

A low-angle photograph of the University of Minnesota Auditorium facade, featuring several tall, fluted columns and a decorative pediment with Latin inscriptions. A large, ornate lamp post is visible on the right side. The sky is blue with some light clouds.

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA  
Driven to Discover<sup>SM</sup>

A STRATEGIC PLAN

The University of Minnesota Twin Cities  
Will be Preeminent in Solving  
the Grand Challenges  
of a Diverse and Changing World

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY** | OCTOBER 2014



***The University of Minnesota Twin Cities Will be Preeminent in Solving the Grand Challenges of a Diverse and Changing World.***

**This is our vision for a U of M renewed for the 21st century.**

President Kaler launched the planning process by assembling a 30-member Strategic Planning Workgroup composed of faculty, staff, and students. That group broadened to include nearly 200 members of the University community. Led by the provost, the group developed a vision and goals to guide strategic decision-making in the next decade.

The Strategic Planning Workgroup considered our institution's strengths, the pressures facing universities, and the responsibilities and opportunities we have to bring our resources more powerfully to bear on the challenges of our global century. Discussions were informed by extensive consultation with the campus and external stakeholders, as well as the Board of Regents.

**The plan defines four areas of focus:**

- Capitalizing on the breadth and quality of our research and our curricular strengths to address the world's grand challenges
- Recruiting, retaining, and promoting field-shaping researchers and teachers
- Fostering reciprocal engagement with our various communities and capitalizing on our specific location, even as we extend our global impact
- Promoting excellence and rejecting complacency at all levels of the institution

This framework will support our dual role. The U of M is Minnesota's land-grant university, dedicated to serving the public good. We are also the state's designated flagship research institution, keeping Minnesota at the forefront of emerging knowledge and educating our students to be the professionals and leaders of tomorrow.

The critical challenges facing today's and tomorrow's world stretch across the boundaries of defined disciplines. Global in scope, they are also defining issues for our local communities and our state, region, and nation.

To address these challenges, we will draw on the unparalleled scope and quality of our extraordinarily comprehensive university—on STEM fields and the humanities, on the social sciences and the arts, on the health and medical sciences, on professional expertise and practice.

The plan aims to make the University more nimble and integrative, to encourage collaborations in areas where we have the potential for major impact. The plan connects research and curricular strategies to ensure that our faculty and staff do their best work and that we provide our students with innovative educational opportunities. While we will continue to develop and honor deep expertise in specialized areas and outstanding single-discipline scholarship, the plan proposes structural changes that will remove barriers to transdisciplinary aspiration and achievement.

We embrace diversity, knowing that diversity among our faculty, staff, and students is linked to excellence and is a key source of the creativity and innovation that our vision requires. We honor our foundational commitments to access and affordability for students, not only because we serve the public good but also because talent and drive are found in all strata of our society.

The plan is explicitly dynamic: it is intended to be subject to recurrent reexamination and revision. There will be new opportunities that we will want to seize, but we must be prepared to abandon failed experiments. We will remain steadfast in pursuit of our basic mission, but the world is constantly changing. Our plan is to meet the world's challenges.

**Our Strategic Vision**

The University of Minnesota Twin Cities will be preeminent in solving the grand challenges of a diverse and changing world.

**Goals**

**Build exceptional research and curriculum integrating grand societal challenges**

Use the U's depth and breadth to capitalize on our students, faculty, and staff to generate new knowledge, deliver an educated workforce, and build partnerships across the state.

**Support excellence and, with intention, reject complacency**

Streamline rules and regulations; set meaningful goals and metrics; and empower faculty, staff, and students to achieve.

**Aggressively recruit, retain, and promote field-shaping researchers and teachers**

Build a pipeline to recruit and retain world-class teachers and researchers, support their work through a highly functional infrastructure and a culture of high expectations, reduce barriers for collaboration across disciplines, and accelerate the pace at which knowledge and discovery benefit the public.

**Establish a culture of reciprocal engagement, leveraging our unique location**

Better leverage the resources and relationships available in the Twin Cities and across the state to benefit our students, our communities, and the world.

## University of Minnesota Mission

The University of Minnesota, founded in the belief that all people are enriched by understanding, is dedicated to the advancement of learning and the search for truth; to the sharing of this knowledge through education for a diverse community; and to the application of this knowledge to benefit the people of the state, the nation and the world. The University's threefold mission of research and discovery, teaching and learning, and outreach and public service is carried out on multiple campuses and throughout the state.

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[strategic-planning.umn.edu](http://strategic-planning.umn.edu)

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