



University
of Glasgow

Research Strategy 2036



Introduction

The future will bring exciting opportunities and new challenges, and it will need all of our skills, from those who conduct research to those who facilitate it.

We've demonstrated through the last strategic cycle that our research can thrive despite an uncertain and changing landscape. We've shown our ability to work collaboratively, be creative and support each other to succeed. The pandemic tested our resolve, yet we emerged strongly because of the resilience, commitment and ingenuity of our research community.

Looking back on the last five years, it is clear to me that structuring our research strategy around the three key areas of collaboration, creativity and careers was the right approach – strengthened by our unwavering focus on quality and how we do our research. But we are only at the beginning, and there is much more still to achieve.

Looking ahead, while the future feels more uncertain than ever, I believe that our research, innovation and impact will be instrumental in shaping a positive future. We will achieve our ambitions and sustain progress by adopting a long-term perspective, leveraging what we know works well and making the most effective use of our resources. We will remain responsive and relevant by strengthening our agility, adaptability, organisational effectiveness and willingness to take risks, enabling us to thrive in an ever-changing world.

Our shared commitment to a values-based research strategy reflects a self-confidence that helps us define our own future, providing a framework for our actions that will help us stay focused on long-term priorities over short-term pressures. It also demonstrates our desire to build an environment that empowers us to generate bold new ideas, work collaboratively, build and deepen partnerships, and develop skills and careers. An inclusive environment, enhanced by diverse perspectives, where new ideas and areas of research can emerge and prosper.

By collaborating, unlocking creativity and enabling our people and teams to succeed, we will advance knowledge, address challenges and drive impact.

**Chris Pearce, Vice-Principal
(Research & Knowledge Exchange)**

“ **By collaborating, unlocking creativity and enabling our people and teams to succeed, we will advance knowledge, address challenges and drive impact.** ”

Our research future

This research strategy sets out a long-term and values-based approach to achieve our research aspirations. It provides a vision for our research environment in which we are empowered to be ambitious for ourselves, each other and the University – enabling groundbreaking, rigorous and influential research.

It establishes a framework to ensure a future-ready University, that is adaptive and responsive to the changing landscape; a University *for* the world, transforming lives through ideas and actions.

Over the next decade and beyond, we will pursue big and bold ideas, excelling across all our research endeavours by balancing disciplinary depth with interdisciplinary collaboration, fundamental discovery with real-world application, and curiosity-driven inquiry with mission-driven impact.

Together, these dimensions enrich and reinforce one another, creating a dynamic, interconnected research ecosystem in which individuals and teams can focus, excel and thrive in diverse ways. Achieving this will require deliberate choices about where we lead, where we partner, where we invest and where we focus our efforts to achieve the greatest impact.



From ideas to impact

As a beacon of inquiry, we will place fundamental research and disciplinary strength at the heart of our broader research and innovation ambitions. From this foundation, we will bring together expertise and resources to tackle bigger challenges and expand the reach and pace of our impact, within and beyond academia, recognising that our research ultimately serves society.

We will explore the interfaces between disciplines, embedding interdisciplinarity across the University and creating opportunities for perspectives and breakthroughs that no single field can achieve alone. We will develop new ways of working with cross-sector partners, embedding co-production so that research is shaped from the outset by those who will put it into practice, including through deeper and more strategic engagement with industry.

Translation will be a defining strength of our research. We will build the skills, infrastructure and support needed to turn ideas into innovations, technologies, policies and cultural contributions that deliver tangible benefit for society, the economy and the environment.

We will underpin these ambitions with the highest standards of good research practice, ensuring rigour, reproducibility, compliance and trust. At the core, is an unwavering commitment to research excellence, where quality is valued over quantity, guiding our recruitment, promotion, and appraisal processes.

Culture and environment

Great research flourishes in a supportive, inclusive and collegial environment; one where a positive research culture enhances quality, attracts and retains diverse talent, and strengthens our reputation. That culture draws strength from valuing the differences in people, perspectives and contributions, and recognising them as assets that enable us to succeed together.

