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Message from the president

I am pleased to present this year’s report on the implementation of the University of Victoria Strategic Framework, 2018-2023. This is our second opportunity to update the UVic community on the progress we have made and ensures that we continue to uphold our commitment to an accountable and transparent approach to implementation.

The report highlights institutional achievements from the past year, documenting our progress in alignment with the Strategic Framework while also highlighting how our community rose to the challenge of the unprecedented global pandemic. While there is no question that this past year has been unlike any other, all that we have accomplished together in the shadow of the COVID-19 crisis is truly remarkable.

I am reminded that this university’s greatest strength is its talented people working collaboratively towards our mission of education, research and engagement. Thank you to everyone who has contributed to our university's efforts over the past year. I have been grateful for your dedication and flexibility, especially through these recent uncertain times.

This past year we continued to make great progress toward our goal of being the Canadian research university that best integrates outstanding scholarship, engaged learning and real-life involvement to contribute to a better future for people and the planet.

As we emerge from these challenging times, our university’s contributions will be more critical than ever to building a strong and healthy future for our local and global communities. I have every confidence that our extraordinary university is well positioned for its future.

Sincerely,

Professor Jamie Cassels, QC
President and Vice Chancellor
University of Victoria
Territorial acknowledgment
We acknowledge with respect the Lekwungen peoples on whose traditional territory the University of Victoria stands, and the Songhees, Esquimalt and W̱SÁNEĆ peoples whose historical relationships with the land continue to this day.

Background
The University of Victoria’s Strategic Framework 2018-2023 establishes the vision and direction of the university. It outlines six key areas where we as an institution should focus our priorities, goals and efforts. While each area is articulated separately in the Strategic Framework, they all weave together to create a unified guide to our future.

Our strategic priorities
- CULTIVATE AN EXTRAORDINARY ACADEMIC ENVIRONMENT
- ADVANCE RESEARCH EXCELLENCE AND IMPACT
- INTENSIFY DYNAMIC LEARNING
- FOSTER RESPECT AND RECONCILIATION
- PROMOTE SUSTAINABLE FUTURES
- ENGAGE LOCALLY AND GLOBALLY

Embedding the Strategic Framework
The university continues to embed the Strategic Framework across the entire university, building on the efforts of the first year and incorporating the goals into new initiatives. Despite the unanticipated impact of COVID-19 on the university community, we have been able to make important investments in student supports and other areas that further the priorities outlined in the Strategic Framework. Many of those investments are highlighted throughout this report.

Visit uvic.ca/strategicframework for more information about the Strategic Framework.
Highlights from 2019/20

At the University of Victoria, we are deeply committed to contributing to a better future for people, places and the planet. The following examples and graphs, while far from a comprehensive account, demonstrate much of the work we have accomplished during our second year implementing the Strategic Framework toward achieving our mission and goals within our six key areas.

CULTIVATE AN EXTRAORDINARY ACADEMIC ENVIRONMENT

Our goal is to be recognized internationally as a university of choice for talented students, faculty and staff.

People make our university. That’s why our institutional plans, including the recently launched Strategic Enrolment Management Plan, are positioning us to attract, support and develop a diverse community of talented students, faculty and staff. Through equity initiatives, we are building a better and more inclusive campus for everyone.

Figure 1: We have made progress towards our Strategic Enrolment Management (SEM) goal of increasing the percentage of first-time enrolling students who have an entering average of 80% or higher from 79% to 89% by 2024.
Figure 2: We have grown international enrolment to an optimal percentage, given our size. As per SEM, instead of increasing the overall international enrolment of our undergraduate population, we aim to strengthen the diversity and faculty-representation of international students while keeping enrolment at approximately 17%.

