

N2025 ***STRATEGIC*** ***PLAN***

**“Every person and every
interaction matters.”**



N

2025



“ Nebraska and the world demands that We Must be a Bold, Engaged, Audacious, Accessible, and Vibrant People’s University—student-centered, continually research innovating and developing, and never more outwardly reaching in our impacts to be Nebraska’s 21st Century PEOPLE’s university.

We must be open to change and evolution as the world around us continues to change so rapidly ... we need to consider unconventional ideas and not constrain ourselves and our future by being tied or wedded to the traditional norms ... we must challenge ourselves and our thinking ... if we can’t invent, innovate and create at a university, where can we? ”

CHANCELLOR RONNIE D. GREEN

Investiture - April 6, 2017

PURSUIT OF N150 VISION STARTS WITH N2025 STRATEGIC PLAN

In 2019, the University of Nebraska–Lincoln proudly celebrated its 150th year of impact to Nebraska, our students, our community, and the world. Leading up to our sesquicentennial celebration, Chancellor Ronnie Green tasked more than 150 stakeholders — faculty, staff, students, alumni, and community members — to chart an imaginative future for our university.

At its conclusion, the N150 Commission laid out a bold vision over the next 25 years:

The University of Nebraska–Lincoln is unparalleled among public research universities in access, opportunity, innovation, and life-long experiential learning.

Importantly, the N150 Commission defined four core aspirations to guide our path over the next 25 years:

- Nebraska students co-create their experience
- Our research and creativity transforms lives and learning
- Every person and every interaction matters
- Engagement builds communities

The full report of the N150 Commission can be found at:

<https://www.unl.edu/chancellor/the-n150-commission>

To take real and meaningful steps toward turning this bold vision into reality, Chancellor Green launched a faculty-led process to develop a five-year strategic plan. In his 2019 State of the University address, Chancellor Green challenged the university to ensure that 25 years from now leaders would “look back on this inflection point moment and say, ‘Wow, they were not only thinking, they were truly IMAGINING!’”

DEVELOPMENT OF THE N2025 STRATEGIC PLAN

Thirty members of the university community — faculty, students, staff and senior leaders — were asked to serve on the N2025 Strategy Team. Four faculty members were chosen as co-chairs to garner strong representation of university faculty. Also appointed were the university’s vice chancellors, given their ultimate responsibility to implement the strategic plan.

Over the course of 12 months, the co-chairs and Strategy Team conducted nearly forty meetings across our university community to seek input and feedback. The draft plan was publicly released to campus for comment and more than four hundred comments were received. The result of this inclusive process is a plan that mirrors the aims of our collective campus community and its leaders.

EVERY PERSON AND EVERY INTERACTION MATTERS

The N2025 Strategy Team immediately committed to rely heavily on the significant work of the N150 Commission. As the N2025 Strategy Team considered the four core aspirations of the report of the N150 Commission, one aspiration continually permeated all others. The idea that, at Nebraska, *every person and every interaction matters* became an aspiration that appeared superordinate to the other three. This overarching theme defines what it means to be a Nebraskan, and was thus recognized as a core feature that should undergird everything we do at the university. It will represent our ethos around which the core aspirations and aims will be embodied.

Accordingly, *every person and every interaction matters* is the overarching principle that envelops all of the aspirations, aims, and strategies within the N2025 Strategic Plan.

The goal of the N2025 Strategic Plan is to make Nebraska distinctive by promoting the tenet that *every person and every interaction matters*. This tenet promotes equity, dignity, and respect for individuals from a diversity of backgrounds, beliefs, experiences, perspectives, abilities, identities, and orientations. It includes interactions that are formal and informal across the domains of academics, research, creative activity, and engagement. Our belief that *every person and every interaction matters* calls for us to value one-on-one relationships to form connections, transform lives, and realize the power of every person. The principle of *every person and every interaction matters* should guide all we do as members of the institution, including its students, faculty, staff, and administration. Thus, every decision made at every level should align with and support (and hence, be supported by) our overarching principle that *every person and every interaction matters*, our core aspirations, and the primary aims of our Strategic Plan.

N2025 STRATEGIC PLAN

The N2025 Strategic Plan outlines the aims, strategies, expectations, and targets for the first five years of the 25-year vision articulated within the N150 Commission Report. The N2025 Strategic Plan contains six ambitious aims. Each aim represents a purpose or intended outcome. Supporting each aim are strategies and expectations. Strategies are actions that can be taken to move toward the aim. Expectations are anticipated changes that will be realized through the implementation of the strategies. Targets are quantifiable metrics that serve as benchmarks to achieve by 2025.

