

Strategic Plan I Advancing the Next Gen K-State

Office of the Vice President for Research

July 2025

MISSION

To enable next-generation research through seeking efficiencies, lowering barriers to success and removing burdens on faculty investigators. By providing concierge-level service that enables faculty and researcher success, we will become national leaders in research administration and be an exemplar for efficiency, effectiveness, integrity and professionalism. We will communicate the value of research being done at Kansas State University to internal and external constituents to raise the profile of the institution in the nation and worldwide.

VISION

To become a national leader in research in community health and well-being, sustainability, global food security and biosecurity, and enabling technologies.

UNIVERSITY VALUES

Connection: We are stronger together — cultivating trust and building relationships to connect our K-State community with our state, nation and world.

Courage: We lead with bold conviction — rising to the moment, even when the course is uncharted, to deliver the greatest good for areas of greatest need.

Impact: We listen, adapt and challenge the status quo — leading change through learning and discovery that transforms lives and creates shared prosperity for all.

Learner-Focused: We welcome all who seek to learn and grow — providing an accessible, inclusive and exceptional experience that helps them achieve their potential.

People-Centered: We are everything because of our people — supporting, valuing and inspiring our entire K-State community and championing a culture of belonging for all.

Stewardship: We are committed to our future — using our resources responsibly to leave a positive, lasting legacy.

STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMITTEE

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STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS

To create our strategic plan, the Office of the Vice President for Research leadership team, consisting of professionals who bring expertise, diverse perspectives and institutional knowledge in all aspects of research administration came together to initiate the planning process.

Each leader met with their respective teams to gather input and better understand their priorities, challenges and aspirations for the future. With this valuable input, the leadership team reconvened to distill the findings and identify overarching themes. Through several planning sessions, the group aimed to align our core goals to guide our priorities and build upon the university's Next Gen Strategic Plan.

The final draft will be shared with the Associate Deans for Research Council and the University Distinguished Professors. This stage will be crucial for gaining additional insights, ensuring alignment and fostering a sense of ownership among these key academic leaders.

GOALS AND STRATEGIES

Goal one: Empower every faculty member to engage in research and compete for intramural funding by aligning institutional resources with individual and unit-specific goals, streamlining support services and fostering programs that drive research growth and success across disciplines. This goal reflects our commitment to being people-centered unit, leading with courage to address the greatest needs and deliver the greatest good.

Imperative alignment

Imperative 4: Grow research expenditures to \$300 million annually and sponsored programs and awards to \$270 million annually.

Imperative 6: Build partnerships at all levels of K-State.

Strategies

1. Enhance funding opportunities and research support

- Provide funding awareness through targeted newsletters and personalized researcher engagement.

- Implement internal funding programs to seed research projects and manage competitive proposal submissions.
- Offer proposal development coaching for individuals and teams to strengthen grant success rates.
- Collaborate with research leadership to identify and promote opportunities for faculty teaming.

2. Strengthen research infrastructure and capabilities

- Strategically recruit core personnel to advance institutional capabilities and services.
- Facilitate acquisition, maintenance, and optimal utilization of campus research instruments and facilities.
- Increase awareness and access to core facilities, including cross-institutional collaborations with neighboring universities.

3. Foster incentives and faculty development

- Return competitive indirect cost percentages to colleges and principal investigators to promote research sustainability.
- Support a faculty buy-out program to enable participation in large-scale, multi-institutional funding opportunities.
- Commit resources to establish university-wide research centers with long-term funding goals.

4. Expand grant and development programs

- Administer targeted grants to advance faculty research initiatives.
- Partner with the KSU Foundation to grow funding for Faculty Development Awards and University Small Research Grants, focusing on early-stage research, creative endeavors, and international opportunities.

5. Drive strategic hiring initiatives

- Execute a cluster hiring program for 12 new research-active faculty in biomanufacturing and related biosciences, leveraging state funding to build institutional expertise.

Goal two: Enhance operational excellence in K-State research by streamlining administrative processes, fostering cross-disciplinary collaboration, and leveraging advanced technologies to ensure efficient resource allocation, compliance and impactful outcomes — empowering innovation, adaptability and institutional effectiveness to deliver the greatest good for the greatest need.