Figure 3: The majority of our students come from outside of the Greater Victoria Region. The student housing project currently underway will provide 620 additional beds for students and help make UVic a more welcoming place for new students.
In March 2020, in response to health and safety measures resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic, our campus community changed the way it works, with students, faculty and staff adapting quickly to remote environments. Campus services transformed in order to meet the needs of our students and community, with offices and resources moving fully or partially online. The UVic Libraries, for example, offered remote research support and encouraged book pickup, and Mystic Market switched to takeout food options. Support staff remained on campus to maintain UVic’s infrastructure, keep the smaller on-campus population safe and secure, and support students in residence return home or move to a single building on site.

Since the shift away from predominantly face-to-face course delivery in March in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, significant investments in online learning and teaching have been made to ensure that high-quality academic programs continue to be delivered effectively. By investing in a new Learning Management System and other platforms such as Zoom, Kaltura, Microsoft Teams and CrowdMark, UVic now has a more modern and engaging learning technology ecosystem that will benefit instructors and students post-COVID-19.

UVic is strongly committed to an inclusive and safe campus, and for the ninth time in as many years, we have been recognized as one of Canada’s Best Diversity Employers. We will continue to implement our Employment Equity Plan 2015-2020, with the primary objective of embedding equity, diversity and inclusion in all that we do. A number of anti-racism initiatives are underway, including anti-racism training through the office of Equity and Human Rights; establishing a comprehensive strategy for considering equity, diversity and inclusion in all faculty hiring, promotion and tenure committees; an upcoming symposium on anti-racism; and planned reviews of our discrimination and harassment, human rights and sexualized violence policies. While many efforts are underway, there is a lot more we all can and need to do to advance anti-racism, and we are committed to continuing this work so that all members of our campus community feel safe and welcomed.

UVic students and faculty continue to be recognized through prestigious national awards. This year, two students received 3M National Student Fellowships, and one student received the Pierre Elliot Trudeau Foundation Scholarship. Also this year, two faculty received 3M National Teaching Fellowships. Faculty also received the 2020 Killam Prize in Social Sciences from the Canada Council for the Arts, and the Molson Prize Laureate—the first designer in history to do so.

This year, three faculty members were named President’s Chairs—the university’s highest internal honour to recognize faculty who excel in research, teaching and engagement and who will help to advance Strategic Framework priorities. Additionally, the Strategic Framework Impact Chairs fund will establish four chair positions this year: Ocean Ecosystem Change and Conservation, Indo-Pacific Studies and Engagement, Transformative Governance for Planetary Health, and Indigenous Art Practices. The $1.2 million fund was designed to recruit exceptional new faculty who will lead the way in priority areas identified in the framework.

The short-term UVic COVID-19 Emergency Bursary was established in April 2020 to support students facing financial hardship as a result of the pandemic. These funds assisted students with a range of needs including job loss, housing, food security, tuition, technology for online learning, child care, mental health, and transportation. In total, the university provided over $1.4 million in funding to approximately 2,000 students.

In August 2020, we advanced student mental health supports through our new Student Wellness Centre—which brings together Counselling, Health and Multifaith Services—and through a 24/7 mental health service. The 24/7 program supports UVic students located locally, nationally and internationally by phone, web and on-demand chat, with options for in-person counselling.
ADVANCE RESEARCH EXCELLENCE AND IMPACT

Our goal is to excel in diverse forms of research and creative activity and heighten our place in the top tier of the world’s research universities.

We are working to excel in diverse forms of research and creative activity, advancing human knowledge, improving and enriching lives and tackling global challenges. Our investments in faculty positions, university-wide research initiatives, and a new strategic research plan will help foster high-quality collaborations—heightening our place in the top tier of the world’s research universities.

IN THE TOP GLOBAL RANKINGS

The 2019 QS World University Rankings by Subject place UVic in the global top 300 for research in:

- Computer science
- Earth & marine sciences
- Education
- English language & literature
- Environmental sciences
- Law
- Mathematics
- Philosophy
- Physics & astronomy
- Psychology

The 2019 Leiden University Rankings place UVic #169 worldwide for research impact across all sciences. UVic is also recognized as a global research leader in the following areas:

#53 IN MATH & COMPUTER SCIENCE
#107 IN BIOMEDICAL & HEALTH SCIENCES
#140 IN SOCIAL SCIENCES & HUMANITIES
#248 IN LIFE & EARTH SCIENCES

Figure 4: We are ranked as one of Canada’s leading universities, consistently outperforming our peers—especially for our size. Work is ongoing to improve our international rankings.

