Nicolaus Copernicus University in Toruń

Strategy 2021—2026

Foreword – assumptions for the NCU Strategy

The Nicolaus Copernicus University is constantly developing. Our community is made up of ambitious people for whom continuous improvement, setting new goals and responding to the evolving challenges of the world around us are an integral part of everyday life. This is why we have been awarded the status of a research University under the Excellence Initiative - Research University programme (IDUB). We operate successfully in an international environment, which is confirmed by our membership in the European consortium - Young Universities for the Future of Europe (YUFE).

We are proud of our past. At the same time, we look to the future - we set ourselves clear, ambitious goals and point out the best way to achieve them. We find enthusiasm and motivation in ourselves, know how to monitor our progress and learn from inevitable mistakes. We understand that development and the pursuit of excellence are a constant and never-ending process. Hence, we have worked out the NCU Strategy, which is the primary development policy document for the coming years. We would like it to become a guide for our entire community, both for those who manage the University and make key decisions and those who contribute to its development through their academic and professional achievements. The NCU Strategy is also a guarantee of credibility and predictability for the University's current and future partners planning cooperation with one of Poland's best and largest universities.

Rector Magnificus – Strategy Team

We seek solutions to important problems facing civilisation by conducting scientific, artistic and medical activities, providing education and transmitting universal values.

Strategy Map of the Nicolaus Copernicus University 2021—2026

Vision 2026

The Nicolaus Copernicus University is one of Poland's leading wide-profile European research universities. Thanks to its talented staff with recognised achievements, it is a renowned and highly valued partner in the international scientific community. The University's momentous research achievements, which cross the boundaries of scientific disciplines and fields, respond to the global challenges of the future.

The University is a friendly, open and inclusive environment for academic, artistic and medical development and sharing universal values. Professional career paths, shaped according to European standards, and the support and integrity of the community attract the best candidates.

The University prepares students for working and taking initiatives in a dynamically changing world according to the highest standards. It combines learning with developing social competencies and educates in a personalised and interdisciplinary way. The University employs modern technologies, draws on the potential of international partnerships and provides opportunities for lifelong learning.

The University supports local communities with knowledge and the application of intelligent solutions. As a major academic partner, it stimulates the economic development of urban areas, local administration and business in Toruń, Bydgoszcz and the Kuyavian-Pomeranian region. The University cares for public health by undertaking medical activities. It is a socially committed and culture-forming institution.

The University is managed in an autonomous and strategically coherent manner. It attaches importance to the continuous improvement of the organisation, the role of leaders at every level, multi-directional communication, digital management support and the entire community's sustainability.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES	OPERATIONAL OBJECTIVES
I. Strengthen the University's position through outstanding scientific achievements that address the challenges of the future, a talented and motivated staff and strong partnerships in the international academic space.	**I.1.** Improve the efficiency of the University's research activities by taking advantage of the opportunities under the IDUB programme, particularly for the sustainable development of scientific disciplines and the strengthening of priority research areas. **I.2.** Optimise the use and development of the scientific potential of the University community members by creating an open and welcoming environment for scientific activity. **I.3.** Build the position of the University as a valued partner in the international scientific space. **I.4.** Identify and address local and global societal challenges by applying interdisciplinary solutions. **I.5.** Increase external funding for scientific activities from national and international sources.
II. Provide education that prepares for functioning and taking initiatives in a dynamically changing world by individualising development paths, making use of modern technologies and international experiences and offering tailored complementary forms of education.	**II.1.** Implement a modern model of personalised and engaging education based on diversity. **II.2.** Develop and promote interdisciplinary education and link it with conducted scientific activities. **II.3.** Link the educational offer and content to the challenges of the future, the needs of the society and the labour market. **II.4.** Strengthen the international attractiveness of education at the Nicolaus Copernicus University and the mobility of students and doctoral candidates. **II.5.** Ensure appropriate conditions for the provision of education at the highest level.
III. Increase the University's role and strengthen its image as an institution open to cooperation with the environment, creating knowledge and innovative solutions, providing high-class expert services, including medical ones, socially engaged and culture-creating.	**III.1.** Develop dialogue and cooperation standards with external partners. **III.2.** Increase the transfer of knowledge and the scale of innovative projects conducted by the NCU in social and business partnerships. **III.3.** Raise motivation and develop the adequate competencies of staff, students and doctoral candidates to deepen their relations with the environment. **III.4.** Ensure organisational conditions for effective cooperation between the University and the social and business environment. **III.5.** Strengthen the University's image as a knowledge-creating, socially engaged and culture-forming institution.
IV. Sustainably develop an open and inclusive organisational culture in line with the University's international aspirations, in which objective assessment, trust, mutual support and community integrity attract the best and strengthen links with the University.	**IV.1.** Implement a professional and proactive personnel policy, including planning, improvement, evaluation and professional promotion processes. **IV.2.** Systematically develop the competencies of employees. **IV.3.** Increase the commitment of academic and support staff through a flexible and motivating salary scheme. **IV.4.** Strengthen identification and build lasting ties within the University community. **IV.5.** Promote openness and collaboration as key values of the NCU inclusive organisational culture based on multidirectional communication.
V. Enable the use of the University's potential in a changing environment through management that emphasises continuous improvement, the role of responsible leadership at every level, support for modern technologies and the sustainable development of the entire community.	**V.1.** Implement a unified University management model based on self-development and advanced data analysis. **V.2.** Strengthen the leadership model oriented to support employee performance and team development. **V.3.** Provide advanced technological and administrative support for the University's key processes. **V.4.** Strengthen the sustainability of the University by ensuring, in particular, long-term autonomy and financial stability. **V.5.** Make optimal use of and upgrade the University's infrastructure to achieve its strategic objectives.