Importantly, it is not the intent of this plan to be prescriptive. The plan does not define implementation details, by design. These tactics are best developed by the campus leadership, community, and units.

The use of words such as “students,” “faculty,” “staff,” and “engagement” within the N2025 Strategic Plan are meant in the broadest sense. Students include undergraduates, graduates, post-graduate and professional students, and often alumni and life-long learners. Faculty include individuals who are in both tenure leading and non-tenure leading positions. Staff include all non-faculty professionals. Engagement refers to relationships with stakeholders that provide opportunities to partner around shared goals, enable a bidirectional flow of information and knowledge, and realize broad impact.

Finally, this N2025 Strategic Plan is meant for the entire university community. It is not expected that every unit or every individual will act on every strategy in the plan. Some units and individuals will resonate with different portions of the plan. No individual or unit will do everything, but it is expected that every individual and unit will contribute in meaningful ways to our shared goals of increasing the impact and excellence of the university. It is also expected that the entire campus will embrace the philosophy that *every person and every interaction matters*, and that this will be transformational for our campus community.

AIMS OF THE N2025 STRATEGIC PLAN

The six aims are listed below. The order of the aims does not imply relative priority. The first four aims focus on the university’s mission-centric areas, while the others focus on our people. The interconnected relationship among the aims is depicted in Figure 1. Each of these aims should be read and understood with the concluding phrase “...in a way that every person and every interaction matters.”



• **Aim:** Innovate *student experiences* that prepare graduates to be life-long learners and contributors to the workforce in Nebraska and the world



• **Aim:** Establish a culture at Nebraska committed to increasing the *impact of research and creative activity*



• **Aim:** Focus research, scholarship, creative activity, and student experiences to foster innovative, *interdisciplinary endeavors* and *solve challenges* critical to Nebraska and the world



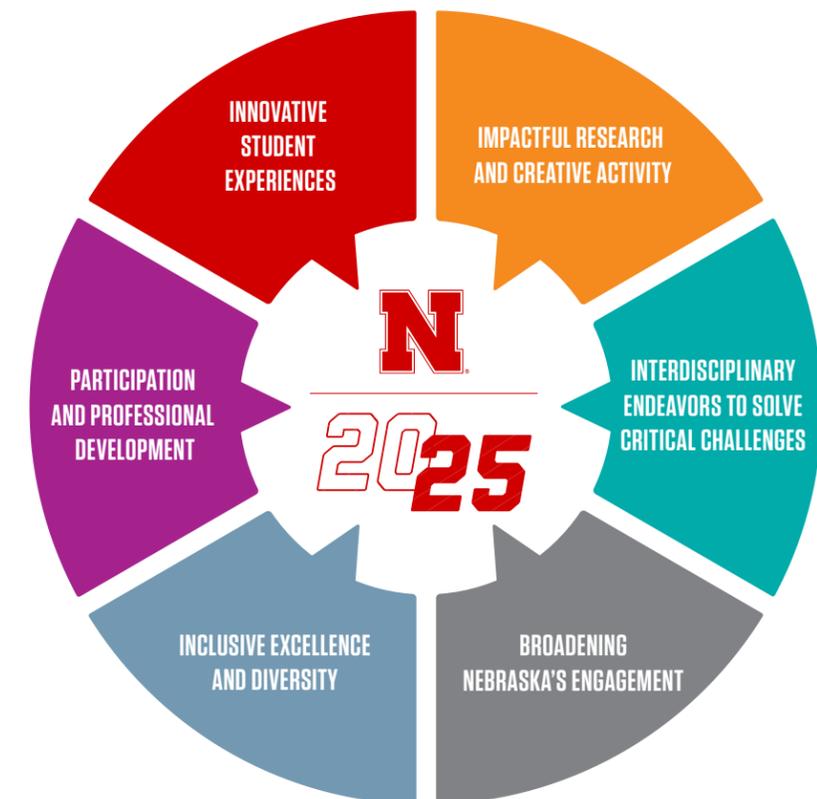
• **Aim:** Broaden Nebraska’s engagement in community, industry, and global partnerships



• **Aim:** Create a climate at Nebraska that emphasizes, prioritizes, and expands *inclusive excellence and diversity*