For ideas and knowledge to flourish, we will nurture an environment that safeguards academic freedom, protects the essential right to conduct research and express ideas, and encourages open dialogue. We will support emerging ideas and invest in areas with the potential to become distinctive strengths. Our commitment to open research, engagement and public participation will ensure our ideas are widely shared, tested and strengthened, accelerating our ability to advance knowledge and create impact.

Progress sometimes involves difficult trade-offs across priorities and perspectives. We will recognise these tensions and make informed, values-led decisions that enable us to pursue our ambitions responsibly.

Our commitment to environmental, social and economic sustainability will remain integral to how we conduct and apply our research, reflecting our responsibility to the planet and society.

Civic and global engagement

Our University was founded for the benefit of Glasgow and its people, and this deep civic purpose continues to shape us. Today, we align our research with the strengths and priorities of the city and Scotland, working with local government, industry, public services and communities to strengthen the region and position it as an engine for growth and talent for the UK.

Our international outlook is a defining feature of our University. We work with leading institutions and partners

worldwide, building strategic institutional alliances and supporting vibrant individual collaborations that extend the reach and impact of our research. Built on trust, equity, mutual benefit and a shared commitment to research excellence, these partnerships foster shared learning, address common challenges and deliver meaningful change. In a rapidly changing world, they strengthen our resilience and position us as an engaged and valued partner in global research networks.



Our strategic priorities

This research strategy builds on the strong momentum of our previous plan, with **Collaboration** as a key *enabler*, **Creativity** as the *energy* that unlocks ideas and **Careers** as our *commitment* to the people whose talent keeps our research thriving. Together, they give us the platform to drive progress. Yet this is not simply more of the same. We are sharpening our focus and adapting how we work to excel in a changing and uncertain research landscape.

These priorities are supported by our **guiding principles for research**. They set expectations for research quality, how we work and how we enable our people and teams to succeed.

Central to this is how we do our research, as it builds the culture, integrity and trust that underpin great research.

We value research quality over quantity.

How we do our research matters.

We succeed through the success and resolve of our people and teams.



Collaboration

Working together to tackle bigger challenges

Collaboration expands our horizons, accelerates discovery and fuels innovation. We are forging stronger connections within and beyond our University, bringing people together in dynamic teams and building strategic consortia that connect people, expertise, ideas and resources.

We will build purposeful collaborations across disciplines, sectors, institutions and borders that bring fresh perspectives, enabling us to tackle bigger challenges and address more complex research questions.

We will work with partners on projects built on shared ownership and trust, enhancing the quality and relevance of our research, opening new routes to impact, and enabling us to shape and respond to new opportunities. Our collaborative strength will create the conditions for innovation and enterprise, enabling us to translate research into solutions that shape policy, enrich culture, strengthen the economy and improve lives.

Whether in our city or in diverse global settings, we work with other researchers and communities to develop programmes that are locally relevant, culturally informed and equitable. Through this place-based approach, our work will be shaped by context but not limited by geography.

Meaningful collaborations are not always easy to initiate, sustain or manage. We will bring our disciplines, partners and people together in new and creative ways, investing in the structures, training, leadership, incentives and support needed to embed collaboration and interdisciplinarity as core elements of our research environment. As the nature of collaboration evolves, we will embrace novel approaches and harness technologies to strengthen our networks, open new opportunities for innovation and drive translation, ensuring that we remain open, engaged and connected as the landscape becomes more complex and fragmented.



Creativity

Unlocking great ideas

Creativity is at the heart of great research, unlocking new ideas and driving innovation. It fuels our solutions and breakthroughs that not only respond to today's questions and challenges but also uncover new problems and reveal uncharted territories to explore.

The path our research takes is rarely smooth or linear. It requires space, patience and ambition. Exploring bold ideas carries uncertainty, and not every path leads where expected. We will create the conditions for ideas to emerge, be shared, tested and refined, increasing their potential to be adopted widely and deliver lasting benefit.

We will foster an environment where researchers feel confident to take intellectual risks, knowing that outcomes, even when unexpected, can yield lessons that spark future breakthroughs.

