



UNIVERSITY OF
GOTHENBURG

GOALS AND STRATEGIES FOR
THE UNIVERSITY AS A WHOLE

2021–2024

A UNIVERSITY FOR THE WORLD

Preface

The University of Gothenburg's Vision, *A University for the World*, expresses the University's endeavour to be an international higher-education and research institution which assumes responsibility for the development of society while helping to build a sustainable world. The Vision rests on three overarching commitments: *Top-quality education and research; Sustainable and knowledge-based societal development; and A coherent organisation, and an attractive place of work and study.* Together, these commitments define the direction in which the University will move forward during the period from 2021 to 2030. The Vision brings out the independent role of the University as it promotes and supports advancement in society, one of its aims being the development of a sustainable world in which education and research conducted at the University play a decisive part.

This document establishes the goals and strategies which the University of Gothenburg as a whole will pursue from 2021 to 2024 in six focus areas: *sustainable development, relations and collaboration with the world around us, competence provision, physical and digital environments, sustainable modes of work and study, and governance and organisation.* These goals and strategies, defined in the course of discussions in university-wide forums, are geared to realising the three commitments in the Vision. They reflect the issues, external and internal, that are at the forefront during the period in question.

The goals and strategies for the whole of the University that are presented in this document share a common aim: that of creating favourable conditions for the development of education and research, including cooperation with the world around us. Guided by these goals and strategies, the designing of concrete operational strategies and plans will ensue at levels close to individual activities.

Our Vision, *A University for the World*, articulates a set of profound responsibilities. As we take on the challenges of the future as well as the present, we will adhere to these goals and strategies, strengthened by the dedication to our education and research which our employees and students bring to their work and studies.

Peter Larsson
Chair, University Board

Eva Wiberg
Vece-Chancellor

Sustainable development

Our goal: By 2024, the University of Gothenburg will have strengthened its position as a leading university with regard to sustainable development.

Work on sustainability issues in education and research is an internationally recognised feature of the University of Gothenburg. The University will take this work further in the years ahead, augmenting its relevance as an agent and a partner in society at large and thereby contributing to Agenda 2030 and the global goals set for sustainable development, including economic, social, and ecological dimensions.

This commitment entails responsibility for developing specialist competence, as well as for building new knowledge by means of interdisciplinary collaboration in education and research. The University will also cooperate with other agents in society in ways that enable students and staff to evolve fresh insights and contribute to joint solutions. As a large organisation, the University of Gothenburg has a considerable impact on its environment. Consequently, it is under an obligation to increase its internal efforts in the field of sustainable development.

During the period from 2021 to 2024, the University of Gothenburg will:

- Communicate the role of the University in society's endeavour to improve sustainability with clarity and emphasis;
- Strengthen the development of sustainability perspectives in education and research;
- Initiate and improve collaboration with organisations and other agents in the surrounding world in order to further sustainable development throughout society;
- Reduce the University's own unfavourable effects on the environment by continuing to pursue long-term systematic work on sustainability.

Working with the world around us

Our goal: By 2024, the University of Gothenburg will be generally perceived as a natural partner in sustainable social-development work based on knowledge.

Good relations with the surrounding world are necessary if the University is to play an active part in social-development work based on knowledge. Ever since its creation, the University of Gothenburg has cooperated closely with the world around it. In order to be a University for the World, the University will need to reinforce and build on that profile, meeting increasing demands and expectations that the University will be a prominent agent in society.

Top-class education and research develop within the framework created by the quality criteria and procedures that govern the scholarly-scientific community, but also in relation to the world around the University. Carefully integrated internationalisation efforts form part of this context. Cooperation at local, regional, national, and international levels will see the University extend its contributions to social development in a variety of spheres. Thanks to responsible and dedicated collaboration which engenders palpable benefits for all parties, higher education and research have a favourable social impact while encouraging continuous development in the University and augmenting its relevance as a force for good in society.

All collaborative schemes pursued by the University will be rooted in its core values.

During the period from 2021 to 2024, the University of Gothenburg will:

- Strengthen collaboration with other seats of learning and with various organisations in society in local, regional, national, and international networks which add value to the development of education and research;
- Stimulate international perspectives by increasing and extending international exchanges for students and staff;
- Develop frameworks for encounters between Academe and society at large, with a special focus on innovation, life-long learning, and practical utilisation of knowledge, by means of shared efforts and a wide dissemination of research findings;
- Promote interaction between the University and the world around it, increasing its visibility to external parties.

Competence provision

Our goal: By 2024, the University of Gothenburg will have strengthened its ability to recruit and foster staff-members who contribute to education and research of the highest quality.

The competence of a university's staff is the most essential factor when it comes to achieving internationally distinguished education and research. As the world around us keeps changing, the demands on the University keep growing: as an employer, it needs to offer a working environment which promotes equal treatment for all as well as a culture of cooperation among colleagues. At the same time, attractive terms of employment will encourage both national and international recruitment.

As articulated in the University's Vision, the commitment to top-quality education and research will guide the development of the University's competence-provision efforts in conjunction with its aim to create complete academic environments.

