



# Strategic Plan (2018 to 2023)

**Themes and Commitments towards Quality Education**

**IQAC**

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# Strategic Plan (2018 to 2023)

## Themes and Commitments towards Quality Education



### Season's Greetings!

Gujarat University is a vibrant and globally engaged institution. We are innovative in our thinking and we will continue to transform our learning environment in order to leverage opportunities afforded by new technologies aiming to deliver high quality learning outcomes. I am pleased to present the strategic plan from 2018 to 2023 for teaching learning and research at the Gujarat University. This plan includes nine themes and nine commitments which will be achieved by the end of the period. The plan sets out five major goals to guide future activity.

The five goals are

1. To fulfil our mandate, we must invest in and insists on excellence everywhere at Gujarat University must diversify our funding to make its optimum use.
2. To enhance our engagement with other stakeholder by equal partnership
3. To continuously improve our research performance
4. To attract and retain excellence staff and to provide an excellent educational experience to attract and retain students.
5. To be a sustainable University

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## **OVERVIEW**

Gujarat University is the oldest and the largest teaching and research University of the state of Gujarat. A sprawling, green campus spread across 260 acres land is University's home and the varsity is administered through the heritage Tower Block.

Over the past year, the University has geared up newer initiatives and reforms across a spectrum of its attributes, from academics to research to infrastructure.

As the University gears up during this phase of massive transformation, there is a need to caretaker the growing needs of the University and a need to bring in consistency, deeper collaboration and uniformity in the newer aspects of the University's administration.

This broad draft roadmap highlights some of the key initiatives and reforms the University envisions to undertake over the next five years.

The roadmap and the implementation thereof is initially being coordinated by the recently instituted University Office of Strategy, that currently operates as an executive think-tank for the University i.e. as a strategic body with executive and operational power for speedy implementation of newer initiatives.

## **SCOPE**

The Gujarat University Strategic Plan sets out a framework of commitments and priorities for the University, its schools and departments. The plan has been drafted after consultation with all stake holders. The objective of preparing this strategic plan is to ensure quality in all activities done by the various schools and departments.

## **VISION**

- To be a Centre of Excellence
- Providing value based Quality Education
- Efficiency with Financial sustainability
- Leading to Socio - Economic Welfare of the Society through Enrichment of Human Capital

## MISSION

- Empowering Students through Modernized Syllabi
- Innovation in Teaching
- Promotion of Research, Consultancy and Extensive for the Benefit of the Society
- Quality improvement to Enhance Global Competitiveness

## THEMES AND COMMITMENTS

Gujarat University will provide quality education and experience with the values, skills, innovation and intellectual discipline which will enable students to make a positive contribution to society.

### **Commitment 1 : To create world class ecosystem for research of exceptional quality**

With the help of GU-PIER and APJ Abdul Kalam (CERI) Center for Excellence Research and Innovation, the breadth and depth of these two departments of the University will enable us to lead international research agenda across Sciences, Social Sciences and Humanities and to set up platform for multidisciplinary and transdisciplinary research. Following reforms will be made.

- **Research Competence:** Building and consolidating on University's research competence is one of the top priorities of the University going forward. As of mid-2017, emphasis is already laid on increasing unique academic research. Steps have been taken to ensure research scholars, postdoctoral scholars and faculty members enjoy an environment conducive of research and necessary facilities and resources are made available to these stakeholders to foster competent research. A mandatory minimum research requirement structure is currently being identified for implementation alongside an incentive structure for all stakeholders to carry out excellent research in their respective fields.
- **Commercializing Research:** The University's consultancy cell and the entrepreneurship council in conjunction have been tasked with the responsibility of commercializing existing and new research. It is envisioned that by mid-2020, at least 30% of University's academic research will be commercialized.
- **Industrial Research:** The University is currently in the process of forging relationships with stakeholders of the industry in order to capitalize on the

research strength and foster industrial research. The upcoming GU Park for Industrial Extension and Research (PIER) will be one key catalyst of industrial research, whereas pivotal initiatives such as the Defense and Homeland Security Research Cell (DHRC) are already bridging university's research resources to industrial appliances.