Our CREDO

To seek the truth in all things
— Nicolaus Copernicus

„Veritas in omnibus quaerenda est"
De revolutionibus orbium coelestium, 1543

We are a classical university with a sense of mission. We address major challenges and universal human issues in the activities we undertake. We are open to the world; therefore, we treat the diversity of views, attitudes, experiences and paths to the truth as an inspiration and an opportunity for development.

We seek solutions to important problems facing civilisation by conducting scientific, artistic and medical activities, providing education and transmitting universal values.

We are committed to educating wise, creative and resourceful people responsible for themselves and others to achieve individual success and become leaders in civil society.

We wish to work actively for the common good of the region, the citizens of Toruń and Bydgoszcz, and our academic community.

We strive for excellence in all areas of the University's operation.

Culture

Transmitting knowledge about the material and spiritual heritage of humanity, caring for its development and enrichment, as well as maintaining the highest moral and professional standards in conducted activities

Research

Conducting scientific and artistic activities at the highest level, influencing the directions of development in science and arts and shaping the perception of the world

Education

Providing modern and effective education based on up-to-date knowledge that results from scientific activities conducted at the University

Diversity

Developing relations and partnerships as well as drawing on diversity as a source of strength and inspiration

Openness

Being open to the free exchange of ideas and challenges facing the University which, strong in its tradition, is open to change

University Heritage

The University sees its historical heritage in the lifetime work and attitude of Nicolaus Copernicus, the great patron of the University. Homage to Toruń's most eminent citizen, a great astronomer and Renaissance humanist, is also a commitment for our community to serve the truth by using our knowledge and skills to seek, disseminate and defend it regardless of circumstances and consequences.

The heritage of Polish universities is part of our tradition. It starts with the Krakow Academy and its branch in the north of the country, the Chełmno Academy, the first university in northern Poland operating during the 17th and 18th centuries. The Nicolaus Copernicus University in Toruń is also regarded as the spiritual successor of the Polish universities: the Stefan Batory University in Vilnius and the Jan Kazimierz University in Lviv. The story of people who came to Toruń more than 70 years ago due to the geopolitical changes in Europe and overcame the now unimaginable hardships of post-war reality to start everything from scratch and create a university gives us the strength and enthusiasm for action. We proudly recall those who worked at the universities of Vilnius and Lviv, who instilled in us a respect for tradition and academic values and the courage to stand up for freedom, human rights and university autonomy during the crucial years of Polish history.

The legacy of the Ludwik Rydygier Medical University in Bydgoszcz, incorporated into the University in 2004, are an important part of our contemporary history.

As a signatory of the "Grand Charter of European Universities" and the "Krakow Charter", the Nicolaus Copernicus University in Toruń remains faithful to the fundamental principles that constitute the University and its identity.

The University's activities are conducted following universal ethical principles and rules of conduct established in the tradition of European universities. The essence of these is the freedom of scientific research and teaching content, academic autonomy, and the right to organise in unions and associations.

University Vision in 2026

The Nicolaus Copernicus University is one of the country's leading wide-profile European research universities. Thanks to its talented staff and recognised achievements, it is a renowned and highly valued partner in the international scientific community. The University's significant research achievements, which transcend the boundaries of scientific disciplines and fields, respond to the global challenges of the future.

The University is a friendly, open and inclusive environment for academic, artistic and medical development and the transmission of universal values. Professional career paths, shaped according to European standards and the support and integrity of the community attract the best candidates.

The University prepares to function and take initiatives in a dynamically changing world at the highest level. It combines the acquisition of knowledge with the development of social skills. It educates in a personalised and interdisciplinary way. It utilises modern technologies and the potential of international partnerships and enables lifelong education.

The University supports local communities with knowledge and application of intelligent solutions. As a significant academic partner, it stimulates the economic development of urban areas, local administration and business in Toruń, Bydgoszcz and the Kuyavian-Pomeranian region. The University cares for public health by undertaking medical activities. It is a socially committed and culture-forming institution.

The University is managed in an autonomous and strategically coherent way. It attaches importance to the continuous improvement of the organisation, the role of leaders at every level, multi-directional communication, digital management support and the entire community's sustainability.