Building on our strengths, convening power and infrastructure, we will sustain an ecosystem that nurtures creativity, connects people and resources, and accelerates translation. We will foster the entrepreneurial mindset and creative process that help turn ideas into research-led innovation, investing in the people, spaces and programmes that make this possible. Within this creative environment, we value the many ways

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our research contributes to knowledge, solutions and culture, and see turning insight into impact – whether through discovery, adaptation or application – as an integral part of our work.

Digital technologies such as artificial intelligence (AI), high-performance computing, digital twins and immersive environments are reshaping the research landscape and becoming an increasingly integral part of the creative process. They are changing how we work, what we can do with data and how we visualise, simulate and share complex ideas. As a result, they enable us to uncover insights more quickly, speed up discovery and open new lines of inquiry. We will equip our community to harness these tools responsibly, ensure human creativity, critical thinking and ethics remain at the heart of our research, and shape how AI-enabled research is validated, governed and trusted.

We will create a more integrated research support ecosystem by streamlining systems and processes, reducing barriers and investing in the tools, data and infrastructure needed to support new and evolving ways of working. In doing so, we will create the time and space for our community to think, create and collaborate.



Careers

Helping each other to succeed

Our people are our knowledge creators and greatest asset. We foster an inclusive environment that inspires ambition, encourages bold ideas, supports collaboration and enables everyone to develop their skills and careers. We are committed to attracting, developing and retaining outstanding people from diverse backgrounds, and to building both individual careers and strong teams with clear expectations, transparent progression and opportunities at every stage. Our goal is clear: to make Glasgow the best place to build a research-related career.

The University's Talent Lab offers a rich portfolio of development opportunities, fostering leadership across career stages. We will enhance it to help people navigate a research landscape shaped by global challenges, rapid technological change, a drive for sustainability and the increasing importance of innovation, translation and collaboration.

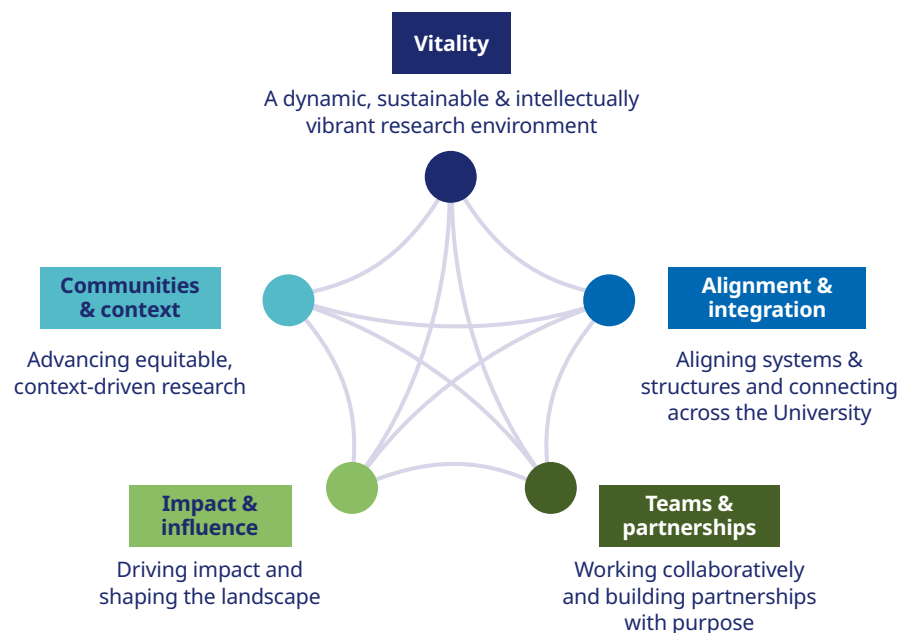
We will strengthen the skills and confidence needed to succeed in collaborative and interdisciplinary settings, while deepening expertise in turning ideas into impact: shaping policy, influencing culture, creating solutions and driving innovation through enterprise, knowledge exchange and co-production. We will equip our community to work effectively with partners across sectors, shaping research from the outset so it delivers tangible benefit, and to communicate and engage with the public to build trust, understanding and participation. With a greater emphasis on team development and leadership, we will ensure our people have the tools and support to contribute, collaborate and thrive.