- **Intellectual Property:** The stakeholders of the University are currently being encouraged to register and file patents and other intellectual property. As of early 2018, the University has made a broad policy of funding expenditure related to intellectual property protection of university faculty, students and startups, and it is envisioned that the stakeholders of the University shall together publish at least 50 patents by the end of 2022.

### **Commitment 2 : To invest in teachers and to support them with world class environment**

Gujarat University will provide Conducive environment for conducting research with state of the art facilities and infrastructure, appropriate support for staffs and student, and investment in the training, support and welfare of our staff members. Gujarat University will also ensure the best measures are in place to attract the most able minds from across world.

- **Hiring :** As part of the University's new HR strategy, it is envisioned to review the Human Resources requirements of the University for the next decade and accordingly fill the required 95% of the vacancies by mid-2020.
- **Training :** Training is an integral part of the University's new HR strategy, and it is envisioned to impart minimum level of technical and soft skills training to all teaching and administrative staff beginning the end of 2018.
- **Performance - based incentivisation :** The University's new HR policy, shall propose a focus on performance based incentivisation for teaching and non-teaching staff.

### **Commitment 3 : To have a international collaboration**

- One of the ambitions of Gujarat University is to have deep roots locally, nationally and internationally. Gujarat University will have an international collaboration in the field of placement, research, cultural exchange, economics, social and skills.

- The University currently has associations and relationships in Universities in USA, Japan, UK and Poland. Dialogues are underway to strengthen these relationships. Such specific partnerships are envisioned to result into several kinds of mutually beneficial models. It is envisioned to have collaborations and associations with universities and research organizations in at least 40 countries by 2021.
- It is expected to undertake partnerships that result into student, faculty, researcher and innovator exchanges, double degree cohorts, hosting foreign campuses, and extension of University campuses.
- **Centre for Post Doctoral Research (CPDR)** : At the under-construction CPDR in the vicinity of the Research Park, it is envisioned to host foreign post-doctoral fellows to involve them in the ongoing academic research at the University. It is expected to have CPDR operational by end of 2019.

#### **Commitment 4 : To contribute Maximum in Social Outreach / Extra Curriculum activities**

In order to maintain and enhance intellectual strength of the university, Gujarat University will strengthen and expand outreach activities based on regress evaluation of their effectiveness. Gujarat University will work with affiliated colleges schools and departments to ensure effective coordination of outreach activities.

- **Sports:** The University intends to consolidate its strong position in sports performance and infrastructure going forward. The Sardar Patel Sports City is expected to be operational by mid 2019, and the University has already roped in mechanisms to further identify great talent across its ecosystem and provide necessary opportunities.
- **Startups:** The University has the largest efforts for startup support for any varsity in India. With more than 40,000 sq. ft. area earmarked for startup and innovation support, building on startup and innovation support capacity is a top priority for GU. It is expected by late 2019, the campus shall be able to support over 200 startup companies across a general, and at least four sector-specific incubators.

#### **Commitment 5 : Partnership with Stakeholders**

Working in partnership with various stakeholders like government, Alumni, Business, cultural organizations, local bodies and NGOs, Gujarat University will

provide research platform, in part, through focusing attention on the emerging issues of greatest importance. By public engagement we can enriches society and are committed to enabling our researchers to inspire, consult and collaborate with the public.

Gujarat University will establish ourselves as an active partner in the development of open scholarship, providing the tools necessary for researchers to publish and share outputs from their research and to support national and international collaboration.

- **Office of Public Relations:** It is planned to implement a micro office of Public Relations to handle matters related to the media and dissemination of information to the larger public by mid-2019. This office shall work directly under the supervision of the Office of the Vice-Chancellor.
- **Staff Training:** During late 2018 and by mid 2019, it is planned to train all members of the University's administrative and teaching staff on public dealing in order to improve public interfacing, and overall experience of students and other beneficiaries with the University.
- **Information Dissemination:** While the University currently employs new-age means including social media, mass SMS, emails, and websites, for disseminating information, it is envisioned to use AI-based tools in order to ensure most efficient and optimum dissemination and delivery of information to the intended recipients.