Strategic objectives

AREAS FOR SHAPING THE VISION AND STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

Science

Education

People

Relations

Management
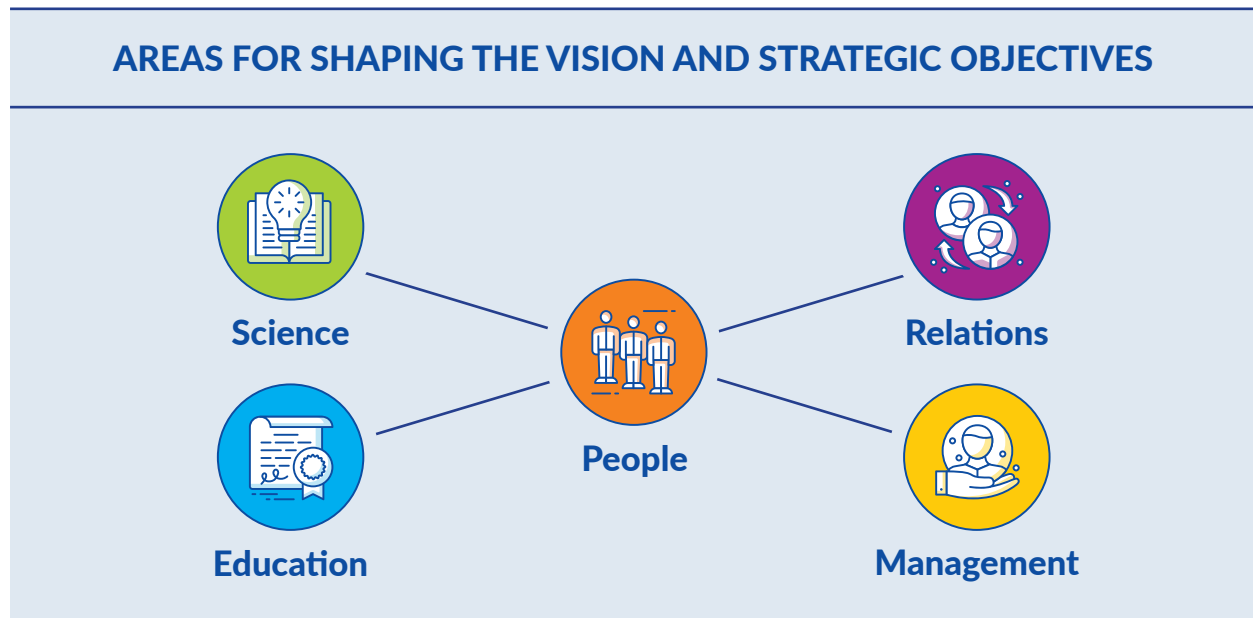
I Strengthen the University's position through outstanding scientific achievements that address the challenges of the future, a talented and motivated staff and strong partnerships in the international academic space.

II Provide education that prepares for functioning and taking initiatives in a dynamically changing world by individualising development paths, making use of modern technologies and international experiences and offering tailored complementary forms of education.

III Increase the University's role and strengthen its image as an institution open to cooperation with the environment, creating knowledge and innovative solutions, providing high-class expert services, including medical ones, socially engaged and culture-creating.

IV Sustainably develop an open and inclusive organisational culture in line with the University's international aspirations, in which objective assessment, trust, mutual support and community integrity attract the best and strengthen links with the University.

V Enable the use of the University's potential in a changing environment through management that emphasises continuous improvement, responsible leadership at every level, support for modern technology and sustainability of the entire community.

Science

Vision

The Nicolaus Copernicus University is one of the country's leading wide-profile European research universities. It confirms its high position in national science, ranking among the top ten universities in Poland, and is fully prepared to maintain its status as a research University (IDUB).

The Nicolaus Copernicus University is a recognised and significant University in Europe, especially in priority research areas developed in the University's centres of excellence. It is a participant in the international research space thanks to its recognised staff and doctoral students who participate in prestigious projects and scientific events. It has numerous achievements of high scientific and artistic significance, many of which result from international cooperation.

The University is a valued partner in several international solid research networks and, in selected scientific disciplines, takes on the role of a leader of scientific initiatives around which new networks are being built. The University creates optimal conditions for the international cooperation of its employees. The academic staff view international relations, including visits abroad, as a valuable source of new experience and a valuable element of their career development.

An essential part of the University's scientific activity is interdisciplinarity pursued within scientific fields and interdisciplinary cooperation. Thanks to this, the University is involved in projects that address complex civilisational challenges.

The Nicolaus Copernicus University has been developing sustainably. Research areas in which it can compete or be a leader at least on a national scale are effectively-identified, supported and promoted. The University's scientific activities respond flexibly to the country's and region's current social and economic needs. This is facilitated by the coupling of knowledge transfer and commercialisation with science at every stage of research work.

The University has a comprehensive system for managing research infrastructure, which ensures its optimal use and, thanks to cooperation with domestic and foreign partners, also creates opportunities to utilise previously unavailable equipment as part of joint research projects.

The University pursues a policy of diversifying its sources of income for research and development of its scientific staff, including significantly strengthening its efforts to obtain national and international grants.

Strategic objective I

I   Strengthen the University's position through outstanding scientific achievements that address the challenges of the future, a talented and motivated staff and strong partnerships in the international academic space.

Operational objectives

I.1   Improve the efficiency of the University's research activities by exploiting the opportunities under the IDUB programme, particularly for the sustainable development of scientific disciplines and the strengthening of priority research areas.

I.2   Optimise the use and development of the scientific potential of the University community members by creating an open and welcoming environment for scientific activity.

I.3   Build the NCU's position as a valued partner in the international scientific space.

I.4   Identify and address local and global societal challenges using interdisciplinary solutions.

I.5   Increase external funding for scientific activities from national and international sources.