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WORKING TO INCREASE SPONSORED RESEARCH FUNDING

**Figure 5:** UVic has an approximately $110 million a year research enterprise. Our sponsored research funding has increased from last year and we are seeing an upward trend in monies received since 2014/15. *Final figures are not available at the time of publication, so best estimates are provided.*

HIRING AND SUPPORTING HIGH QUALITY FACULTY AND LIBRARIANS

**Figure 6:** Faculty renewal hiring over the past five years has been strong. We continue to develop targeted initiatives to recruit and support a diverse and talented community of researchers.
UVic is second among all Canadian universities in citation impact per faculty member (QS Rankings, 2020). UVic-based researchers wrote a higher proportion of top-performing papers based on international collaborations than any other university in North America (Leiden Rankings, 2019). We are ranked as the second-best comprehensive school in Canada for the third consecutive year and have consistently ranked in the top three since this ranking’s inception (Maclean’s, 2020).

UVic researchers pivoted their efforts to help address the COVID-19 pandemic, including the creation of face shields for front-line workers, making wash basins with COVID-19-resistant material, building and testing ventilators, producing hand sanitizer, and 3D printing supplies. After needing to urgently close research spaces on campus for health and safety reasons, UVic began a phased resumption of research and creative activity on our campus.

This past summer, UVic launched the Research Accelerator Fund. Through this fund, donors can effect meaningful change by directly investing in community-engaged research partnerships that contribute to COVID-19 recovery efforts—locally and beyond—as well as future research projects tackling the most challenging social, economic and environmental issues of our time.

A Health Sciences Initiative (HSI) concept paper was released in November 2019. The paper recommends ways to unite health learners, educators and researchers at UVic under a common banner—“advancing lifelong health for all”—and outlines goals and timelines to strengthen partnerships, increase funding for researchers, and create additional programming and funding opportunities for students. The pandemic this year has underscored the importance of vital health research, and UVic intends to be a Canadian leader in this field through the HSI.

Planning has begun for the Strategic Research and Creative Works Plan 2021–2026, a renewal of the current strategic research plan. This creates an opportunity to revisit UVic’s key areas of research, scholarship and creative endeavors, and to recommit to a coordinated strategy to address these areas. The engagement and consultation campaign will commence early October, with a projected completion date of fall 2021.

UVic has an allocation of 41 Canada Research Chairs (CRCs) in the areas of health sciences, engineering, natural sciences, social sciences, law and humanities. In the December 2019 CRC analysis of equity, diversity and inclusion, UVic continued to meet and exceed equity targets for chairholder representation from women, visible minorities, persons with disabilities and Indigenous peoples.
**INTENSIFY DYNAMIC LEARNING**

Our goal is to be Canada's leader in research-enriched and experiential learning.

UVic continues to build on our dual commitment to excellence in teaching and research, working towards our goal of being Canada's leader in research-enriched and experiential learning. In order to ensure every student is able to engage in dynamic learning even during the pandemic, we have made substantial investments in online learning and teaching, and we continue to explore new co-op opportunities.

*Figure 7: This year, in part due to the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, we have seen an overall decrease in co-op placements. There has been an increase in non-profits and municipal employers and a decrease in federal, provincial and private employers.*
Figure 8: Our co-op program is one of Canada’s largest. BC remains the most popular location for work-terms, representing over 80% of all placements. Not surprisingly, international co-op placements are down this year due to health and safety concerns resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic, including travel restrictions.

