

Strategic Roadmap

Draft #3





OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

Dr. José Luis Cruz Rivera

I am pleased to share Draft #3 of our Strategic Roadmap. This draft is a robust synthesis of our university community's contributions and input over the past six months. I want to extend my sincere thanks to our Strategic Roadmap working group leads, to the dedicated members of the facilitative working groups, and to our entire university community for the countless hours of work, thoughtful engagement, and bold aspirations that have brought this shared vision into sharper focus. This is *our* Roadmap.

In Draft #3, you will see for the first time the **NAU Charter: Equitable Access to Excellence**. Embedded within it is our vision—to be a national leader in delivering equitable postsecondary value to students and the communities they represent. Equitable postsecondary value is the touchstone for our work because it represents all that we aspire to achieve by positively—and equitably—transforming individual lives, propelling economic and social mobility, and supporting community well-being through the power of our educational programs and outcomes.

The Roadmap, including the Charter, is infused with the guiding principles that serve as a foundation for our collective efforts. Throughout, NAU's Strategic Roadmap:

- Builds on the distinctive excellence that defines our student-centered, community-engaged, and broadly impactful work as a university, and commits to trust and transparency in our institutional deliberation and decision-making processes.
- Grounds diversity, equity, inclusion, and justice in all that we do, honoring the diversity of our students, workforce, and state, and prioritizing support for historically underserved and marginalized communities.
- Acknowledges Indigenous Peoples'* unique sovereign legal status and the sacred land on which the university was built and commits to fostering a community that welcomes and contributes to the continued success of Indigenous students, faculty, staff, and Nations through intentional institutional support.
- Values and commits to the advancement of our Hispanic community through culturally responsive institutional support that reflects and honors the lived experiences of our Latino and Latina students, faculty, staff, and university partners.

I believe Draft #3 clearly distills the invaluable perspectives gathered through this planning process into a sharp vision, clear goals, and actionable objectives that, together, present an ambitious blueprint for the future that capitalizes on the many strengths and achievements developed and amassed through 122 years of charting the path and blazing the trail for the people of Arizona and beyond.

As we finalize the Strategic Roadmap, we want to know what you think. I encourage you to share your thoughts and think of ways in which you, our colleagues and stakeholders, can mobilize our community and engage in the critical work ahead. Visit nau.edu/Strategic-Roadmap to share your feedback.

I look forward to your continued engagement, dialogue, and enthusiasm around this bold vision for NAU and to finalizing the Strategic Roadmap this spring to guide our work for the next three years.

In partnership,

José Luis Cruz Rivera
President

*Indigenous Peoples include Native Americans, American Indians, Alaskan Natives, Native Hawaiians, Native Pacific Islanders, and other global Indigenous relatives. Indigenous Peoples also identify with specific Nations, Tribes, Bands, Clans, and Communities.

The NAU Charter: Equitable Access to Excellence

Our **vision** is to be a national leader in equitable postsecondary value—to serve as an engine of opportunity for students and communities throughout Arizona and beyond.

Our **mission** is to provide equitable access to and support for high-quality and impactful academics, scholarship, creative endeavors, and public service to propel economic and social mobility, transform lives, and contribute to the vitality of communities.

Our **distinctive excellence** prioritizes meaningful connections with students and communities to spur positive educational, social, cultural, economic, and environmental outcomes.

Our **actions** will broaden participation, maintain high academic standards, increase attainment, and improve postcollege outcomes, using a tailored and inclusive approach, to meet student needs anywhere they live and learn—with the goal of fostering a more educated, equitable, and just society.

Our **commitment** to diversity, equity, inclusion, and justice is reflected throughout our work as we support Indigenous Peoples, Black/African American communities, first-generation and low-income students; institutionalize our Hispanic-serving efforts; and enhance support for LGBTQIA+, disabled, and other historically underserved and marginalized communities. By engaging talented people from all backgrounds and identities, who seek to meet their full-potential, and strengthening collaborations with P–12 schools, community colleges, and public and private partners, we strive to leverage the power of diversity for a more just, equitable, and sustainable global future for all.