Operational objectives and key actions

I.1 **Improve the efficiency of the University's research activities by exploiting the opportunities under the IDUB programme, particularly for the sustainable development of scientific disciplines and the strengthening of priority research areas.**

- **I.1.1.** Implement a comprehensive NCU research policy and coherent programmes to develop individual disciplines.
- **I.1.2.** Enhance the functioning of centres of excellence, developing emerging fields and research groups at the University.
- **I.1.3.** Improve the management of the research process at the NCU by implementing an internal quality assurance system for research activities.
- **I.1.4.** Reconstruct the rules for the internal distribution of research funds, taking into account the sustainability of the University and the disciplines.

I.2 **Optimise the use and development of the scientific potential of the University community members by creating an open and welcoming environment for scientific activity.**

- **I.2.1.** Improve the competencies of the research staff and doctoral students in organising and conducting scientific and publishing activities through tailored training and dissemination of good practices.
- **I.2.2.** Enhance the support for research and project management by increasing the availability of specialised administrative staff.
- **I.2.3.** Broaden access to and optimise the use of modern research infrastructure, including literature, digital and computational resources.
- **I.2.4.** Create a support system for thematically diverse research groups and their funding mechanisms within organisational units.

I.3 **Build the position of the University as a valued partner in the international scientific space.**

- **I.3.1.** Support the initiation and development of individual relations of academic staff and doctoral students with the staff of other academic units in Poland and abroad.
- **I.3.2.** Develop research cooperation with renowned scientific institutions, including scientific consortia.
- **I.3.3.** Define clear roles and responsibilities for activities related to the internationalisation of research.

I.3.4. Ensure the friendly organisation of academic staff visits and work from outside the University.

I.3.5. Actively promote the scientific achievements of the University in the academic world and beyond, particularly in English.

I.3.6. Enhance the support of academic staff and doctoral students in conducting effective scientific communication, including publications in foreign languages.

I.4 **Identify and address local and global societal challenges by applying interdisciplinary solutions.**

I.4.1. Respond rapidly to emerging societal challenges by launching new research projects and supporting strong research teams focused on these challenges.

I.4.2. Support interdisciplinary, inter-institutional research teams proposing innovative solutions and implementing research results, particularly for local communities.

I.4.3. Provide conditions for the efficient operation of modern centres specialising in socially and culturally important research areas and delivering professional services.

I.5 **Increase external funding for scientific activities from national and international sources.**

I.5.1. Implement an effective model to support female researchers in obtaining, managing and settling grants and conducting international scientific cooperation.

I.5.2. Introduce a transparent bonus system for academic staff, doctoral students and support staff for obtaining funds and settling scientific research from external sources.

I.5.3. Support the acquisition of funds for scientific activities from private entities by taking advantage of fundraising activities.

Education

Vision

By providing education at the highest European level, the Nicolaus Copernicus University creates unique and comprehensive opportunities for individual development and achievement of high professional competencies for all students.

The education model at the NCU emphasises shaping the individual learning path in a conscious and personalised manner; students are encouraged to make free use of the University's wide educational offer according to their interests and predispositions. The Nicolaus Copernicus University emphasises cross-disciplinary and inter-disciplinary education and educational modules involving students in the works conducted by research or creative teams.

The University offers an educational model based on the holistic view of a human being, combining the acquisition of knowledge and intellectual skills with the development of social and emotional competencies as well as effective communication, self-organisation, creative problem solving, entrepreneurship and professional use of ICT technologies.

The professionalism and potential of the teaching staff and the University's own Academic Excellence System ensure high quality of education. We find it crucial to closely link education with research, especially in priority areas, through strong cooperation with university centres of excellence. Modern teaching infrastructure also meets high standards, while new technologies and methodological tools complement the educational process. The University attaches importance to the extra-curricular experience by creating a friendly and inspiring environment for development.

Thanks to its attractive scientific and teaching offer, recognisable brand, identity, and tradition, the University attracts and creates unique opportunities for talented people. The offer of degree programmes is proactively designed to anticipate

the needs of the future labour market and respond to social and economic challenges on a regional and national scale. The University is continuously improving its offer of lifelong learning by providing a wide range of postgraduate studies, courses, training sessions, and other short forms of education.

The Nicolaus Copernicus University is open to people from abroad, striving for the widest possible international relations. The educational offer includes an increasing number of modules taught in a foreign language, and there are more and more talented students and young researchers from abroad pursuing their education as part of summer schools, workshops and doctoral schools. Thanks to cooperation within the framework of foreign partnerships and European programmes, the NCU offers its students education at numerous universities abroad, double diplomas and the unique potential under the YUFE European University partnership.

Strategic objective II

II Provide education that prepares for functioning and taking initiatives in a dynamically changing world by individualising development paths, making use of modern technologies and international experiences and offering tailored complementary forms of education.

Operational objectives

II.1 Implement a modern model of personalised and engaging education based on diversity.

II.2 Develop and promote interdisciplinary education and link it with conducted scientific activities.

II.3 Link the teaching offer and content with the challenges of the future, the needs of the society and the labour market.

II.4 Strengthen the international attractiveness of education at the Nicolaus Copernicus University and the mobility of students and doctoral candidates.

II.5 Ensure appropriate conditions for the provision of education at the highest level.

Operational objectives and key actions

II.1 **Implement a modern model of personalised and engaging education based on diversity.**

II.1.1. Ensure the compatibility of the concept of education provided at the University with the vision of comprehensive lifelong human development and implement it in the curricula and teaching offer.