Imperative alignment

Imperative 6: Build partnerships at all levels of K-State

Imperative 8: Focus on operational excellence and being One K-State in all we do

Strategies

1. Modernize research administration systems

- Fully integrate eRA solutions with K-State systems (HR, financial, and compliance) for seamless data management.
- Implement automated systems for grant budget oversight, forecasting, and burn-rate analysis to reduce administrative burden and improve investigator support.
- Deploy a modernized cost-sharing and effort reporting system to streamline processes, ensure federal compliance, and minimize administrative workload.

2. Strengthen compliance and risk management

- Configure and implement a Cayuse conflict-of-interest solution to modernize compliance reporting and reduce administrative burdens for researchers.
- Update template contracts and negotiation strategies to align with innovative collaboration approaches.

3. Optimize resource and financial management

- Enhance partnerships with colleges and administrative units to ensure accurate capture and reporting of research expenditures.
- Perform a comprehensive review and modernization of financial and administrative processes related to research operations.

4. Foster collaboration with strategic initiatives

- Build robust partnerships with university-wide initiatives, including the Water Institute, Id3A and Corporate Engagement, to amplify research impact.

Goal three: Build a reimagined Kansas State University Research Foundation that fosters innovation through partnerships to grow our research enterprise, solve grand challenges, and make transformative impacts, advancing Kansas' economic prosperity while reinforcing our commitment to sustainability and applied learning experiences. By embracing bold, interdisciplinary research, we will enhance global competitiveness, driving societal impact and prosperity in alignment with our Next Gen goals.

Imperative alignment

Imperative 6: Build partnerships at all levels of K-State

Imperative 7: Be a positive force for the Kansas economy

Strategies

1. Advance use-inspired and interdisciplinary research

- Prioritize research aligned with the NextGen Strategic Plan focus areas: Community Health and Well-Being, Sustainability, Global Food Security and Biosecurity, and Enabling Technologies.
- Increase funding and collaboration for interdisciplinary research projects with high societal and economic impact.

2. Strengthen industry and economic development partnerships

- Build strong relationships with industry partners to foster collaborative research and technology transfer.
- Develop research partnerships with significant economic development potential, enhancing regional and state prosperity.

3. Promote innovation and commercialization

- Facilitate commercialization of university-generated intellectual property through new company formation and industry partnerships.
- Attract venture capital and other investments to support university-based start-ups, driving job creation and technological innovation in Kansas.

Goal four: Position the Biosecurity Research Institute as a nationally and internationally recognized Center of Excellence for research, education and training in biosecurity, aligning with our Next Gen vision to address global challenges. This includes advancing our status as the premier U.S. facility for research on high-consequence livestock diseases at biosafety level-3 agriculture. By leveraging interdisciplinary collaboration, cutting-edge research, and a commitment to global leadership, we will foster innovation and enhance resilience in agriculture and biosecurity, contributing to K-State's role in advancing sustainable solutions for critical societal issues.

Imperative alignment

Imperative 4: Grow research expenditures to \$300 million annually and sponsored programs and awards to \$270 million annually

Imperative 5: Nimble and proactively meet the needs of learners, employers and society

Imperative 6: Build partnerships at all levels of K-State

Imperative 7: Be a positive force for the Kansas economy

Imperative 8: Focus on operational excellence and being One K-State in all we do

Strategies

1. Work towards achieving financial sustainability through improved operational efficiency and appropriate staffing levels

2. Enhance research, education and training

- Sustain and expand research, education and training activities at the BRI, including for-credit courses offered by the College of Veterinary Medicine.
- Provide students with applied learning experiences in BSL-2 and BSL-3 laboratory environments to develop critical skills.

3. Support high-impact research and collaboration

- Facilitate new faculty-led research proposals requiring BSL-3 facilities, promoting interdisciplinary and high-impact studies.
 - Collaborate with industry and federal partners to develop and test innovative measures to address agricultural threats.
- 4. Address emerging global challenges**
- Adapt to evolving priorities in global food security and biosecurity, ensuring responsive and relevant research efforts.
 - Support the needs of diverse research teams across K-State, government, and industry to advance shared goals.
- 5. Maintain safe and sustainable operations**
- Seek funding for essential facility upgrades and replacements to ensure the BRI remains safe, secure and energy efficient.