During the period from 2021 to 2024, the University of Gothenburg will:

- Evolve a systematic approach to competence-provision work, proceeding from the long-term needs of educational and research environments within the framework of a culture of cooperation among colleagues and good working conditions;
- Design systems for extending staff qualifications with a focus on the development of complete academic environments, also including collaboration with external agents;
- Continue its work on improving procedures for recruitment, preparatory processes included, with a view to ensuring meritocracy and transparency which contribute to excellence in recruitment and in the furthering of staff qualifications;
- Increase international recruitment and improve the reception and introduction of international staff.

Physical and digital environments

Our goal: In 2024, the University of Gothenburg will be widely recognised for its success in creating physical and digital environments which are fit for purpose and serviceable in the long term, satisfying the needs of all those who work here.

Investments in physical premises, infrastructures, and digital systems solutions account for a large share of the University's total costs, and they entail long-term commitments. In addition, the University, being a public authority, is expected to keep streamlining and digitising its operations. Taken altogether, these conditions call for clearly defined procedures governing strategic decisions and coordination with regard to the development of physical and digital environments.

Serviceable, cost-effective, and well-functioning physical and digital environments and infrastructures are crucial to the University's ability to foster top-quality education and research while forming a coherent organisation. Besides, such environments are instrumental in opening channels between the University and the wider world. On the basis of the University's long-term requirements, its development of premises will contribute to the creation of strong centres for teaching and research, as well as of vigorous arenas for collaborative schemes involving external agents.

The University's need of physical meeting-places for learning, pedagogical development, and research will be balanced against the potential gains and effects of increased digitalisation.

During the period from 2021 to 2024, the University of Gothenburg will:

- Provide a sound basis for a financially viable, cost-effective, and sustainable supply of premises for ongoing and forthcoming strategic local projects;
- Build on experiences drawn from the Covid pandemic in efforts to create new, interdisciplinary environments for education and research, as well as to streamline and develop administrative procedures;
- Increase the degree to which premises and infrastructures are utilised, by means of internal coordination as well as collaboration with external agents;
- Contribute to the current transition to Open Science.

Sustainable modes of work and study

Our goal: By 2024, the University of Gothenburg will have expanded its efforts to promote a sustainable environment for work and study.

The Vision states that the University of Gothenburg will provide plenty of opportunities for learning, knowledge formation, and exchange of experiences while constituting an attractive place of work and study. The quality and relevance of the University's activities will be developed by way of stable conditions, a sense of involvement, and cross-border collaboration of various kinds, all of which will be imbued with respect, reciprocity, and joint responsibility.

Promoting a sustainable environment for work and study will result in high-level performance over time; but it will also encourage fruitful cooperation of various kinds, enabling participants to contribute to the activities of the University and make them even better. A sustainable environment for work and study which benefits every student and member of staff is vital to their health, and the achievement of the University's long-term goals depends on it.

Stress-related ill-health is a growing challenge throughout society, not least because of the gradual disappearance of boundaries in working life. Consequently, the University will pay particular attention to conditions in the environment of staff and students that might reduce or prevent stress-related disorders, such as workload over time, the distribution of working and teaching hours, and the digital work and study environment.

Safety and clarity are also crucial to the working environment of students and staff, not least when unforeseen things happen. Anyone who is nevertheless exposed to hatred, threats, or violence in relation to his or her University activities will feel safe in the support provided by the University.

During the period from 2021 to 2024, the University of Gothenburg will:

- Direct targeted measures against stress-related ill-health among staff and students, working proactively with the in-house healthcare services for students and employees in order to promote health across the board;
- Strengthen the University's work on equality and non-discrimination with a view to preventing and dealing with harassment, with a special focus on sexual harassment;
- Ensure that all staff and students are aware of the support available for those exposed to hatred, threats, and violence;
- Analyse and reinforce the abilities of people in leading positions to perform their duties successfully, and invest additional efforts in developing the University's supply of forms of internal competence development for staff, leaders, and directors.

Governance and organisation

Our goal: By 2024, the University of Gothenburg will be operating management and governance procedures adapted to its Vision of being A University for the World.

Greater autonomy has increased expectations that institutions of tertiary education will work on developing their organisation and their internal management. The Vision states three over-arching commitments regarding the development of the University: top-quality education and research; sustainable and knowledge-based social development; and a coherent organisation, providing an attractive place of work and study. It is also clear from the Vision that the University leadership will apply long-term perspectives, decentralise operations wherever possible, and work in a spirit of trust; and that the University will evolve into a coherent organisation which emphasises the idea of the University as a whole. The management and governance of the University will be rooted in a continuous endeavour to enhance the quality of its operations thanks to stable conditions, a sense of involvement, and cross-border collaboration. Achieving these aims calls for development on the part of governance.

Combined with active leadership, extended dialogues and the evolution of processes based on the cooperation of peers will shape transparent and purposeful procedures for planning operations, and for ensuring that decisions are made on the basis of careful preparatory work. These procedures will utilise the range and the competences offered by the University as a whole.

During the period from 2021 to 2024, the University of Gothenburg will:

- Promote coordination between strategic operative development efforts and systematic quality-enhancing measures across the board, including issues of diversity, equality, and non-discrimination;
- Analyse and develop the university-wide steering and funding operations pertaining to education and research, including collaboration with external agents;
- Develop the steering and funding operations underpinning the University Library and the central University administration with a view to achieving transparency, practicability, and cost-effectiveness in connection with shared services and resources;
- Increase the opportunities for cooperation, exchange of experiences, and knowledge formation across the various activities and internal organisational boundaries of the University.