Northwestern Global Strategic Plan
White Paper Series

The Northwestern global strategic planning process builds upon important campus-wide planning conversations about Northwestern’s global direction over the last ten years. For the current process, over 200 Northwestern University stakeholders have been engaged in conversations that will form the basis of the strategic plan:

- **Global Mapping Project (Fall 2018)** – Northwestern Buffett staff conducted a thorough analysis of the University’s current global programming and collaborations, working with partners in each of the schools to understand Northwestern’s global footprint.

- **Northwestern Strategic Plan Contact Groups and White Paper Series (Spring 2019 – Ongoing)** – The planning process is structured around a set of priority areas, which are addressed by committees of faculty, administration, student and alumni leaders:
  
  - Impactful Global Research
  - Strategic Global Partnerships
  - Multilingualism
  - Global Learning
  - Role of Northwestern Buffett
  - Infrastructure and Logistics
  - International Faculty, Students and Scholars
  - Role of Information Technologies
  - Alumni Engagement
  - Data Analytics
  - Global Reputation

The findings of these groups are defined in white papers drafted by the groups’ co-conveners. Key ideas from these groups and the white papers they author will be further synthesized into the Northwestern Global Strategic Plan and its implementation.

The full strategic plan will be shared with the Board of Trustees at its March 2020 meeting.

Please direct comments about the Northwestern Global Strategic Plan and the preliminary findings as described in the White Paper Series to Meghan Ozaroski at m-ozaroski@northwestern.edu.
Northwestern Global Strategic Plan White Paper Series:
Impactful Global Research
Draft – July 23, 2019

Key Questions:
• How can Northwestern enhance the global reach of our research and bring the brightest minds around the world together to solve the most critical global challenges?
• How do we ensure that Northwestern remains at the forefront of research in a shifting global environment and seize global opportunities to advance our research reputation and impact?

What is impactful global research?
When we speak of research that is “global,” we intend all of the following:
• Research about international, non-US or global issues
• Research that is produced globally (with international collaborators) or disseminated globally
• Research that raises the global profile of Northwestern

By impact, we mean any and all of the following:
• Innovative research that addresses global challenges—by better formulating problems or developing solutions
• Basic research that changes minds about the world—through new discoveries or by giving us new categories of analysis
• The creation of global connections—institutional or personal networks outside academia that generate new research questions and accelerate the dissemination of new knowledge to next users globally
• The training of globally engaged graduates at all levels and the preparation of undergraduate and graduate students for careers in a global environment
• The engagement of diverse collaborators, not just global elites, such that the full diversity of perspectives are brought together in research

Our vision for impactful global research
Our aim is for Northwestern to become, and to be globally recognized as, one of the very best sites for research in the world, across a diverse range of fields. We aim to become a premier institution where the world turns to answer questions of global significance.

Northwestern cannot maintain its current international stature—let alone raise its research profile globally—without accelerating and intensifying its commitment to the free flow of ideas and of researchers across national borders and global collaboration in the production of knowledge.

Thus, we expect that the demographics of our campuses will continue, and even accelerate, the trend towards internationalization. In order to be one of the very best research institutions in the world, we must have access to the very best intellectual talent in the world, wherever it may be found. Hence, we aim to be able to recruit and train the very best graduate students, regardless of national origin.
Likewise, we aim to be able to recruit and hire the very best researchers onto our faculty, regardless of national origin.
We envision that our faculty, graduate students, and graduates who pursue careers in research will select and engage with collaborators based on their potential scholarly contributions rather than their nation of origin, collaborate freely with researchers around the world and disseminate their work globally so that it may have the greatest possible global impact.

We also envision the necessity for new forms of global interdisciplinary team research—bringing together scholars and practitioners from around the world with differing expertise and differing points of view by virtue of their location, linguistic, economic and cultural environment, or nationality to produce solutions that no singular situated research community could produce on its own.

We recognize that in order to be the very best, our researchers require access to global sources of data of all kinds, and to policy communities, markets, civil society and other next users around the world. Hence one task of the global university is to build and support the institutional frameworks and networks that empower global access.

Finally, we embrace the way the accelerated globalization of our research mission will change Northwestern as an institution. We envision Northwestern leading the formation of a multifaceted and multidirectional alliance of global universities (the Global Alliance) such that a researcher functionally has access to the full range of talent and research opportunities within the network. We also expect that a more international research mission will over time lead to a change in mindset across the University, such that a global perspective is the default mode of operation in teaching, research and outward-facing communications.