• **Aim:** Prioritize *participation and professional development* for all Nebraska students, staff, and faculty



»» **Aim: Innovate student experiences that prepare graduates to be life-long learners and contributors to the workforce in Nebraska and the world**



We believe in growing flexible, nimble and strong minds. *Educating students* and preparing them for the *workforce* is a core mission of the University of Nebraska. Technology, demographics, and many other factors have led to significant changes in the way knowledge is distributed and acquired. The University of Nebraska must continue to innovate to provide an accessible student experience, inside and outside the classroom, that remains relevant and produces a desire for *life-long learning*. The university must equip students for their future by including *experiential learning* for all Nebraska students.

The student experience at Nebraska should instill the value that *every person and every interaction matters*, resulting in alumni who value every person and every interaction.

Strategies:

1. Develop and employ innovative approaches for recruiting, enrolling, educating, and retaining a diverse student body
2. Equip and incentivize instructors to instill in their pedagogy that every person, every interaction, and a diversity of ideas and perspectives matter
3. Use technology, physical/virtual spaces, and scheduling to more effectively educate learners wherever and whenever they are
4. Develop new tuition models that allow for increased revenue while improving accessibility and reducing student debt
5. Establish a requirement for graduation that all Nebraska students engage in experiential learning, which may include research, creative activity, or community engagement
6. Enable students to co-create academic credentials or badges to demonstrate qualifications in response to the changing workforce needs in areas including innovation, leadership, sustainability, and entrepreneurship
7. Develop a new cross-disciplinary program accessible to all students that emphasizes imagination, creative expression, entrepreneurship, and design thinking
8. Establish new curricular requirements for all students that emphasize diversity and inclusion
9. Create programs and experiences that encourage alumni to participate in life-long learning with formal and informal educational opportunities
10. Prepare and align university staff to be connected and engaged in the student experience as well as the recruitment and retention of a diverse student body
11. Align faculty apportionments, appointments, and evaluation criteria appropriately to achieve and maintain high-quality teaching
12. Implement systematic practices that enable students to improve their mental, physical, psychological, social, and emotional well-being

Expectations:

1. Increased student enrollment
2. Increased outreach to underrepresented groups, community college graduates, international, and out-of-state students
3. Increased year-to-year retention of students
4. Increased diversity of student body
5. Increased enrollment in online platforms
6. Increased number and funding of experiential learning opportunities
7. Guidelines for academic credential or badge requirements established
8. New cross-disciplinary program emphasizing imagination, creative expression, entrepreneurship, and design thinking developed and supported
9. Courses emphasizing diversity and inclusion identified, developed, and offered
10. Increased number of instructors with pedagogical training on diversity and inclusion within the classroom
11. All students receive support services they need for mental, physical, psychological, social, and emotional well-being

Targets:

1. The 4-year UNL graduation rate will increase from 46.9% to 55%; the 6-year graduation rate will increase from 67.8% to 72%
2. The first-year to second-year retention rate will increase from 84.1% to 88%
3. The equity gap in degree completion will be reduced from 14.4% to 7%
4. UNL will increase both graduate and undergraduate enrollment by 15%
5. The number of students who engage in study-abroad programs in an academic year will increase to 10%
6. All graduates will have a documented experiential learning portfolio, including internships or apprenticeships, research or creative activity, community-engaged problem solving and/or international engagement

▶▶ Aim: Establish a culture at Nebraska committed to increasing the impact of research and creative activity



We do big things. The University of Nebraska is the state's *flagship research institution*. Conducting novel and impactful research that generates new knowledge, solves real-world problems locally and globally, and enhances lives through research, creative activity, and transformational innovations is among the *most fundamental purposes of the institution*. It

is imperative that research and creative activity be central to every university action, interaction, and decision; that sizable resources be committed to bolstering research and creative activity; and that students, faculty and staff are involved and stakeholders meaningfully engaged in research and creative activities.

The research and creative activity enterprise at Nebraska engages in practices *where every person and every interaction* contributes to the generation and proliferation of new knowledge, understanding, and perspectives.

