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 Whitepaper Series:
Alumni Engagement

Key Questions:
- What role can Northwestern’s international alumni play in Northwestern’s globalization strategy?
- How can the University continue to support the development of alumni around the world, and make use of their talents, expertise and networks abroad?
- How can Northwestern broaden the current scope of engagement with international alumni, clubs and parents?

Our community of global Northwestern alumni is an invaluable asset and opportunity for the University. There are over 260,000 global Northwestern alumni, with undergraduate, professional, and graduate degrees from all of Northwestern’s schools and campuses. Our alumni are among the world’s leaders in arts, medicine, finance, engineering, communications, education, law, policy, and more.

Our alumni are critical to the fabric and identity of our institution, and have made meaningful investments in Northwestern University in myriad ways. Under the auspice of the Northwestern Global Strategic Plan we ask the question, how can we ensure that this community of global alumni and Northwestern University are driving reciprocal benefits for one another? What should Northwestern be doing to help our alumni succeed globally? In what ways can Northwestern benefit from all that our global alumni community has to offer?

Opportunities for Alumni Engagement through the Global Alliance

Our Alliance of global partner institutions will create new opportunities for alumni engagement around the world. The alliance will be a network of sustainable, long-term, multifaceted, and reciprocal partnerships with a select group of global universities and institutions. This network will help us better connect with alumni in the regions of our new global partners because Northwestern will have a stronger and more consistent presence at our partner locations abroad.

We envision having at least one embedded staff member dedicated to each of the Global Alliance sites, with reciprocal staff from our alliance partners based at our Evanston campus. These staff members will work to identify synergies, build relationships, and achieve shared benefits for Northwestern, our global partner institutions, and local alumni. There is opportunity here for collaboration with Northwestern’s local alumni clubs: one area of responsibility for these staff members might be to foster alumni engagement, in coordination with the Northwestern Alumni Association (NAA). They might spearhead initiatives to strengthen connections between alumni abroad and help to develop programming relevant in the local context, including multilingual communications about Northwestern tailored to specific communities and contexts.

We anticipate that one important impact of the Global Alliance will be an increase in the numbers of global alumni. As Kellogg built the Executive MBA Global Network, annual reports on Northwestern’s global alumni quickly showed large gains in alumni living in the regions of Kellogg’s network partners, in locations such as Germany and Israel. We anticipate the same patterns in building the university-wide Global Alliance, and have an opportunity to partner with the NAA and Northwestern’s schools to proactively plan for increased activity in the locations of our global partners.
A Role for Alumni in Impactful Global Research

There will also be new roles for global alumni to play in Northwestern’s global strategy through research. One key element of our new model for impactful global research is two-way engagement with thought leaders in the professions, in the policy world, and in civil society, beyond the walls of the university. In order for Northwestern scholars to identify the most impactful research questions, we need to hear from thought leaders around the world who have questions that they need answered by the scholarly community, and problems that they need strategies to address. We must deepen the connection between academia and the world beyond. There is also an important role for these thought leaders in ensuring that the discoveries made at Northwestern effectively reach next users and impact the world. Northwestern’s global alumni from all of our schools and campuses can be our key partners in this process of global engagement. Their skills, talents and networks can help to ensure that Northwestern’s excellent research is engaged and impactful.

At the Northwestern Buffett Institute for Global Affairs, we will do this by inviting alumni to be part of the earliest stages of faculty research by participating in and even proposing ideas for the Idea Incubation Workshop. During the inaugural workshop at Northwestern in 2019, three Northwestern alumni participated as judges, bringing their expertise from fields such as international development, human rights, and global communications in determining which research teams would be awarded ongoing support from Northwestern Buffett.

New Leadership Roles for Global Alumni

We look forward to an expanded role for Northwestern’s global alumni in the governance and support of the University. The NAA has very intentionally focused on enhancing the international diversity of its Board of Directors. Recent years have also seen an increase in the number of international trustees of the University. As Northwestern launches a new phase of its globalization, the thought leadership, advocacy, and financial support of our global alumni will be a critical component of our success.

Next Steps

Coordination with the NAA Strategic Plan

We recognize that it is crucial that efforts to engage Northwestern alumni are coordinated. In the short term, we are working to create synergy and alignment between the Northwestern Global Strategic Plan and the forthcoming Northwestern Alumni Association Strategic Plan. We will take this opportunity to take stock of lessons learned through Northwestern’s earliest efforts in international alumni engagement, and to support and nurture a more engaged global alumni network.

Pursue opportunities for joint programming and staffing in Global Alliance partner locales

Beginning this year, we look forward to a conversation between the Associate Provost for Global Affairs, the NAA leadership and Alumni Relations and Development about the role of alumni in supporting our Global Alliance partnerships, the opportunities for alumni that such partnerships create, and synergies between alumni activities and the collaborative research, learning and engagement taking place in each locale.
Conveners:
- Annelise Riles, Associate Provost for Global Affairs
- Samir Mayekar ´06, ´13 MBA, Trustee and President, Northwestern Alumni Association

Contact Group Information
- Contact Group Members:
  - Christine Breakey – Senior Associate Director of Alumni Engagement, Pritzker
  - Michele Cahill – Director, Alumni Engagement, Northwestern Alumni Association
  - Stephanie Cisneros – Office of International Student and Scholar Services, Northwestern Buffett
  - Belinda Clarke – Director of Alumni Relations and Engagement, Medill
  - Linda Feeney – Senior Associate Director of Alumni Engagement, Kellogg’s Executive MBA Program
  - Alex Herrera – International Development, Alumni Relations and Development
  - Albert Manzone ´93 MBA (´18, ´22 P), Vice President, Northwestern Alumni Association; former President, Kellogg Club of Switzerland, and NAA Global Ambassador
  - Lisa Mar ´87, ´94 MBA, Vice President, Northwestern Alumni Association; former Northwestern Alumni Association regional director for Asia
  - Laura Wayland – Executive Director, Northwestern Alumni Association
  - Aaron Zdawczyk – Associate Director of Admissions, Undergraduate Admission
- Special Consultation:
  - NAA Board of Directors
  - NAA International Volunteers Leadership Group
  - Larry Irving ´76, Trustee and President-Elect, Northwestern Alumni Association
- Staff Lead: Meghan Ozaroski, Associate Director for Strategic Initiatives at Northwestern Buffett