneurship opportunities, and extend the impact of research.

### **D.2 Innovation and entrepreneurship**

Knowledge and discovery feed the innovations that lead to solutions for global challenges. Faculty and students will be encouraged to participate in innovation and entrepreneurship, and student enrollment will be tracked.

### **D.3 Research impact**

Research funding is one metric for gauging impact; targets include increasing research expenditures by 3% per year. Iowa State also measures research impact by tracking new intellectual property disclosures, patents filed, and licensing revenues that are generated annually.

### **D.4 Organizational excellence**

Organizational excellence will be met through the university's capital planning process, assessment of stakeholder engagements for improvement, and reprioritization of efforts based on the annual input process built into the strategic plan.

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## **E. TO BE THE TRUSTED PARTNER FOR PROACTIVE AND INNOVATIVE SOLUTIONS.**

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### **E.1 Collaborative research initiatives**

Iowa State will monitor and report on collaborative and large-grant funding growth, industry partner expansion, the engagement with external partners and our core research facilities, and the key partnerships built in each Iowa county through Extension and Outreach offices.



## **E.2 Impact of partnerships**

Iowa State prides itself on its partnerships, whether through the engagement of communities across Iowa through Extension and Outreach, engagement of industries in our region, or through collaborations formed with Ames Laboratory, the Regents' universities, and other researchers around the globe. Iowa State will grow its industry-funded projects and its strategic partners. Innovative solutions for industry partners also include current and future workforce development through education experiences and expanding our partnerships in the Iowa State University Research Park and through our other economic development programs.

**Appendix 1** In alignment with the Board of Regents 2022-2027 Strategic Plan, Iowa State University has established 5-year milestones for key progress indicators and will report annual progress to the Board. The preceding two years of pandemic have impacted how our students have experienced Iowa State and how our faculty and staff have navigated the Mission. Our baseline metrics are reported as averages.

Key Progress Indicators	Fall 2021 Baseline	5-year Milestone
First-year retention	88%	90%
Four-year graduation	54.1%	56%
Six-year graduation	76.7%	78%
High-impact practices participation in 3+ activities	60%	Annual progress
Student loan debt upon graduation (median)	\$22,754	Annual progress
% of students with loan debt	49%	Annual progress
Increase scholarship funding	\$43M	3% increase over 5-year average
Gaps in one-year retention for underrepresented students	2.5% to 6.3%	40% gap reduction
Gaps in graduation rates for underrepresented students	3.7% to 17.3%	2% rate increase
Expand online programs to meet industry/state needs	Online enrollment: 657	30% enrollment increase, 2-4 new programs/credentials
Extension and Outreach program participation levels	# statewide direct and indirect adult and youth education contacts	Annual progress
Extension and Outreach program participation levels	# facilitated educational programs	Annual progress
Extension and Outreach program participation levels	Diversity of participants in programs compared to Iowa demographics	Annual progress
Extension and Outreach program participation levels	# of educational materials obtained from Extension Store	Annual progress
Extension and Outreach impact of learning programs	Changes in learning, behavior and/or life conditions as a result of engaging with programs/experiences	Annual progress
Extension and Outreach impact of partnerships	# partnerships, impact by topic and county	Annual progress
Research funding (3-year rolling average of HERD expenditures)	\$361M	3% increase/year
Intellectual property disclosures (technology and other)	144	Annual progress
Patents (new filed/active)	69 new, 319 active	Annual progress
Licensing revenue income	\$3.2M	Annual progress
Strategic industry partners and contracts	396 contracts	Annual progress
Industry funded contracts	\$23.8M	Annual progress
Research Park partnerships (tenants, pre-incubator companies)	New in FY21: 10 tenants, 26 pre-incubator	Annual progress

## 2022–2031 STRATEGIC PLAN

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