II.1.2. Develop key competencies, particularly social and emotional competencies as well as self-organisation, creative thinking, entrepreneurship, and digital competencies.

II.1.3. Enable and promote co-designing by students of their individual educational paths and make the rules for organising their studies more flexible.

II.1.4. Increase the use of activating, engaging and team-based methods of education.

II.1.5. Implement modern educational methods, tools and technologies and improve and enrich the teaching infrastructure.

II.1.6. Increase accessibility of education for persons with special educational needs.

II.2 **Develop and promote interdisciplinary education and link it with conducted scientific activities.**

II.2.1. Ensure linking the educational content with scientific activities.

II.2.2. Develop an offer for the development of particularly gifted persons, strengthening their research competencies and involving them in scientific activities, in particular in doctoral schools.

II.2.3. Extend the interdisciplinary educational offer, including cross-disciplinary courses.

II.2.4. Promote an interdisciplinary approach to planning personal development that prepares for the challenges of the future.

II.2.5. Introduce organisational mechanisms supporting cooperation of faculties in providing interdisciplinary education.

II.2.6. Support the establishment of interdisciplinary scientific societies and closely link their activities with the research conducted at the University.

II.3 **Link the educational offer and content to the challenges of the future, the needs of the society and the labour market.**

II.3.1. Regularly analyse the needs of the environment as well as changes and trends in the labour market.

II.3.2. Increase the practical teaching workload based on identified needs of the labour market.

II.3.3. Ensure effective implementation of dual degree programmes, internships, work placements and commissioned diploma theses thanks to partnerships with entities from the socio-economic environment.

II.3.4. Allow recognised certification of specific qualifications acquired as part of education at the NCU.

II.3.5. Develop and promote the offer of complementary forms of education linked to higher education degree programmes, the needs of the society and the labour market.

II.4 **Strengthen the international attractiveness of education at the Nicolaus Copernicus University and the mobility of students and doctoral candidates.**

II.4.1. Develop regular forms of education for foreign nationals, including summer and winter schools and the offer of programmes and modules in English.

II.4.2. Facilitate intercultural, communication, psychological and organisational adaptation for foreign nationals.

II.4.3. Identify and remove mobility barriers for students and doctoral candidates as well as support and promote mobility.

II.4.4. Strengthen the promotion of international offers, including short mobility forms, at the level of recruitment, degree programmes and doctoral schools.

II.4.5. Significantly increase the involvement of the entire University community in activities arising from the participation in YUFE and other international partnerships.

II.5 **Ensure appropriate conditions for the provision of education at the highest level.**

II.5.1. Make use of the experience and good practices resulting from the NCU's international relations to improve the quality of education.

II.5.2. Ensure active participation of key stakeholders in defining and improving the concept of education.

II.5.3. Increase the efficiency of collecting, processing and using data on the educational process.

II.5.4. Update and develop methodological competencies of the teaching staff and disseminate the best teaching practices.

II.5.5. Provide comprehensive support for the professional and personal development of persons pursuing degree programmes, preparing doctoral dissertations and undertaking other forms of education.

Relations
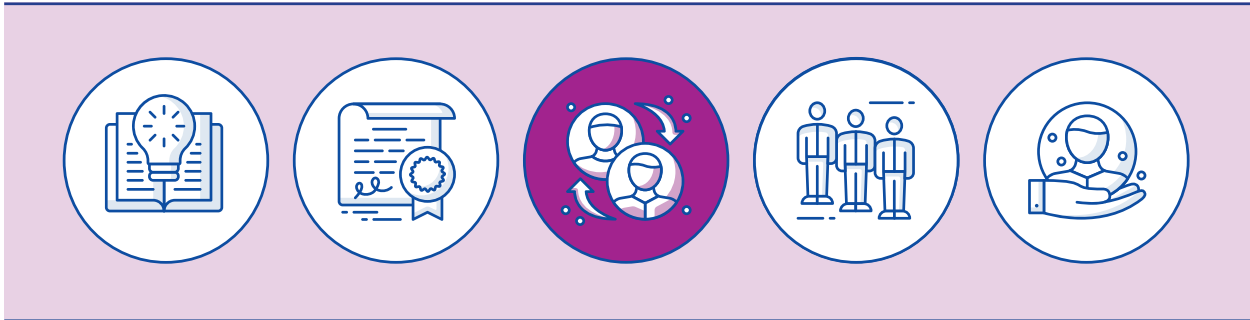
Vision

The Nicolaus Copernicus University is a leading academic partner for cooperation in sustainable development and innovation for cities, local government and business, especially in the Kuyavian-Pomeranian region. Strong commitment and high priority given to the development of relations with Toruń, Bydgoszcz and the region has met with appreciation and generated valuable social and economic initiatives.

The University offers a wide range of research and expert services that are attractive to external entities. It is a strong commercialisation centre thanks to successful implementations of R&D results. The NCU effectively protects intellectual property, enabling the implementation of research and development projects in cooperation with significant business entities and the local government. The Centre for Academic Entrepreneurship and Technology Transfer facilitates the creation of innovations and their transfer to the economy, conducts patenting and strengthens academic entrepreneurship. These activities actively support innovation and project managers as well as special purpose vehicles supporting University spin-off companies.