Inclusive Academic Excellence

NAU's high-quality academic programs and the pedagogical excellence of our faculty will foster students' knowledge and capacities necessary for professional success, informed civic engagement, global citizenship, and lifelong learning.

Objectives

1. NAU will **offer a broad portfolio of academic programs** that are responsive to Arizona's social and workforce needs to position our diverse students for postgraduate success.
2. NAU's academic programs and complementary general studies curriculum will **help students gain the knowledge, skills, and intercultural competencies** necessary for professional success, informed civic engagement, global citizenship, lifelong learning, and the promotion of a more just and sustainable future.
3. NAU students will **participate in high-impact learning opportunities** that promote academic excellence, build mentorship relationships that sustain their momentum, and prepare them for postgraduate success.
4. NAU will **offer faculty and staff professional growth opportunities** designed to enhance pedagogical excellence and foster learning environments that support equitable student success and reinforce our reputation for offering a personalized, student-centric education.

Equitable Student Access, Momentum, Attainment, and Postgraduation Success

Grounded in an institutional culture of care with student-centered practices, NAU will provide accessible and affordable educational opportunities with tailored support services that enable students to complete their academic credentials and realize transformative outcomes from their collegiate experience.

Objectives

1. NAU will **provide equitable and unobstructed pathways for student access and educational attainment** through an engaging portfolio of academic programs, responsive admissions policies, and expanded need-based financial aid, resulting in a student population that reflects the state of Arizona and who can benefit from the diverse perspectives of out-of-state and international students.
2. NAU will **increase enrollment and credential attainment** in its statewide and online programs to broaden access and better serve students throughout Arizona and beyond.
3. NAU will **improve retention rates** with evidence-based approaches that are tailored to student needs, increase the number of **high-quality credentials awarded**, and **reduce attainment gaps** across student populations.
4. NAU will **support student economic security and physical and mental well-being** and foster a strong sense of belonging at NAU to facilitate student momentum across our diverse student population.
5. NAU will **provide robust student support** for academic success, career preparation, and other co-curricular programs that contribute to student momentum, positive postgraduate outcomes, and lifelong success.

Commitment to Indigenous Peoples

In honor of the unique sovereign status of Indigenous Peoples and the sacred land on which the university was built, NAU will advance intentional recruitment; culturally responsive educational opportunities and programming; support for faculty, staff, and students; and mutually beneficial partnerships that promote educational attainment and opportunities for Indigenous Peoples and communities.

Objectives

1. NAU will implement culturally responsive best practices to **recruit, retain, and support Indigenous faculty, staff, and administrators** throughout the institution.
2. In partnership with Indigenous Nations and local communities, NAU will **support mutually beneficial community-driven partnerships, engagement, and service.**
3. Through Indigenous Peoples-focused coursework and culturally responsive training and programming, NAU students and employees will **gain knowledge and understanding of Indigenous Peoples'** sovereignty, cultures, contributions, self-determination, and traditional ways of knowing.
4. NAU will **increase enrollment and credential attainment** of Indigenous Peoples through innovative pre-college pathways, community-based recruitment, culturally responsive programming, innovative support, and dedicated campus environments that support the learning, development, and success of Indigenous students.
5. NAU will **promote Indigenous community-driven research, programming, and service activities** with a goal of advancing the work of and commitment to Indigenous researchers, scholars, and artists.

Impactful Research, Scholarship, and Creative Activities

NAU's impactful research, scholarship, and creative activities will provide transformative learning opportunities, engage our diverse students and communities, advance disciplinary and interdisciplinary knowledge, and contribute to solving problems of regional, national, and global relevance.