**How we will measure success**
We will judge our success in achieving this vision according to the following indicia:

- Extent to which potential collaborators—both individual researchers and premier research institutions—seek us out as partners
- Amount of co-authorship between Northwestern researchers and global researchers
- Enhanced global reputation of our faculty as measured by numbers of international research prizes and awards, and other standard indicia of research excellence
- Increase in access to international research awards and grant funding by virtue of increase in collaborative funding proposals with international scholars
- Intensified participation in global collaborative research projects and networks of researchers and more normalized and accessible scholar mobility as self-reported by faculty
- More global demographics across all categories of stakeholders
- Stronger and more engaged network of alumni who are faculty at international universities
- Reduction of institutional and logistical barriers that hinder global collaboration
- Multilingual translation of Northwestern scholarship
- Expanded global audience for our research
- Greater engagement of researchers and research institutions in developing countries and other contexts of global inequality
- Our Global Alliance partners have demonstrated growth because of participation in the Alliance
- Rise in global rankings—research reputation is key element of these

**Guiding Principles**
We will achieve this vision by focusing on the following guiding principles:
• We wish to support relationship-building that leads to collaboration at every institutional level and across every kind of boundary.
• We believe that stronger connections between researchers in the experimental and theoretical sciences and researchers with expertise in cultural, historical, and area studies can provide new pathways to international engagement and new opportunities for global impact for both.
• We wish to pursue joint PhD training programs with partner institutions to bring young scholars together and ensure that collaboration occurs at all levels of the research enterprise.
• Our network of Northwestern PhDs now in academic positions abroad is a powerful, and undertapped resource for recruiting top talent to Northwestern and disseminating our research globally.
• In many disciplines, the period immediately after tenure is an excellent point in the academic career to develop a more global research profile. We wish to provide opportunities for recently tenured scholars to globalize their research networks through fellowships, travel support and training and mentorship opportunities.
• We aim to significantly lower the logistical and financial barriers to researcher, graduate student, and undergraduate student mobility. These include internal rules and policies that inadvertently disincentivize global engagement, financial barriers to mobility and exchange, and regulatory challenges to collaboration across national boundaries as well as linguistic and cultural barriers.
• We aim to increase our research engagement in Asia and Africa.
• We will achieve much of this by creating a Global Alliance of universities as discussed elsewhere in this strategic plan. The Global Alliance will address barriers to mobility, provide opportunities for collaboration at all levels, incentivize joint degree programs, and help to reach audiences and next users through our partners in each locale.

Action Plan

In the short to medium term, we will begin with the following steps:
• We will build a Global Alliance, as outlined in this strategic plan.
• As part of the alliance model, we will create Visiting Professorships for leading scholars from partner universities to return to our campus on a regular cycle such that they can serve on graduate committees, collaborate with our scholars, and facilitate institutional relationships between our institutions. We will expect that our alliance partners will do the same such that our scholars will have opportunities to collaborate with scholars at our global partner institutions.
• We will improve Northwestern hospitality for visitors to facilitate the circulation of researchers at all levels. This includes housing, policies and practices surrounding the engagement of visitors, coordination of logistical issues such as visas and payments, and follow-up networking with visitors after the visit is complete.
• We will create new opportunities for idea incubation and pioneer a new model of research innovation across disciplines and national boundaries (see Appendix below).
• We will support faculty-led and unit-led efforts to build start-up collaborations through seed funding and logistical support
• We will invest in global marketing of our research and our research profile, and target global media in particular.
• We will host more global conferences in Evanston to bring greater international visibility to Northwestern. This will require investments in conference infrastructure. The Jacobs building is an ideal venue for such events.
• We will identify and systematically address internal Northwestern policies that may unwittingly discourage researchers from collaborating globally or undercut the global reputation or impact of our work.