Strategies:

1. Align all aspects of academic, student, and business affairs in support of research, scholarship, and creative activity
2. Recruit and develop diverse world-class researchers, scholars, artists, and staff and provide them with strong institutional and community support
3. Build new mechanisms to reward and retain highly successful faculty
4. Recruit, develop, and compensate a competitive and highly competent community of graduate students and post-doctoral fellows
5. Ensure dedicated, long-term research or creative activity experiences for students
6. Revise UNL apportionment guidelines and staff position descriptions and evaluation criteria to include engagement
7. Apply for international and national awards and fellowships for faculty and students
8. Communicate broadly about the breadth and social impact of research and creative activity

Expectations:

1. Increased number and diversity of tenured and tenure-leading faculty with a majority research apportionment
2. Increased number, size, and scope of extramural proposal submissions
3. Increased revenues for research and creative activity through a diverse funding portfolio
4. Increased number and impact of scholarly journal articles and creative works

5. Increased number, quality, and compensation of graduate students and post-doctoral fellows
6. Increased number of students with long-term research or creative activity experiences
7. Improved research ranking among Big 10/peer institutions
8. Increased number of national/international awards and citations of faculty and students

Targets:

1. Achieve \$450M in annual research expenditures including at least \$30M from the private sector and \$10M in licensing income
2. Increase the number of faculty participating in extramurally-funded research, scholarship, and creative activity by 5% annually on a three-year rolling average
3. Increase the number of faculty apportioned to do research, scholarship, and creative activity by 5% annually on a three-year rolling average
4. Increase the number of faculty receiving external honors and awards by 10% annually on a three-year rolling average
5. Increase graduate (master's and doctoral) degrees awarded by 5% per year

▶▶ Aim: Focus research, scholarship, creative activity, and student experiences to foster innovative, interdisciplinary endeavors and solve challenges critical to Nebraska and the world



We don't rest on our strengths — we stretch them and combine them. Interdisciplinary approaches in research and creative activity propel new ways of generating knowledge. The University of Nebraska values interdisciplinary work and *embraces collaboration*, characterized by an openness and respect for differing disciplines and perspectives, to address challenges facing our community, nation, and world. At Nebraska, a context that *promotes, supports, and rewards interdisciplinary work* encourages academicians, scientists, artists, and students with diverse experiences and knowledge to learn with and from one another, thereby accelerating the potential for solving Grand Challenges.

Inherent in interdisciplinary work at Nebraska is that *every person* contributes, and *every interaction matters*, in the creation of new knowledge and solutions.

Strategies:

1. Prioritize diversity of perspectives, approaches, and backgrounds when solving challenges
2. Build, strengthen, and evaluate interdisciplinary centers and organized units to promote productivity, minimize duplication, and retain an emphasis on priority areas
3. Revise policies and practices to incentivize interdisciplinary collaboration across departments, colleges, centers, and campuses, and with partners across the country and world
4. Establish flexible and functional facilities for interdisciplinary research, creative activity, teaching and learning

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5. Create shared learning experiences that include interdisciplinary groups of students, post-doctoral fellows, and faculty
6. Leverage interdisciplinary strengths and related initiatives, including those at Nebraska Innovation Campus and elsewhere, into the development of intellectual property, technology transfer, and entrepreneurial activity
7. Identify Grand Challenges that leverage existing strengths and seek to solve issues important to Nebraska and the world
8. Commit, generate, and expand sources of support for investment in Grand Challenges, interdisciplinary research, creative activity, and education
9. Integrate creative activities and education into solutions for Grand Challenges in an intentional and substantive manner

Expectations:

1. Increased number and diversity of individuals, teams (faculty, staff, post-doctoral fellows, and students), and centers working on high priority challenges
2. Increased investments (financial resources and facilities) in successful teams and centers
3. Evaluation system developed and implemented to ensure continued productivity of successful interdisciplinary centers and units
4. Increased number of national and international collaborations in Grand Challenge areas
5. Increased number of interdisciplinary scholarly products (proposals, grants, publications, creative works)
6. Increased number of tenure-track faculty apportioned to interdisciplinary centers and units
7. Annual review and promotion documents that value and reward collaboration and interdisciplinary work
8. Increased number of interdisciplinary learning experiences established
9. Increased number of patents, copyrights, licensing, and research-based start-up companies
10. Grand Challenge topics for Nebraska established and resources committed to them
11. Structures and systems established to support research and creative activities aligned with Grand Challenges

Targets:

1. Increase extramural funding, scholarship, and creative activities generated by interdisciplinary teams by 15% annually on a three-year rolling average
2. At least 50% of strategic research investments aligned with university-prioritized Grand Challenges
3. Increase the number of U.S. patents issued by 70% and the number of licenses executed by 50%
4. Form seven research-based start-up companies annually, based on university technologies