Figure 9: The Digital Scholarship Commons switched to remote delivery of technology workshops for students, staff and faculty throughout the spring and summer. Compared to the past four months last year, we are teaching more workshop participants online than we were face-to-face on campus.
UVic continues to work to support co-op students and foster new opportunities during the pandemic, including creating **new co-op positions within the university**. This summer, UVic funded 80 new co-op positions to help transition courses to the new Brightspace Learning Management System for the fall. Additionally, we are looking to hire 140 co-op students as leaders in the new Student Engagement Program in September, which will connect upper-year students with incoming students and support online community building.

The new **Business Strategy Internship** program partners undergraduate and graduate co-op students with businesses through a 12- to 16-week internship program, where students develop strategic projects to help restore or pivot business operations in the changing economic environment. This new program is a partnership between the Gustavson School of Business and Mitacs.

The **Experiential Learning Fund** was created in late 2019 to enhance opportunities for students to participate in experiential learning with not-for-profit organizations and NGOs. In spring 2020, the fund supported 17 recipients: 12 in the Faculty of Education and five in Human and Social Development. Eight of the placements were domestic and nine were international. Due to the current travel restrictions, students with international placements will retain their funding for future practicums to be completed within the next 12 months.

We continue to develop and evolve **high-quality academic programs** that align with the priorities set out in the Strategic Framework. This past year, the Ministry of Advanced Education, Skills and Training granted the university approval to offer the Master of Engineering in Industrial Ecology degree. The program is important for supporting clean growth and green jobs in the BC economy. In addition, a new master’s degree program in biomedical engineering was recently approved by Senate.
FOSTER RESPECT AND RECONCILIATION

Our goal is to be a global leader in creating opportunities for Indigenous students and advancing reconciliation.

Launching the world’s first Indigenous law degree program and the appointment of an Associate University Librarian–Reconciliation are just two of the significant steps UVic has taken since launching the Strategic Framework toward becoming a global leader in creating opportunities for Indigenous students and advancing reconciliation.

Figure 10: Since 2009/10, Indigenous student enrolment has grown dramatically, from 973 to 1,145. We continue working towards our SEM 2019 goal of doubling Indigenous enrolment by 2029 so that Indigenous students comprise at least 10% of our overall student population.
Figure 11: UVic surveys all new employees in order to track the university’s progress towards achieving an equitable workforce. Of those surveyed this year, 87 continuing faculty and staff self-declared as Indigenous, an increase of 14 individuals in five years.

Figure 12: We have worked to increase support and opportunities for Indigenous students, including one-to-one support and culturally relevant co-op opportunities. In 2018/19, we expanded our award-winning International Indigenous Co-operative Education Program—the first of its kind in the world.
UVic Libraries is partnering with Indigenous communities and will work to directly address the need to preserve and sustain Indigenous knowledge, as well as introduce Indigenous approaches to knowledge into the daily work of the UVic Libraries. The Associate University Librarian–Reconciliation is a newly created position that will be part of efforts to decolonize the library.

Indigenous students at UVic identified the Elders-in-Residence program as a major support for their university success. The program recently expanded to include three new Elders, enabling the program to go from four days a week to five. The program has adapted to new COVID-19 realities by providing the Elders with iPads to stay connected with students and videotaping cultural protocols to help ensure Elders engage safely.

Over the past 12 months, UVic has hired 12 Indigenous faculty in anthropology, environmental studies, psychology, geography, human and social development, and fine arts. We have also hired 11 Indigenous staff across the university, including an Indigenous Resurgence Coordinator in the Faculty of Fine Arts and an Indigenous Learning Specialist in the Division of Learning and Teaching Support and Innovation.

Our community partnerships have substantially increased this year, with several communities providing language and educational programming, including new partnerships with the Tla’amin, Tseycum and Tsawout Nations. The UVic Living Lab Project also has new community collaborations, and new pathway initiatives brought Indigenous youth from many communities to campus in unprecedented numbers pre-COVID-19.

We welcomed the second cohort of students to UVic Law’s Indigenous joint JD/JID degree. Construction of the new national centre for Indigenous law and reconciliation—an expansion of the Fraser Building—will begin this year and, upon completion in 2023, will welcome students, academics and community members from all nations for engagement, debate and public education.