OUTCOME TARGETS AND TIMELINE

By 2027

- **Launch a comprehensive Responsible Conduct of Research (RCR) education program:** Initiate a program for all graduate and undergraduate researchers by Q2 2027, aiming for full participation by 2028.
- **Achieve high completion rates for compliance and integrity Training:** Target a 95% completion rate for research compliance and integrity training by 2027, with annual assessments of training effectiveness.
- **Ensure full faculty participation in export control and research security training:** Ensure 100% of faculty involved in federally funded research complete export control and research security training by 2027.
- **Conduct annual compliance audits:** Start conducting annual audits in 2027 to ensure adherence to evolving federal and state regulations.
- **Achieve 98% participation in RCR training for eligible researchers:** Aim for 98% participation in RCR training by 2027, with annual compliance checks to ensure ongoing adherence.
- **Increase educational outreach on research integrity:** Expand outreach by 25% by 2027, as measured by the number of workshops, webinars, and online resources made available to the research community.
- **Expand strategic research partnerships:** Establish 10 additional strategic research partnerships through the execution of Master Agreements for Research and Testing/Evaluation Projects.
- **Modernize research contracting templates:** Update at least six current research contracting templates to align with state and

federal laws, university policies, and the latest best practices in university-industry contracting by 2027.

- **Increase grant submissions linked to BRI capabilities:** Increase the number of grants submitted by K-State researchers that leverage BRI capabilities by 3% by 2027.
- **Increase early career proposals:** Submit at least one Department of Defense early career proposal annually by 2027.
- **Support workshop participants in proposal submissions:** Ensure workshop participants submit one large proposal by 2027.
- **Expand new company formation:** Increase commercialization of university-generated intellectual property to establish 5 new companies.
- **Increase participation in the technology commercialization process:** Achieve a 20% increase in invention disclosures resulting from research that directly addresses critical challenges and opportunities within the Economic Prosperity Plan focus areas.
- **Enhance research intelligence capabilities:** Launch the Cayuse platform to modernize research administration which includes a system upgrade to the current Cayuse environment and the implementation of three new modules. Build and integrate RADAR 2.0 to accelerate advanced research intelligence, enabling the creation of data-driven, real-time insights into research performance, funding trends, and faculty productivity.
- **Scholarship information management system (SIMS):** Adopt and implement a comprehensive scholarship tracking and management system to capture and analyze faculty scholarly activities and productivity, further enabling data-driven decision-making in faculty evaluation and strategic research planning.
- **Modernize IT infrastructure for secure research data management:** Upgrade research data storage and management infrastructure to ensure secure, reliable, and scalable access to research data, with specific provisions for handling Controlled Unclassified Information (CUI), International Traffic in Arms Regulations (ITAR) data and other sensitive information.

By 2030

- **Implement department-specific research security assessments and training:** Complete research security needs assessments and tailored training programs for 100% of academic departments by 2027.
- **Expand research security needs assessments:** Conduct assessments in at least 75% of departments by 2027, with full coverage achieved by 2030.

- **Conduct discipline-specific RCR workshops:** Launch workshops for priority fields (e.g., biosciences, engineering) beginning in 2027, aiming for 85% participation by 2030.
- **Provide annual feedback surveys for compliance training:** Distribute user feedback surveys for all compliance-related training programs starting in 2028, with the goal of achieving 90% positive feedback by 2030.
- **Expand strategic research partnerships:** Establish 20 additional strategic research partnerships through the execution of Master Agreements for Research and Testing/Evaluation Projects by 2030.
- **Modernize key research contracting templates:** Update 10 of the most frequently used research contracting templates to reflect the latest best practices and regulations by 2030.
- **Reduce contract negotiation time:** Shorten the negotiation time for transactions using K-State's contract templates by 50% through streamlined and responsive contractual language.
- **Increase grants submitted using BRI capabilities:** Boost the number of grants submitted by K-State researchers leveraging BRI capabilities by 5% by 2028.
- **Increase early career proposals and awards:** Increase the number of NSF, DOE, and DoD early career proposals and awards by 20% by 2030.
- **Expand new company formation:** Increase commercialization of university-generated intellectual property to establish 10 additional new companies.
- **Increase participation in the technology commercialization process:** Increase invention disclosures to 80 including at least 45 resulting from research that directly addresses critical challenges and opportunities within the Economic Prosperity Plan focus areas.