#### **Commitment 6 : To attract, recruit and retain the highest caliber faculty members**

In order to perform better in global and national rankings university will ensure to recruit and retain the very excellent staff. Newly designed Self appraisal manual will help us to promote, retain and reward quality scholars.

#### **Commitment 7 : Alumni funding**

Gujarat University will try to create corpus for 10 different initiatives for staff and students from the corpus generated through alumni funding Initiatives like faculty exchange program, Travelling grant, Student exchange program, Scholarship, Research Projects funding, Award for Excellence, Innovation and start up funding, Infrastructure facilities etc will be the main area where funding will be invested.

- **Alumni Outreach:** As of 2017, the Gujarat University Alumni Association has been resurrected and currently in the process of reaching out to University's older alumni. It is envisioned to reach out to maximum number of University alumni through various means of communication and enroll at least a million members of the alumni within the next 5 years.
- **Network:** The network of the alumni is intended to be leveraged in order to create a mutually beneficial model. It is envisioned to allow meritorious students to have access to alumni, and involve alumni at several levels of the University's administration and culture.
- **Alumni Hubnet:** On the GU Hubnet, it is envisioned to have a dedicated alumni extension by mid-2020 that alumni could use to network, as well as students could use to connect with alumni. Other existing social media tools such as Face book, Instagram, and Twitter shall be utilized to better interface with the University's alumni.

### **Commitment 8 : Strategy from Strength**

Through the strategic planning process, we have identified areas of our greatest strength. Following are the areas in which we will invest our resources most heavily because they are the areas where we can have the greatest impact.

- ❖ Forensic Science
- ❖ Climate Change
- ❖ Botany
- ❖ Life Science
- ❖ Physics
- ❖ Performing Arts
- ❖ Library Science
- ❖ Microbiology
- ❖ Education
- ❖ Start-up and Innovations

### **Commitment 9 : Infrastructural Support**

- **Campus Redevelopment Plan (CRDP):** The already underway Campus Redevelopment Plan is slated to complete by mid-2019, as per the stipulated timeline.
- **Controlled Campus:** As part of the CRDP, it is proposed to have a controlled campus, with smart-card based access for all persons having access to the

University for Improved Security and better management of visitors. It is envisioned that the campus will be made a controlled campus with full access-control features by end of 2018.

- **Renovation of remaining infrastructure:** It is visualized that key infrastructure such as remaining departments, convention centre, staff quarters, and hostels shall be renovated in the next 2 years, by mid-2020.
- **World-Class Facilities:** Alongside current upcoming projects, it is envisioned to build additional hostels, guest houses, mess, sports and cultural arena, additional staff quarters, Heritage Park and open, green spaces, all of international standards, in the next five years.
- **Partnerships and Collaborations:** It is expected that the University infrastructure shall be responsibility and judiciously allowed for private use at a cost to individuals, events and entities, through partners and collaborators, in order to ensure sustainability of the University.

#### **Commitment 10 : Academic Interventions & Initiatives**

- **Exam Reforms:** Necessary reforms to continually improve the examination and assessment structure are to be implemented in the coming years, which include the adoption of improved ways of assessment to make grading better, as well as integrating newer tools for efficient and optimum assessment.
- **Faculty Development:** Beginning this year, the University has undertaken several programs to cohesively develop and update the skills and aptitude of faculty members and teaching staff of the University. It is envisioned that these programs shall also be expanded to teachers and staff associated with affiliated colleges beginning early 2019. Faculty development and training is one of the key plans of this roadmap. Through the University's global engagement strategy, it is also planned to undertake international exposure and training for select faculty to accelerate faculty development.
- **Course Expansion and Digitalization:** Since mid 2017, the University has been ushering in newer courses across a variety of faculties and streams. It is planned to continually introduce such new courses over the coming years at an accelerated pace, based on student demand, and individual course performance. Through Hubnet, it is also envisioned to have resources for all individual courses available online for course students and designated faculty.