Consultation with Indigenous leaders and Elders is ongoing for several new capital projects, including the Campus Greenway, student housing and dining facilities, and national centre for Indigenous law and reconciliation. UVic has also updated policies and practices related to building naming and renaming, making it possible to give new and existing buildings names from local Indigenous languages.
PROMOTE SUSTAINABLE FUTURES

Our goal is to be a global leader in environmental, social and institutional sustainability.

UVic has become a global leader in environmental, social and institutional sustainability through research, partnerships and campus policies. We continue to be recognized as one of Canada’s Greenest Employers, and this year we were awarded a Gold rating by the Sustainability Tracking, Assessment & Rating System for a third time since 2014.

![Waste Diverted from the Landfill](chart)

Figure 13: This past academic year was a remarkable one for campus waste diversion. We achieved our waste diversion goal as outlined in our 2014-2019 Sustainability Action Plan, with 76% of waste diverted. Work is underway on a new and revised sustainability action plan.
Figure 14: UVic tracks emissions resulting from buildings, fleet vehicles and office paper. In 2018, the university’s greenhouse gas emissions decreased by 25% below the 2010 baseline but did not meet our target. Emissions are largely dependent on heating demand, and in 2017 and 2018 we experienced colder winter temperatures than in the previous three years. The completion of the District Energy Plant in 2019 provides increased capacity to the heating system. Note that 2019 data is not yet available, as reporting has been put on hold by the B.C. Government due to COVID-19.

Figure 15: Our successful outreach to external donors helps UVic continue to prioritize financial sustainability. Every year we set ambitious goals to increase funds raised from donors, helping to ensure our financial stability. This year, we raised over $19 million from 4,439 donors.
UVic was also recognized for high performance in all remaining areas that we submitted data for: health and well-being, quality education and partnerships.

Figure 16: UVic registered in the top 100 in five of the eight United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in which it was ranked. Overall, UVic ranked 82nd out of 766 participating institutions worldwide in THE’s Impact Ranking.

UVic has adopted a new responsible investment policy with a commitment to reduce the carbon footprint of UVic’s short term investments by 45% and to make impact investments that further the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), with emphasis on promoting sustainable futures and supporting Indigenous economic development. The policy proposes use of investment screening to reduce the portfolio’s carbon emissions, as well as continued use of a responsible investment approach to managing financial risks.

A global impact ranking by Times Higher Education (THE) ranked UVic fourth among the world’s universities for climate action—meaning research and action taken to understand and respond to the global challenge of climate change. The university registered global top 100 in five of the eight United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in which it was ranked, and was also recognized for high performance in the remaining areas.

The final report for the Sustainability Action Plan 2014-2019 highlighted a reduction in operational greenhouse gases by 25%, electrical energy intensity by 13%, and natural gas energy intensity by 22% below the 2010 baseline; reduced campus fleet diesel consumption by 28%; reduced campus fleet gasoline consumption by 9%; and increased campus waste diversion to 76%. We continue to set ambitious targets for both the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions and enhanced sustainability, which will be reflected in a new sustainability action plan currently under development that responds to priorities in the Strategic Framework.
The Climate Solutions Navigator initiative convenes a cross-campus working group with members from at least 15 university departments and research centres to identify and address strategic gaps and opportunities in climate solutions research engagement, awareness and partnerships on campus. The project is supported by UVic’s Strategic Impact Fund.

This fall, UVic will implement the University Drive Connection Pathway, the first major project of the university’s Campus Cycling Plan. The plan is a guide for cycling infrastructure, including bicycle racks and shelters, cycling paths, showers and change rooms on campus, as well as signage and directional strategies to improve comfort and safety on shared paths and roads.

Our five-year development plan is advancing the culture of philanthropy on campus and in the community, ensuring the financial sustainability of the university. This year, we raised approximately $19.12 million from 4,439 donors—surpassing our fiscal goal of $18 million. We continue to build valuable relationships with new donors to grow and diversify our resources through philanthropic efforts.