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»» Aim: Broaden Nebraska's engagement in community, industry, and global partnerships



We are Nebraska. Engagement — the co-creation, co-discovery and co-development of solutions — is key to the *land grant mission* of the University of Nebraska. Engagement brings Nebraska to the world, and the world to Nebraska through a university where students, faculty, staff and alumni are actively engaged across Nebraska and beyond. It is imperative that the university embrace a culture of engagement and partnership that generates *genuine mutual benefit* both in Nebraska and across the world, while creating extraordinary opportunities for students, alumni, industry, community partners, faculty, and staff.

At its core, engagement is about relationships and reciprocity that must be built upon a foundation where *every person and interaction matters*.

Strategies:

1. Recognize engagement (i.e., relationships with stakeholders for opportunities in partnership and impact) as one of Nebraska's mission areas, reflected in staff and faculty apportionments and evaluation criteria
2. Create a vehicle for advancing and supporting student engagement in community-based research, creative activity, and learning experiences at the local, national, and global level
3. Establish and nurture strong, consistent two-way communication with stakeholder groups allowing for research and learning collaborations
4. Establish new international partnerships that connect the world to Nebraska, and Nebraska to global opportunities
5. Pursue Carnegie Community Engagement classification
6. Develop Huskers for Life program to engage alumni and stakeholders from varying sectors and cultural backgrounds in life-long learning opportunities and partnerships
7. Embrace and exploit existing and future technologies to promote access for individual and community-based research, learning, engagement, and creative activities
8. Concentrate resources and funding to promote engagement responsive to unique local, national, and international needs

Expectations:

1. UNL apportionment guidelines and staff position descriptions and evaluation criteria revised to include engagement
2. Student engagement program developed and supported
3. Increased number of and impact on community, industry, and global partners
4. Carnegie Community Engagement achieved

AIMS OF THE N2025 STRATEGIC PLAN

5. Increased engagement of alumni and stakeholders
6. Increased engagement through online platforms
7. Improved infrastructure and professional development to promote communication, applied research, and sharing of knowledge
8. Accelerated and concentrated response to needs

Targets:

1. UNL is designated a Carnegie Community Engagement campus
2. 10% annual increase in percentage of faculty members with an engagement apportionment
3. 5% annual increase in number of overall alumni giving

▶▶ Aim: Create a climate at Nebraska that emphasizes, prioritizes, and expands inclusive excellence and diversity



We must *commit to inclusive excellence* — an active process ensuring that excellence is reflective of diversity in all forms. As systematic efforts expand to recruit and retain historically underrepresented students, faculty, and staff, it is imperative that this work be done in close concert with efforts to further improve the quality of research, creative activities, teaching, and engagement. An integrated approach will greatly improve work toward minimizing barriers and enhancing and creating new programs in support of equity, diversity, and inclusion. This *intentional integration* will equip us to better solve the challenges that face Nebraska and the world, while preparing students for a continually evolving and global workforce.

An environment that emphasizes inclusive excellence and diversity is a place that embraces the *importance of every person* and knows that *every interaction matters*.

Strategies:

1. Create systematic procedures to evaluate and improve campus climate focused on inclusion, diverse experiences, and sense of belonging
2. Engage in practices that value every person and every interaction in ways that promote equity, dignity, and respect for individuals from a diversity of backgrounds and perspectives
3. Enhance participation in critical dialogue around issues of equity and inclusion
4. Embed inclusive excellence into existing and new educational and professional learning opportunities for students, staff, faculty, and administrators
5. Expand systematic efforts to recruit and retain students from underrepresented groups
6. Expand systematic efforts to recruit and retain faculty, staff, and administrators from underrepresented groups

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7. Identify and address institutional barriers that perpetuate equity gaps between and across underrepresented groups
8. Enhance existing and create new programs and networks for resilience and personal well-being for students, staff, faculty, and administrators
9. Enhance existing and create new programs and networks for academic, cultural, and social support for students, staff, faculty, and administrators

Expectations:

1. Increased number of students from underrepresented groups
2. Reduced inequities in retention and graduation across student populations
3. Increased number of faculty, post-doctoral scholars, and staff applicants and hires from underrepresented groups
4. Increased retention rates of students from underrepresented groups
5. Increased graduation rates of students from underrepresented groups
6. Increased numbers and retention of faculty from underrepresented groups
7. Increased retention of staff from underrepresented groups
8. Increased number of programs/activities focused on well-being and resilience

Targets:

1. Increase enrollment of first-time entering students from underrepresented ethnic/racial groups by 7%
2. Increase enrollment of Pell-eligible first-time entering students by 8%
3. Provide inclusive excellence professional education to 100% of instructors
4. Increase the participation of underrepresented gender, ethnic, and racial employees in leadership development programs by 20%
5. Provide inclusive excellence professional education to all search committee members
6. 100% of colleges and units utilize equity data and goals to develop recruitment and retention plans for increasing ethnic, racial, gender, and cultural representation of underrepresented groups among faculty and staff
7. Provide inclusive excellence professional education to all new employees

▶▶ Aim: Prioritize participation and professional development for all Nebraska students, staff, and faculty



We believe in the power of every person. The most important asset at the University of Nebraska is its people — students, staff, post-doctoral fellows, and faculty. It is critical to *provide access* to individualized professional development and effective mentorship *for all members of the university community*.

Professional development opportunities integrating inclusive excellence and fostering a culture of participative decision-making enhances the richness of the university experience. A *comprehensive approach* to professional development will result in a vibrant and supportive climate characterized by excellence in all mission areas of our institution.

Meaningful and impactful professional development for all reinforces that *every person and every interaction matters*.

Strategies:

1. Ensure a means for all faculty, graduate and professional students, post-doctoral fellows, and staff to co-create an individualized professional development roadmap
2. Develop and enhance structures for all faculty, post-doctoral fellows, staff, and students to have access to a mentor or advisors
3. Establish professional development around mentoring and reward effective mentorship of faculty, post-doctoral fellows, staff and students
4. Create and allow access to university-sponsored Staff Council for staff to provide input on relevant issues to university leadership
5. Revolutionize graduate education to include professional development in response to workforce needs
6. Build and enhance institutional structures and culture for participative decision-making
7. Embed inclusive excellence in existing and new professional development opportunities or systems

Expectations:

1. Documented individualized professional development plan established for all faculty, post-doctoral fellows, graduate and professional students, and staff
2. Mentor or advisor provided for all faculty, post-doctoral fellows, staff, and students
3. Professional development methods established and delivered to faculty, post-doctoral fellows, staff, and students
4. Mentorship incentives established and awarded
5. Staff Council created

6. Graduate education continually updated to allow for flexibility and individualization
7. Improved transparency in administrative decision-making
8. Increased student, faculty, and staff retention
9. Increased job satisfaction
10. Improved placement of graduates and post-doctoral fellows

Targets:

1. All annual evaluations will align with apportionments and assigned duties
2. 100% of faculty, post-doctoral fellows, staff, and graduate and professional students have a documented and individualized professional development plan
3. All leaders and administrators engage in professional development associated with inclusive excellence and participative decision-making
4. All faculty, post-doctoral fellows, staff and students have a mentor or advisor and all evaluations include reporting of mentorship activities
5. All graduates and post-doctoral fellows employed in appropriate jobs commensurate with their degree
6. UNL will be in top tier of employee satisfaction among higher education institutions

RESPONSIBLE STEWARDSHIP OF RESOURCES

To achieve the N2025 aims, the university must commit to *responsible stewardship of resources* to reinforce institutional priorities. Responsible stewardship requires organizational and operational effectiveness, proper investment in physical and technological infrastructure, and commitment to sustainability. Realization of the aims and implementation of the strategies will require:

- An implementation plan for the N2025 Strategic Plan
- Intentional and transparent allocation of resources to incentivize actions that align with the N2025 Strategic Plan
- Intelligent and sustainable investments in key university resources, and, in particular, people
- Development of a sustainable built environment and technology infrastructure to support N2025 Strategic Plan
- Creation of an incentive-driven and financially strong campus environment led by the N2025 Strategic Plan
- Systematic cost reductions across administration
- Formulation of a long-term road map for university operations that ensures sustainability, environmental resilience, and stewardship of natural resources

The university recognizes its significant responsibility to the citizens of the state of Nebraska and the need to be good stewards of all of its resources. This bold N2025 Strategic Plan, implemented well, will increase the value of the institution to the state of Nebraska.

N2025 CO-CHAIRS

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