The University offers degree programmes that make it easier for students to start their professional careers by taking into account the needs of employers and enabling them to recruit competent staff. Strong and lasting ties with graduates, drawing on their experience and promoting their achievements, are an essential element of the University's culture.

In its relations with the environment, the University relies on transparent procedures, effective communication, and good practices of combining research and internal interests with the market. The Nicolaus Copernicus University has a training system to raise the awareness of its researcher regarding knowledge transfer and possibilities of implementing the results of their research as well as an incentive system to support implementation activities. The University is actively working to

deepen partnership cooperation with institutions in Bydgoszcz and other scientific centres.

The Nicolaus Copernicus University continues its culture-forming role as an animator and patron of important cultural events in the region. The University is also a natural center for disseminating knowledge by promoting attitudes of active participation and conscious reception. It runs the University School of Secondary Education, the Open University, the Children's University and the University of the Third Age. The NCU serves the community as a highly credible advisory institution promoting rational decision-making methods.

In fulfilling its mission, the University is committed to solving important civilisational and social challenges. The University is active in improving the quality of life and health care based on reliable scientific research and modern clinical facilities. Employing good international practice, the NCU supports local communities with expertise and application of solutions in all areas of knowledge and technology important to the residents of Toruń, Bydgoszcz and the region.

Strategic objective III

III Increase the University's role and strengthen its image as an institution open to cooperation with the environment, creating knowledge and innovative solutions, providing high-class expert services, including medical ones, socially engaged and culture-creating.

Operational objectives

III.1 Develop dialogue and cooperation standards with external partners.

III.2 Increase the transfer of knowledge and the scale of innovative projects conducted by the NCU as part of social and business partnerships.

III.3 Increase motivation and develop appropriate competencies of staff, students and doctoral candidates to deepen relations with the environment.

III.4 Ensure organisational conditions for effective cooperation between the University and the socio-economic environment.

III.5 Strengthen the University's image as a knowledge-creating, socially engaged and culture-forming institution.

Operational objectives and key actions

III.1 **Develop dialogue and cooperation standards with external partners.**

III.1.1. Develop and implement a comprehensive policy for the University's relations with external stakeholders.

III.1.2. Improve the terms and forms of cooperation with external entities by regularly analysing the needs of individual groups of stakeholders and the level of satisfaction.

III.1.3. Select and develop effective channels of multidirectional communication with stakeholders.

III.1.4. Ensure the highest quality of relations with key partners in the socio-economic environment through dedicated representatives and central and faculty teams monitoring and supporting these collaborations.

III.2 **Increase the transfer of knowledge and the scale of innovative projects conducted by the NCU as part of social and business partnerships.**

III.2.1. Identify the potential of the University's infrastructure, research and staff competencies for implementation activities and expert services.

III.2.2. Prepare a comprehensive, interdisciplinary offer of scientific and educational cooperation between the University and its socio-economic environment oriented towards the challenges of the future, the needs of the society, the economy and the labour market.

III.2.3. Manage the NCU's service portfolio and value proposition by updating the offer of cooperation with external stakeholders.

III.2.4. Create new opportunities for commercialisation and expert services by providing information on research and international best practices in areas of interest to partners.

III.2.5. Develop cooperation with business environment institutions of key importance for the region.

III.3 **Raise motivation and develop adequate competencies of staff, students and doctoral candidates to deepen their relations with the environment.**

III.3.1. Encourage openness to external relations, pro-innovative and entrepreneurial attitudes in the University community.

III.3.2. Systematically motivate the staff, students, doctoral candidates and persons undergoing training to cooperate with the socio-economic environment by taking into account evaluation and reward mechanisms.

III.3.3. Develop the competencies of the university community members in entrepreneurship and innovation, project management, self-organisation, and social and communication competencies.

III.3.4. Support innovation and innovation-oriented activities of University staff through mentoring, networking and other activating forms.

III.3.5. Enhance students' and doctoral candidates' development linked to cooperation with entities from the social and economic environment and facilitate a flexible combination of studies and work.

III.4 **Ensure organisational conditions for effective cooperation between the University and the social and business environment.**

III.4.1. Develop and adequately equip a specialised team for supporting the activities to initiate and manage the cooperation of the NCU as part of partnerships.

III.4.2. Implement transparent and simple procedures for undertaking and conducting cooperation with the socio-economic environment and a clear division of responsibilities and competencies in this regard.

III.4.3. Shorten decision-making and settlement time and ensure cost-competitiveness within joint ventures.

III.4.4. Organise legal support for cooperation initiatives with the socio-economic environment and review the management of industrial property rights within this cooperation.

III.4.5. Increase the implementation readiness of the results of research work by obtaining external funds and allocating NCU special funds for this purpose.

III.4.6. Enhance diverse forms of academic entrepreneurship through a permanent incubation programme.

III.5 **Strengthen the University's image as a knowledge-creating, socially engaged and culture-forming institution.**

III.5.1. Implement the programme to promote the NCU image by adjusting the promotion instruments to the defined target groups.

III.5.2. Regularly disseminate knowledge by emphasising that the NCU is taking up the challenges of the future, supports the sustainable development of local communities, and harmonises with the natural environment and the urban ecosystem.

III.5.3. Take initiatives and co-create social, cultural and sporting events that integrate the NCU community and the citizens of Toruń and Bydgoszcz.