**Impactful Global Research Contact Group Information:**
- **Conveners:** Annelise Riles and 2018-19 Northwestern Buffett Faculty Advisory Council
- **Staff Leads:** Krzysztof Kozubski and Meghan Ozaroski
- **Contact Group Participants** (The following are all members of the Faculty Advisory Council):
  - Adam Goodman – Director, Center for Leadership and Clinical Professor of Undergraduate Engineering, McCormick
  - Sossina Haile – Professor of Materials Science and Engineering, McCormick
  - Laura Hein – Professor of History, Weinberg (Faculty Senate)
  - Mark Huffman – Professor of Health Policy, Feinberg
  - Ofer Malamud – Associate Professor of Human Development and Social Policy, School of Education and Social Policy
  - Wendy Pearlman – Associate Professor of Political Science, Weinberg College
  - JP Sniadecki – Associate Professor of RTVF, School of Communications
  - Vijay Viswanathan – Associate Dean of Integrated Marketing Communications, Medill
  - Klaus Weber – Professor of Management and Organizations, Kellogg
  - Zachary Wright – Associate Professor in Residence of Liberal Arts, NU-Q
- **Special Representatives in the Theoretical and Experimental Sciences:**
  - **Co-Convener:** Rick Morimoto – Professor of Molecular Biosciences, Weinberg College
  - Ravi Allada – Professor of Neurobiology, Weinberg College
  - Marco Gallio – Associate Professor of Neurobiology, Weinberg College
  - Robert Holmgren – Professor of Molecular Biosciences, Weinberg College
  - Milan Mrksich – Professor of Biomedical Engineering, McCormick
  - Richard Silverman – Professor of Chemistry, Weinberg College
  - Robert Vassar – Professor of Neurology, Feinberg
- **Northwestern University Office for Research**
  - Jay Walsh – Senior Advisor to the President for Science and Research
  - Ann Adams – Associate Vice President for Research, Office for Research
  - Celeste Watkins-Hayes – Associate Vice President for Research, Office for Research
  - Fruma Yehiely – Associate Vice President for Research, Office for Research
Impactful Global Research Appendix:
Collaborative Research from Idea Generation to Impact

Our approach to research is closely linked to our proposed alliance model, discussed in another section of this strategic plan. The following is one new model of impactful global research linked to the alliance model. We recognize that global innovation and impact take many forms, and we hope and expect that this proposal will be only one of many forms of collaborative research to emerge as part of the Alliance.

**Idea Generation**
If we are to produce the best global research we need to find a way to address the most globally significant research questions. Research shows that the best ideas are the product of collaboration among diverse and disparate thinkers. One pillar of our plan to amplify our global research is to pioneer new methods of global research innovation.

Towards this end, our global partnership model, the Global Alliance, will also include a space of innovation and experimentation to foster a collaborative and creative process of idea incubation among researchers and students at global partner universities, called alliance universities. This space will offer opportunity for diverse thought leaders to come together, reach across boundaries of university, sector, discipline, country, and background, and take the risks necessary to explore unknowns, define new questions, and imagine new solutions to complex global problems.

Each alliance university will support its own local idea incubation activity. This idea incubation will involve faculty, students, and local thought leaders from beyond the academy in each locale, and will be conducted in partnership with non-university entities—civil society groups, corporations, governments, etc. Local idea incubation will focus on identifying critical challenges, from the local point of view, and finding creative solutions.

An annual idea incubation event will bring together researchers from alliance universities and their civil society partners. Building on local idea incubation work, teams will define key global challenges that could be addressed through international collaboration, and propose research, technical innovation or public engagement initiatives. Quality proposals developed in interdisciplinary groups will receive inter-institutional support in long-term Global Working Groups.

**Resource Sharing for Local and Global Research Activities**
Participating institutions will be invited to make a shared commitment to the sustainability of this model for impactful research. All partners participating in the Alliance, including Northwestern, will host and support their own local idea incubation activities. Alliance universities will be responsible for local staffing and will incentivize faculty leadership. They will provide in-kind or cash contributions to Global Summit expenses and seek event sponsorship. They will host meetings of Global Working Groups at their university locations and will contribute to travel and meeting expenses. Alliance universities will also collaborate on community-based policy/outreach staffing to support dissemination of Working Group research results and implementation of concrete action plans.

Where local resources are not available, the Alliance can serve as a mechanism for resource sharing, support for local staffing needs, and shared intelligence on funding opportunities. All Alliance partners will strive to invest time, monetary resources to the extent possible, human resources, intellectual resources, relational capital, and cultural resources as meaningful, impactful contributions.