

## Research Impact Working Group

**DRAFT PLAN – Develop Queen’s University as an inspirational institution that produces ground-breaking research that advances the UN SDGs and impacts society, through talent, ideas and supports.**

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### **I. INTRODUCTION AND CONTEXT**

As an institution, Queen’s mission is to attract and cultivate excellence and leadership and push the boundaries of knowledge through research – in service to an inclusive and sustainable society<sup>1</sup>. The university acknowledges that to be effective in our mission and make impact would require us to draw on all our intellectual and material resources to address challenges identified in the past two years through the principal’s initiative, [The Conversation](#). The landscape of challenges related to research impact is multifaceted and spans from decline in research funding per faculty to repercussions of a five-year hiring freeze.

### **II. MANDATE**

The working group’s mandate is to identify operational priorities that will result in increasing the intensity and volume of exemplary, ground-breaking and interdisciplinary research, whether fundamental, applied, or driven through community partnership.

### **III. GOAL: DEVELOP QUEEN'S UNIVERSITY AS AN INSPIRATIONAL INSTITUTION THAT PRODUCES GROUND-BREAKING RESEARCH THAT ADVANCES THE UN SDGs<sup>2</sup> AND IMPACTS SOCIETY, THROUGH TALENT, IDEAS AND SUPPORTS.**

We believe it is imperative to recognize the varied approaches, impact mechanisms and evaluation metrics for research at Queen’s, given the diversity of research fields afforded to academics and faculty.

The working group proposes that for Queen’s to achieve the aspirations of an institution with high intensity and volume of groundbreaking research, it should embrace and implement three interrelated building blocks. You may refer to the attached figures that show the relationships between the three blocks and how investments and changes in one would have a positive cascading effect on others.

- 1. Talent:** recruitment, nurturing and development of outstanding researchers at every level from students to faculty.
- 2. Grand Challenges and Ideas:** anticipation of grand challenges aligned with the [UN SDGs](#), catalyzing interdisciplinary researchers to create ideas and solutions to challenges, and recruitment and training of talent to address the grand ideas.
- 3. Supports:** Support, time protection and infrastructure that enables talent and idea development.

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<sup>1</sup> [Queen’s Strategy](#)

<sup>2</sup> The [United Nations Sustainable Development Goals](#) (SDG).

The operational priorities and actionable items include:

- **Talent:**
  - **Recognize and nurture** talent by the development of internal prizes (e.g. internal Killam), endowed and termed Chairs for faculty focused on high intensity research to provide teaching relief.
  - **Develop talent and sustain research prominence**, through the creation of Advisory Councils of emeriti, CRC and other senior researcher, to formalize processes and paths to maintaining legacies.
  - **Build legacies through mentorship**, spanning generations from emeriti/senior faculty to mid-career, to early career, to postdocs and to graduate students.
  - **Develop leadership initiatives and collaboration opportunities for mid-career faculty through** inter-faculty/university co-leadership of large initiatives and grants.
  - **Recruit** mid-career research-intensive faculty in strategically targeted areas.
  - **Attract and retain outstanding postdoctoral and clinical fellows as well as graduate students**, through prizes and named fellowships/awards. Facilitate growth through targeted early career research grants.
  - **Advancement campaigns in support of research initiatives** should be considered as a high priority as they both raise funds and promote Queen's research strengths to key Queen's alumni.

Several operational items above can also be supported via targeted Advancement campaigns for termed, endowed chairs that can provide protected research time to faculty, promote excellence, allow development of world-leading researchers and attract new talent.

- **Grand Challenges and Ideas:**
  - **Foster and catalyze interdisciplinary collaborations**, through support for identification of Grand Challenges aligned with Queen's planned actions to support UN SDGs, generation of ideas and **catalyzing research partnerships**, and building research groups across Queen's faculties and departments.
  - **Incentivize and support** faculty to apply for/participate in large initiatives and leadership roles by rewarding teams with technical and project management support, and teaching release.
  - **Engage with industry through research clusters/centres advisory units**. Target industry through the branding and promotion of strategic research clusters/centres that are related to SDGs and/or Grand Challenges.

It is imperative to prepare proactively for major national and international funding calls by anticipating topic areas and fostering the growth of research clusters, so that Queen's researchers will be poised for success in these funding competitions. Providing researchers the time and support (project management) for building partnerships and formulating ideas is key to long-term success and impact and the submission of competitive funding applications. Meanwhile, departments and units should also be encouraged to identify strategic research priorities and paths to achieve them.