III.5.4. Strengthen the University's position as an essential animator of culture and arts in the region and the country, including support for the development of student culture.

People
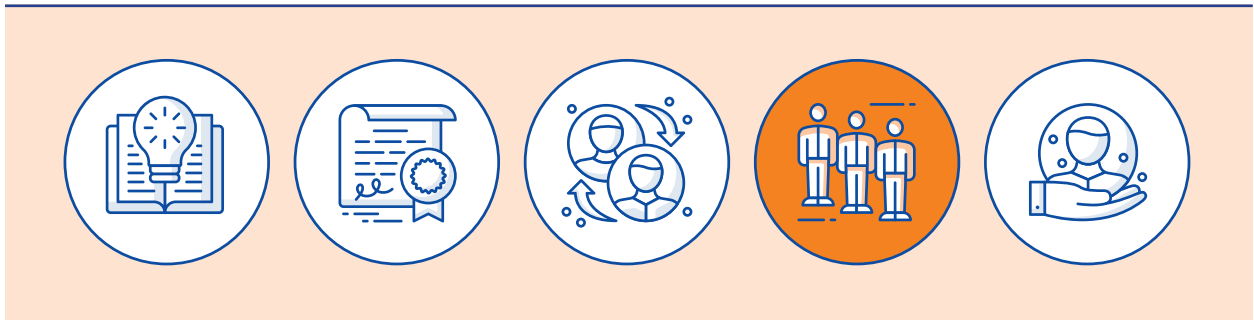
Vision

The Nicolaus Copernicus University serves people and develops thanks to them. It is a communal and friendly environment for scientific, artistic and medical development as well as for education and transmission of universal values.

The University employs persons with recognised achievements as well as young scientists by creating the best conditions for the development of their research and creative activity. The University builds broad and lasting partnerships in the international academic community and focuses on developing top talent. These activities result in increased interest and development of international scientific cooperation.

The University has a specialised administration unit, which provides comprehensive supports for employees in their professional development and competence improvement. The University ensures equal opportunities for all staff by objectively assessing their contribution to particular areas of the University's activity. Recruitment and performance evaluation criteria stimulate the development of the University's scientific and teaching potential.

The Academic Career Development Model defines assessment rules by taking research and teaching paths into account. The model adapts best practices and international standards for the purposes of the University, including the fully implemented HR Excellence in Research standard. The proportions of involvement in research, education and relations with the socio-economic environment are flexibly shaped, according to the predispositions of the staff and the needs of the University. With effective administrative support in place, researchers are able to focus more on their academic activities and international With effective administrative support in place, researchers are able to focus more on their academic and international outreach.

Equal attention is paid to the professional achievements of administrative and other support staff at the NCU by applying development standards and assessment criteria

appropriate for these teams. The University is guided by the principle of integrity, paying particular attention to effective cooperation of various organisational units as well as research, teaching and support staff.

When planning and selecting forms of staff development, the University draws on competence models and individual professional development plans. Exceptionally high requirements are placed on the qualifications of the University's management staff, which translates into the quality of the work of the units and teams they lead. The University's organisational culture is open and inclusive, and the diversity of worldviews, languages and intellectual perspectives is a valued asset. It is a sustainability-oriented culture in which all stakeholder groups are treated subjectively. The University has an anti-discrimination policy and promotes mediation skills and a culture of dialogue and social solidarity.

The Nicolaus Copernicus University is a responsible employer committed to ensuring decent wages and working conditions for its staff. Apart from appropriate social conditions and scholarship programmes, students and doctoral candidates benefit from scientific and professional mentoring, coaching and psychological support. The University also helps persons in difficult life situations and maintains lasting ties with NCU graduates and retirees.

The university community engages in health and environmental campaigns and sports-related programmes alongside the community of the cities and the region. Both students and employees take part in cultural and sporting events as well as social and integration initiatives. The university contributes to the unique academic atmosphere of Toruń and Bydgoszcz.

Strategic objective IV

IV Sustainably develop an open and inclusive organisational culture in line with the University's international aspirations, in which objective assessment, trust, mutual support and community integrity attract the best and strengthen links with the University.

Operational objectives

IV.1 Implement a professional and proactive personnel policy, including planning, improvement, evaluation and professional promotion processes.

IV.2 Systematically develop the competencies of employees.

IV.3 Increase the commitment of academic and support staff through a flexible and motivating salary scheme.

IV.4 Strengthen identification and build lasting ties within the University community.

IV.5 Promote openness and collaboration as key values of the NCU inclusive organisational culture based on multidirectional communication.

Operational objectives and key actions

IV.1 **Implement a professional and proactive personnel policy, including planning, improvement, evaluation and professional promotion processes.**

IV.1.1. Adopt the rules of long-term, active personnel policy based on supporting people in their development and objective evaluation.

IV.1.2. Coherently manage human resources by defining the roles of research, research and teaching and supporting staff in the form of appropriate career paths.

IV.1.3. Improve the quality of work of academic teaching staff through a system of periodic assessment taking into account criteria appropriate to defined career paths, specific roles at the University and the specificity and development programmes of disciplines.

IV.1.4. Manage support staff's performance and work quality through a periodic assessment system.

IV.1.5. Enhance the professionalism of academic staff recruitment based on reliable verification of competencies, open and transparent criteria of the HR Excellence in Research standard, and taking into account the specificity and development programmes of disciplines.