Our research community – whether postgraduate students, researchers or colleagues who support and enable research – is at the heart of our research ecosystem. We will provide a supportive and enabling environment in which all can flourish, ensure research-related careers remain attractive to future generations and celebrate the impact of those who shape knowledge, society and culture within and beyond Glasgow and academia.

Strategy delivery

The success of this 10-year research strategy depends on purposeful initiatives and a shared commitment across all parts of the University, from colleges and schools to centres and cross-cutting activities. Delivery is shaped around five **drivers for strategic advancement** that guide our institutional actions and focus attention on what we need to do differently. We will review these regularly, adapting our approach as contexts change, and remaining nimble, bold and willing to try new approaches without undue fear of failure. The strategy is delivered through a close partnership between colleges, schools and our central services. It is anchored in a shared set of values and priorities, supported by institution-wide expertise, investment and programmes, and realised locally in ways that reflect disciplinary context and opportunity.

Drivers for strategic advancement



Vitality

A dynamic, sustainable and intellectually vibrant research environment

Empowers us to collaborate across disciplines, unlock bold ideas and support people at every stage. We achieve vitality by investing in emerging and distinctive strengths, outstanding talent, infrastructure and culture, building the capacity and resilience for Glasgow to lead nationally and globally.

Alignment & integration

Aligning systems & structures and connecting across the University

Ensures our strategy is delivered consistently across the university and allows collaboration, creativity and careers to flourish. By scaling interdisciplinary initiatives, creating a new model for research centres, aligning systems and embedding our guiding principles, we build an agile and values-driven research environment ready for future challenges

Teams & partnerships

Working collaboratively and building partnerships with purpose

Great research happens when people work together with trust and shared ambition. We build strong teams and long-term partnerships across disciplines, sectors and geographies, creating the conditions for research that is more ambitious, more relevant and more impactful than any one of us could achieve alone.

Impact & influence

Driving impact and shaping the landscape

We will make translation, engagement and influence integral to the research process, embedding pathways to impact, aligning our work with societal challenges and building the skills and partnerships that extend its reach. By demonstrating these benefits and contributing actively to the policy and funding landscape, we will strengthen trust, relevance and recognition locally, nationally and globally.

Communities & context

Advancing equitable, context-driven research

Our research is strengthened when it responds to the communities and contexts in which it is carried out. We work with partners locally, nationally, and around the world to co-create knowledge that reflects diverse needs and perspectives, ensuring our research is responsive to its setting, equitable in its partnerships and contributing solutions to challenges facing societies.



Key initiatives

1

Strengthen research excellence and support emerging ideas

We will make deliberate institutional choices to prioritise research quality and integrity, and back bold ideas with the potential to deliver major breakthroughs, sustained excellence and strong REF outcomes.

Primary driver:

Vitality

Secondary drivers:

Impact & influence

Integration & alignment

Outcomes:

Sustained improvement in research quality and integrity across disciplines; REF outcomes that reflect depth and quality rather than volume; stronger pipeline from bold ideas to major external funding and recognition; the ARC operating as a dynamic hub for collaboration and creativity, where bold ideas are formed, tested and developed into major research programmes.

2

Support and catalyse areas of distinctive strength

We will identify, invest in and connect areas of distinctive research strength that position UofG for leadership nationally and globally, ensuring focus by concentrating investment where we can achieve critical mass and global distinction, and making deliberate choices about where to prioritise our efforts.

Primary driver:

Vitality

Secondary drivers:

Integration & alignment

Teams & partnerships

Outcomes:

A clearly articulated set of nationally and globally distinctive research strengths, with critical mass, visibility and leadership; growth in major centres, hubs and flagship programmes anchored in these strengths; clear external recognition of the research areas in which UofG leads nationally and globally.



3

Scale challenge-led and interdisciplinary research

We will embed challenge-led and interdisciplinary approaches across our research portfolio while prioritising a small number of significant pan-institutional programmes tackling global and national challenges, linking discovery to application and innovation.

Primary driver:

Integration & alignment

Secondary drivers:

Impact & influence

Teams & partnerships

Outcomes:

A small number of high-profile, challenge-led programmes operating at scale; increased success in large, interdisciplinary and mission-driven funding; clear pathways linking discovery research to application and impact; greater coherence across colleges in addressing shared challenges.