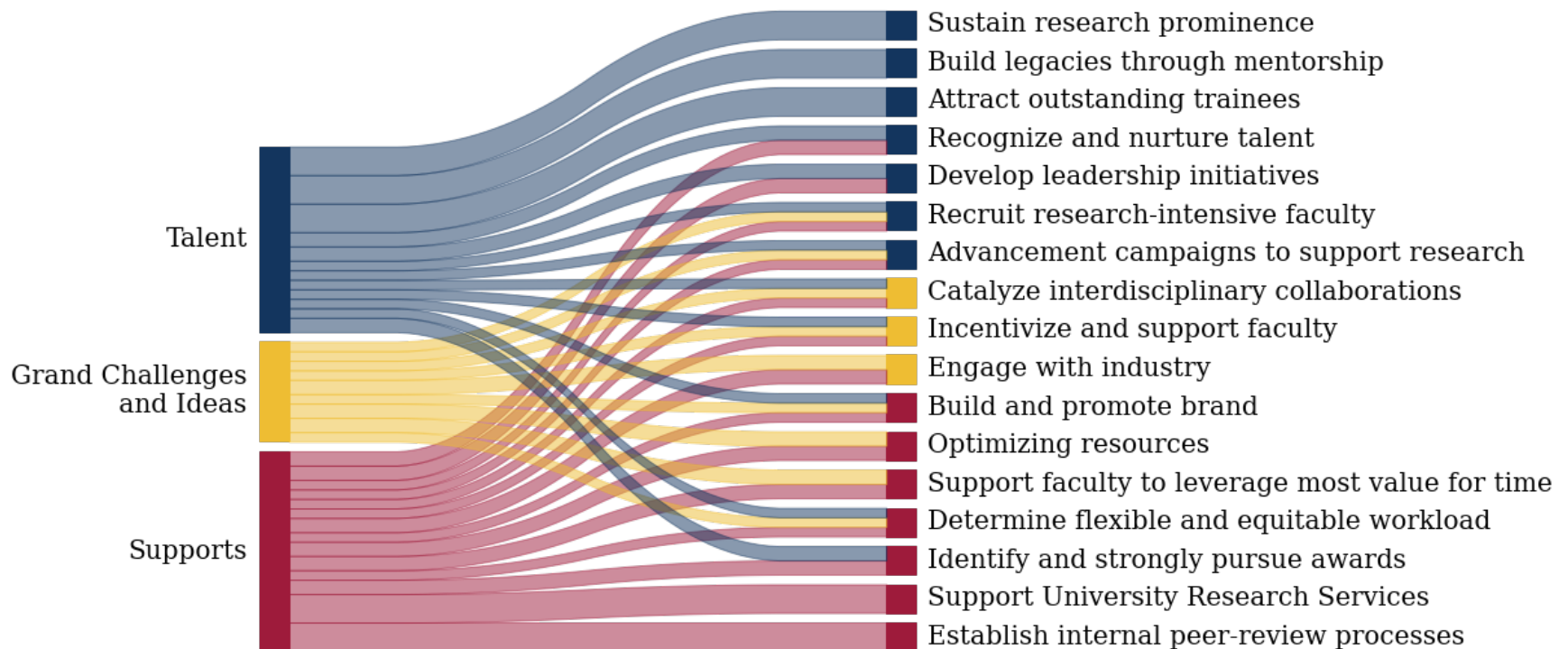
- **Supports:**
  - **Brand building and promotion.** Develop a strategy to aggressively promote research excellence internally and externally including Queen's unique facilities (research clusters, facilities, etc.) and expertise (staff, students and faculty) at Queen's.
  - **Identify and strongly pursue international awards** and other recognition for Queen's researchers.
  - **Optimize resources by** identifying and publicizing facilities that serve as a hub for interdisciplinary partnerships, provide marketing/admin and/or technical support to develop and promote these initiatives/facilities.
  - **Provide University Research Services with support** for collaborative and informed initiative generation through advisory faculty/researcher groups beyond senior administration. Better promote the services available to faculty/groups across university.
  - **Support faculty to leverage optimal value for time.** Provide substantive grant writing assistance (e.g., soft elements of large-scale grants, graphics), technical and project management support, teaching relief when pursuing intensive research, and resources for graduate student training (e.g. dedicated resources for scientific writing and editing) and preparation of major awards for students and PDFs.
  - **Establish** internal peer-review processes that allow critical growth of research proposal and program development. This could include embedding specific staff positions for research at the department level.
  - **Adopt a flexible and equitable workload determination that supports and prioritizes research intensity.** The workload model can be generalized and evaluated as a departmental (unit) deliverable rather than for individual faculty, allowing for prioritizing research. Provide flexibility for targeted teaching relief during periods of research intensity (i.e., major grant writing). Secure termed and endowed Chairs that allow teaching relief periodically. Meaningful sheltering of junior faculty from administrative responsibilities (focused on a research context); talent acquisition at all career levels can help address imbalanced administrative loads.

## CONCLUSION

This plan is a starting point to open the conversation and have input from members of the Queen's community. The Working Group looks forward to receiving feedback since these suggested operational priorities will have an impact on the university for several years to come.

**Figure 1**

**Interrelationship between proposed operational initiatives**



**Figure 2**

**Interrelationship between proposed operational initiatives**