Objectives

1. NAU will **increase the number and diversity of students engaged in mentored research, scholarship, and creative activities** to broaden access to transformative learning opportunities.
2. In partnership with local and regional communities, NAU will **engage in research and service activities** that promote and enhance individual quality of life, community engagement, and economic opportunity.
3. NAU's areas of distinctive and emerging excellence in research will **advance knowledge and innovation to help solve** issues of regional, national, and global relevance.
4. NAU will **support and recognize excellence in research, scholarship, and creative activities** that contribute to disciplinary and interdisciplinary knowledge, with a focus on contributions that advance the university's mission.

Highly Qualified, Mission-Driven, Diverse Faculty and Staff

NAU will implement strategies throughout its employment practices to support the recruitment, retention, development, and promotion of a highly qualified, mission-driven, diverse workforce. NAU is committed to integrating the identities and lived experiences of its local communities in Arizona and beyond and to cultivating an institutional workforce culture that incorporates Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Justice in pursuit of excellence.

Objectives

1. NAU will **develop, implement, and adequately resource equitable policies and practices** to enhance the recruitment, retention, professional development, and evaluation of highly qualified, mission-driven, diverse faculty and staff, resulting in a **workforce that reflects the backgrounds and lived experiences of our student population.**
2. NAU will **support faculty and staff economic security and physical and mental well-being** to foster a healthy and fulfilled workforce and a mission-driven workplace.
3. NAU will **foster a culture of shared responsibility** for diversity, equity, inclusion and justice-centered institutional practices, and accessibility through the support of Universal Design for Learning approaches.

Mutually Beneficial Community Engagement

NAU will engage and collaborate with local, statewide, and regional communities in a timely and substantive manner to foster mutually beneficial relationships that enhance our students' educational experiences and increase individual, communal, cultural, and economic vitality.

Objectives

1. NAU will **enhance and celebrate its culture of community engagement**, building new and expanding existing mutually beneficial partnerships that support the creation and exchange of knowledge and service throughout Arizona.
2. NAU's academic programs, public service, applied research, and scholarly contributions will **have a beneficial economic and social impact in communities** across Arizona and for the state overall.
3. NAU will **build a robust statewide network** for internships, teaching practicums, and clinical placements that prepare students for the workforce and support Arizona's businesses and communities.
4. NAU will **enhance alumni engagement efforts** to promote student learning, facilitate opportunities, and cultivate a postgraduate culture of engagement and service.
5. NAU's Flagstaff campus will **serve as a regional cultural hub** through its rich arts and cultural experiences, athletic events, and scientific and technological activities to enhance community engagement and economic opportunity.

Effective Stewardship of Financial, Physical, and Virtual Resources

NAU will effectively utilize and continually improve our physical, technological, and financial infrastructure, with a commitment to mission-driven financial investments, sustainable use of environmental and financial resources, and innovative use of technology to propel equity and institutional advancement.

Objectives

1. NAU will **diversify and pursue additional revenue streams** by advocating for public investments at the state and federal levels, strengthening our relationship with the NAU Foundation and other philanthropic organizations, and expanding support for the generation of grants and contracts.
2. NAU will **develop and implement a Physical Campus Master Plan** that effectively reimagines how we utilize and continually improve our physical resources to optimally deliver all aspects of our mission within the context of our New NAU Workplace initiatives, expanded use of our technological infrastructure, and continued commitment to high-contact student learning, service, and support.
3. NAU will **develop and implement a Climate Action Plan** that sustainably achieves carbon neutral operations and provides pedagogical, research, and community engagement opportunities for our students.
4. NAU will **deliver exceptional technological infrastructure and service** for students, faculty, and staff in support of all aspects of our mission to provide an unsurpassed working and learning environment.
5. To set a strong foundation for long-term financial sustainability, NAU will **invest in strategic initiatives** that bolster current and generate new revenue streams and **support our workforce** to accelerate the success of our Strategic Roadmap.

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Effective Stewardship of Financial, Physical, and Virtual Resources

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