Work continues on UVic’s new student housing and dining facilities—the largest construction project on campus. It is expected to be fully completed in 2023. The housing project recently received a Net-Zero Energy-Ready Challenge (NZERC) award for its energy efficient design. The facilities are beginning to take shape, and the Modular Dining Facility will be operational in September 2020. This fall, student housing will operate at about 40% capacity due health and safety restrictions related to COVID-19.
ENGAGE LOCALLY AND GLOBALLY

Our goal is to be a preferred partner and leader in local and global engagement.

UVic researchers, faculty, staff and students continue to foster strategic relationships and mobilize knowledge, locally and globally. Even during the pandemic, we have strengthened our connections to the community and are working to enhance our reputation, building off of the success of our faculty and alumni and using The UVic Edge to position ourselves to the world.

Figure 17: To date, we have conferred approximately 135,000 degrees, certificates and diplomas. Strong student supports help to ensure our students succeed—from the newly admitted to alumni.
ALUMNI ENGAGEMENT

BY THE NUMBERS
135,283
Current number of UVic alumni

62
Alumni regions, chapters and networks worldwide

STAYING CONNECTED
61,524
Alumni received the UVic TORCH

62,496
Alumni Monthly e-news recipients

GIVING BACK
$1.7 million+
Donated from 2,464 alumni donors

BUILDING COMMUNITY
98
Volunteers across 32 local, national and international regions

5,295
Alumni donated, attended an event or volunteered

37K+
Social Media engagements across uvicalumni channels

29
Grants awarded by the alumni association

$754
Average amount of alumni grants given

85,000+
People reached across Canada with Kind Mail video

17
Individual Kind Mail videos submitted

Figure 18: Strategic alumni engagement leads to strengthened connections with communities and businesses.

DIVERSIFYING UVIC’S STUDENT POPULATION

Headcount (SUM)

1

Figure 19: In 2019, our international students came from 127 countries; most are from China (1,864 students), followed by the USA (381) and India (339). We aim to strengthen the diversity of international students while keeping enrolment at approximately 17%.
A new **UVic central website** was launched in August for both internal and external audiences. The new website is simple, searchable, mobile-friendly and task-driven. It is also fully compliant with Web Content Accessibility Guidelines, meaning everyone—regardless of physical, cognitive and/or neurological impairments—can easily navigate the website.

UVic is a member of the **Rising Economy Taskforce**, created by the South Island Prosperity Partnership. This task force is a non-government COVID-19-related initiative in the Greater Victoria region that will provide guidance to inform a recovery strategy and measure the pandemic’s impact on key economic assets, assess employment issues, and explore business transitions and new emerging opportunities.

Although much of our regular **community programming and outreach** has been put on hold or scaled back due to COVID-19, new initiatives have emerged this year in response to the pandemic. For example, we launched The Great Indoors online platform, where members of the UVic community can come together to share ideas, have conversations, support each other, and learn from UVic researchers and artists. Featured on this platform is Good Company, a show in which UVic Chancellor Shelagh Rogers chats with faculty, staff and colleagues at UVic.

The **Faculty of Fine Arts** has contributed to the community effort during the pandemic by organizing a phone campaign for seniors in care-home lockdowns, sewing and donating face masks, and delivering groceries as part of the Fernwood NRG’s Good Food Box program. With theatres closed, an alumni group took live theatre to the streets with a mix of students and alumni, and many students recorded their recitals or shifted exhibitions online. Even during a pandemic, the show must go on.

**A final thought**

Despite the impact of COVID-19 on the university community, good progress has been made in implementing the Strategic Framework. The second year of implementation has placed continued effort and emphasis on embedding the framework across the entire university and incorporating the goals into initiatives across the university.

Together, we will emerge from the pandemic as an even stronger and more connected community. Guided by the Strategic Framework, UVic will continue to deliver on our commitments to our people, partners and local and global communities.

Visit [uvic.ca/strategicframework](http://uvic.ca/strategicframework) for more information about the Strategic Framework.