- **International Exposure:** Through collaborations with several universities abroad, it is planned to offer dual degree and other global opportunities to university students. Already, GU has foreign collaborations in four countries, and it is planned to have collaborations in as many as 40 countries by 2021.
- **Course Reforms:** The varsity envisions to redesign curriculums of various existing courses to impart practical training of students through various programmers such as industrial visits, internship opportunities and project based learning with commercial enterprises.
- **Scalable Learning:** It is also expected to implement the usage of MOOCs and other scalable online models to impart digital skill-based, topic-based learning to students and non-students through Gujarat University. Scalable learning shall be done through existing tools, and through extensions of the Hubnet. From 2018 onwards, several MOOCs and skill-based courses shall be introduced by the University online, with full integration with the Hubnet by mid-2019.

#### **Commitment 11 : Administrative Reforms & Initiatives**

- **Paperless GU:** It is also planned to make 96% of processes and systems related to the University paperless (or automated or digital) by mid 2021, beginning the end of 2018. The Paperless GU initiative will ensure all past records are digitized (current underway), while existing processes are done using custom technologies and methodologies. From attendance of students, to teacher resource allocation, to management of the estate, digital alternatives to current processes shall be identified and adopted.
- **File Management:** A new-age, tech-based file management system shall function hand-in-hand with the Paperless GU initiative. The file management system will encompass processes and functionalities such as file tracking, authorizations, archival and retrieval by various entities, including third-party stakeholders such as students and vendors. The file management initiative is expected to initiate in pilot cases from early 2019 and encompass the entire university's scope and departments by the end of 2021.
- **Grievance Redressal System:** The University is in the process of developing an AI-based scalable, grievance redressal mechanism, through which

grievances of students as well as other staff members will be forwarded to relevant authority without human interference. It will also ensure confidentiality as and when necessary. It is expected to

- **GU Hubnet:** The Gujarat University Hubnet (codename) is envisioned to be a common web, mobile and app-based platform bringing together all the resources for all stakeholders at one common point, including the components of the Paperless GU initiative, file management systems, grievance redressal systems, along with news from across the University ecosystem through an online portal. Parts of Hubnet shall be live on GU website from end of 2018, with complete launch by late 2019.
- **Governance:** It is envisioned that the governance of the University shall be streamlined during the next few years, with an empowered Board of Advisors and Board of Governors leading the University's overall strategy and governance.

#### **Commitment 12 : Strategy for Financial Sustainability**

- **Fundraising:** One of the key priorities of the University is to raise funds in order to accelerate development. The varsity plans to involve industry, alumni and non-profits in order to raise appropriate funds against non-profit and for-profit objectives. As part of the fundraising strategy, it is envisage to establish a fundraising unit under the chairpersonship of the Vice-Chancellor the solely responsibility of which is to involve external and internal stakeholders in order to raise funds. A key aspect of this strategy is to also involve university's academic departments and colleges and explore ways to empower them to raise their own funds in pursuit of department-level sustainability. Responsible and sustainable outsourcing of University's existing resources and facilities is also a part of the fundraising strategy, along with Industry consultancy.
- **Decentralization:** As part of the broad finance strategy, it is also envisioned to empower department and administrative heads to efficiently undertake financial decisions up to certain limits. Already, as of early 2018, several such financial rules have been laid which are being currently implemented. It is planned to further configure these rules so as to ensure initiatives are implemented in the most efficient, optimum and judicious ways.

### **Commitment 13 : Other Areas**

University will also focus in next five years

- ❖ To develop new academic programs that expand the impact of experiential learning and make changes that enable students to earn more credit toward graduation from experiential learning activities.
- ❖ Increase opportunities for students to engage in faculty-supervised research and creative work, internships, civic involvement, and other beyond - the - classroom learning experiences and encourage and enable all students to participate.
- ❖ Create a year-round educational experience by extending experiential learning activities throughout the summers and between quarters and secure the additional resources required to support these activities.
- ❖ Increase the breadth and depth of options we offer students to give them better pathways for learning and find better means of assessing and measuring the outcomes.
- ❖ Stimulate academic innovation that results in more modular course sequences and new modes of team - based academic and career advising.
- ❖ Expose more students to the extraordinary talents of our faculty by, for example, offering signature courses across different majors , departments and schools and by developing courses for undergraduate and postgraduate students in our professional schools.
- ❖ Leverage advanced communication and information technology to improve access to learning experiences of all sorts and to foster innovation in teaching inside and outside the classroom.