

# Examples of possible Goals, Objectives, Tactics, and Metrics for development of a Research Pillar on the Board’s Strategic Plan

## Priority Research

**Goal** Leverage the resources and the agenda of the Utah System of Higher Education (USHE) to position the state to be a leader in the global knowledge economy. Transform and invigorate Utah’s economy, culture, and communities through research, creativity, discovery, and innovation.

### Objectives:

- Ensure all undergraduate students participate in research, applied learning, work-based learning, or community engaged learning as part of the award program structure at technical colleges, community colleges, regional universities, and research universities.
- Leverage the scholarship generated by USHE institutions, consistent with their institutional roles, to help power local economies, culture, and quality of life.
- Strengthen the quality and reputation of the state’s Research Universities and support them in their efforts to achieve state, national, and/or international preeminence in key academic, research, and public service programs.

### Tactics and metrics:

1. Ensure undergraduate student participation in research and scholarly activities, and eliminate equity gaps in participation.
  - a. Embed undergraduate research, applied learning, work-based learning, community engaged learning, or other key high impact practices into associate and bachelor’s degree program structures and all technical college certificate programs.
  - b. Measure the percentage of undergraduates engaged in research or high impact learning and identify and eliminate equity gaps.
  - c. Measure the impact of civic learning and democracy engagement at all 16 USHE institutions through the AACU/Lumina Civic Evidence Project.

- d. Ensure all 8 degree-granting institutions earn the Carnegie Foundation’s Community Engagement or Leadership for Public Purposes Classifications by 2026.  
<https://carnegieclassifications.acenet.edu/>
2. Strengthen the pipeline of underrepresented Utahns pursuing graduate degrees.
    - a. Measure the percentage of undergraduates who graduate from USHE institutions and continue into graduate programs. Identify and address equity gaps.
    - b. Facilitate collaboration across USHE institutions to recruit Utah students, especially those from underrepresented backgrounds, into graduate programs.
    - c. Facilitate collaboration across USHE institutions to provide teaching and other opportunities for graduate students, for example, by creating graduate assistant instructor opportunities at community colleges.
    - d. Measure financial support available to USHE graduate students and their impact as employees of USHE institutions.
  3. Focus the research agenda for the State System by identifying the strengths and priorities of each institution and by strengthening research collaboration among them. Promote innovation through basic and applied research, technology transfer, and business support.
    - a. Identify significant challenges and opportunities facing Utah’s citizens, communities, regions, the state, and the world and mobilize the resources of the system to address them.
      - i. Align graduate programs to meet the needs of the state, including offering new programs in XXX across the System. (Examples: be regarded nationally and internationally as a leader in medicine; clean air; water usage and biodiversity; and XXX.
      - ii. Tap into the scholarly expertise of USHE faculty to address challenges facing the system, including student retention, completion, college affordability, equity gaps, etc.
    - b. Boost production and growth in Utah’s businesses and industries by increasing entrepreneurship and the commercialization of research discoveries and technology transfers at regional and research universities.
      - i. Measure and increase transfer activity to an average of at least XX awarded per year, including the number of
        1. patents awarded annually,
        2. licenses and options executed annually,

3. start-up companies created;
- c. Increase institutional community outreach at community colleges, regional universities, and research universities to address local or global problems and improve the quality of life within the state.
  - i. Measure delivery of knowledge to advance the health, welfare, cultural enrichment, and economy through community and business engagement and service.
4. Strengthen the quality and reputation in national measures of the state's scholarship, research, and innovation at the two research universities.
  - a. Increase the state's Higher Education Research and Development (HERD) survey ranking from the NSF.
  - b. Work with the Research Universities to set specific goals for number of faculty memberships in National Academies; faculty awards in the Arts, Humanities, Science, Engineering, and Health.
  - c. Increase annual expenditures from grants, sponsored programs, and business partnerships consistent with institutional missions to \$XX million. Reach the top XX% (when comparing public colleges and universities) for the percentage of R&D expenditures that were funded externally.
    - i. Measure total R&D expenditures; percent of R&D expenditure from external sources.
    - ii. Measure and increase research funding from business and industry
  - d. Increase public awareness and understanding about the State System's stewardship of resources to meet needs of the state and its students.
    - i. Publish periodic reports presenting the impact of research produced by the State System's institutions on students and the state, the amount of money brought to the state through research grants and other funding, and the impact of commercialization of university research discoveries.
    - ii. Measure and communicate the impact of students' civic engagement and global learning at all 16 USHE institutions as the leading system in the national AACU Civic Evidence Project.

**Links to other system's research strategies:**

Maryland: <https://www.usmd.edu/strategic-plan/USM-Strategic-Plan-Outline-Next-Steps.pdf>;

<https://www.usmd.edu/strategic-plan/USM-Mission-Vision-Values.pdf>

Pennsylvania:

<https://www.passhe.edu/inside/BOG/Documents/Strategic%20Plan%202020%20Rising%20to%20the%20Challenge.pdf>

Georgia: [https://www.usg.edu/strategic\\_plan/strategic\\_plan\\_goals/community\\_impact](https://www.usg.edu/strategic_plan/strategic_plan_goals/community_impact)

Florida: <https://www.flbog.edu/wp->

[content/uploads/2025\\_System\\_Strategic\\_Plan\\_Amended\\_FINAL.pdf](https://www.flbog.edu/wp-content/uploads/2025_System_Strategic_Plan_Amended_FINAL.pdf)