4

Nurture outstanding talent and positive culture for excellence

We will attract, develop and retain researchers through the Talent Lab, Fellowships Framework and Doctoral Academy; strengthening leadership and career pathways, and how we do our research.

Primary driver:

Vitality

Secondary drivers:

Teams & partnerships

Integration & alignment

Outcomes:

UofG recognised as an attractive place to build a research-related career; stronger leadership and team capability across career stages.



5

Turbocharge strategic partnerships (industrial/national/global)

We will build a portfolio of deep, purposeful, long-term collaborations with academia, industry, government and third-sector partners, nationally and globally, to deliver major research programmes, secure funding and deliver tangible societal outcomes.

Primary driver:

Teams & partnerships

Secondary drivers:

Impact & influence

Integration & alignment

Outcomes:

A portfolio of deep, long-term strategic partnerships across sectors; increased leadership of major consortia and collaborative bids; faster and more effective translation of research through trusted partners; recognition of UofG as a partner and convener of choice.

6

Invest in research infrastructure

We will develop sustainable, future-ready research infrastructure, data and AI capacity, and shared technology platforms to enable interdisciplinary research and efficient, environmentally responsible research.

Primary driver:

Integration & alignment

Secondary drivers:

Vitality

Teams & partnerships

Outcomes:

Future-ready research spaces, platforms and technical capability aligned to priorities; stronger data, AI and computing capacity accessible across disciplines; more efficient and sustainable use of research infrastructure; infrastructure that actively enables interdisciplinary and collaborative research.

7

Streamline systems, governance and research management

We will ensure systems and processes support our ambitions, deliver operational efficiency, help diversify funding, improve cost recovery, simplify and strengthen compliance and good research practice and ensure long-term institutional resilience.

Primary driver:

Integration & alignment

Secondary drivers:

Vitality

Impact & influence

Outcomes:

Reduced friction and duplication in research processes and decision-making; stronger compliance, integrity and risk management across the research lifecycle; improved cost recovery and financial resilience; research systems that support agility rather than constrain it.

8

Steward a resilient, diverse and sustainable research portfolio for long-term impact

We will make deliberate, evidence-informed decisions about our research mix, funding sources and investments to reduce dependency, manage risk and sustain excellence over the long term. This will include active decisions on where to grow, sustain, partner or phase down activity.

Primary driver:

Integration & alignment

Secondary drivers:

Vitality

Impact & influence

Outcomes:

A more balanced and diversified funding portfolio with reduced dependency on a particular source of research funding; clearer institutional oversight of investment and funding decisions; alignment between ambition, resources and strategic priorities.



9

Embed translation, impact and policy engagement

We will make translation, impact and policy engagement integral to our research practice, strengthening co-production, innovation, skills and the evidence and communication of impact.

Primary driver:

Impact & influence

Secondary drivers:

Teams & partnerships

Communities & context

Outcomes:

Translation, co-production and engagement embedded from the outset in research programmes; stronger and more diverse pathways to societal, economic and cultural impact; clear, credible evidence of impact recognised by funders and the public.

10

Champion responsible research, integrity and trust

We will position research integrity, ethical governance, environmental sustainability and responsible use of emerging technologies as core institutional strengths, building trust with partners, funders and society.

Primary driver:

Integration & alignment

Secondary drivers:

Vitality

Impact & influence

Outcomes:

High levels of trust with funders, partners, regulators and society; clear and effective governance for ethical, sensitive and AI-enabled research; environmental sustainability embedded in research design and delivery.

11

Anchor research in place, community and equitable global partnerships

We will position UofG's research as deeply connected to its city, region and global contexts, working through long-term, equitable partnerships that deliver shared benefit and locally and globally relevant impact.

Primary driver:

Communities & context

Secondary drivers:

Teams & partnerships

Impact & influence

Outcomes:

Strong, trust-based, place-based research partnerships; research demonstrably contributing to regional growth and wellbeing; equitable, long-term global partnerships with shared benefit and mutual learning; recognition of UofG as a leader in context-driven and responsible research.

In addition, the University will take forward a separate series of initiatives linked to our bold innovation ambitions.

We are
World-Changing
Glasgow.