IV.1.6. Improve the rules of vertical and horizontal promotion for academic and support staff based on transparent and performance-related criteria.

IV.1.7. Optimise HR structure and plans by monitoring the number and potential of the University's staff in relation to the vision of its development.

IV.2 **Systematically develop the competencies of employees.**

IV.2.1. Introduce a standard of support for employees based on a constant dialogue with superiors in the form of individual development plans.

IV.2.2. Develop and disseminate the use of competence models as positive models of improvement, useful for managers and team leaders.

IV.2.3. Periodically diagnose the competencies and development needs of the academic and support staff, including the use of modern analytical technologies.

IV.2.4. Coordinate and make coherent all forms and programmes of development support, taking into account the objectives of the University, the needs diagnosis, and the segmentation of stakeholders.

IV.2.5. Increase the efficiency of competence development through long-term planning and by actively informing employees about the available development opportunities and the rules for obtaining them.

IV.3 **Increase the commitment of academic and support staff through a flexible and motivating salary scheme.**

IV.3.1. Reward the commitment and achievements of academic staff by using flexible salary mechanisms.

IV.3.2. Motivate employees by awarding them with extra non-financial benefits in their faculties based on uniform and transparent rules.

IV.3.3. Additionally reward those involved in the commercial activities of the University, depending on the results of these activities.

IV.3.4. Disseminate information about salary and non-salary benefits and other forms of support available at the University.

IV.3.5. Support staff commitment by improving the quality of tools and working conditions in positions which require them.

IV.4 **Strengthen identification and build lasting ties within the University community.**

IV.4.1. Build and promote among the community members the image of the NCU as a European University with a unique identity, providing its stakeholders with excellent opportunities for development.

IV.4.2. Build and strengthen links with the University community through structured activities during recruitment and adaptation, the entire period of education or work and after completion.

IV.4.3. Strengthen the community's identification with the University through participatory programmes and mechanisms.

IV.4.4. Promote the activity and academic and personal success of staff, students and doctoral candidates.

IV.4.5. Form and strengthen links with alumni, promote their achievements and encourage them to support the University.

IV.5 **Promote openness and collaboration as key values of the NCU inclusive organisational culture based on multidirectional communication.**

IV.5.1. Implement a human resources policy based on the principles of equality and prevent all forms of discrimination and mobbing.

IV.5.2. Improve internal communication by ensuring a multi-directional flow of information and developing effective forms, channels, and communication skills of employees.

IV.5.3. Ensure the availability of information on the results of research and organisational activities at the University, including improving communication within faculties at every organisational level.

IV.5.4. Nurture the integrity of the University by strengthening teamwork and removing barriers to internal collaboration.

Management

The Nicolaus Copernicus University is a fully autonomous and efficiently managed academic institution with adequate competencies and instruments for implementing its strategic objectives. Strategic management is supported by analyses of the University Centre for Strategic Analysis, opinions of the University Council and external expertise.

The development of the University and the implementation of structural and functional changes result from the constant pursuit for excellence in all spheres of its activity. Unit heads and the University managers monitor the teams' achievements and systematically evaluate them according to a consistent set of criteria applied for the entire University. As a result, the management can identify and implement corrective initiatives, improvements or development objectives for the next period.

The University actively manages risk by systemically monitoring the achievement of objectives and developing the capacity to respond proactively to changing environmental conditions. Financial and investment policies are transparent and subordinated to the University's development priorities. The NCU secures the financial basis of its autonomy and growth through an increasing share of non-subsidy income in the University budget.

The management model at the NCU combines concentrated leadership that ensures controllability of the entire institution with trust placed in the competence and independent decision-making of those responsible for the tasks assigned to individual organisational units. Roles, decision-making powers and management relationships are precisely and clearly defined.

The Nicolaus Copernicus University implements management styles, forms of managing teamwork, project methodologies and process improvement consistent with the University's organisational culture. Communication within and beyond the

University is systemically supported, effective and multi-directional, with leaders communicating in a manner that facilitates achievement and collaboration. Mangers, both in the areas of research and education as well as administration, understand the employee perspective and are interested in their suggestions for improvement.

The University's administration makes effective use of an integrated management system, electronic document flow and other modern IT and communication solutions. This ensures that basic, repetitive processes run smoothly and are partly automated. The University places emphasis on the effective implementation of its environmentally friendly policy. Administrative procedures are being significantly simplified and the developed operating systems are user-friendly.

Specialised administrative teams contribute to the University's achievements by providing high-quality support, well adapted to the specificities of projects and international challenges.

Strategic objective V

V   Enable the use of the University's potential in a changing environment through management that emphasises continuous improvement, the role of responsible leadership at every level, support for modern technologies and the sustainable development of the entire community.

Operational objective

V.1   Implement a unified University management model based on self-development and advanced data analysis.

V.2   Strengthen the leadership model oriented to support employee performance and team development.

V.3   Provide advanced technological and administrative support for the University's key processes.

V.4   Strengthen the sustainability of the University by ensuring, in particular, long-term autonomy and financial stability.

V.5   Make optimal use of and upgrade the University's infrastructure to achieve its strategic objectives.

Operational objective and key actions

V.1 **Implement a unified University management model based on self-development and advanced data analysis.**

V.1.1. Manage by setting objectives and monitoring their achievement by improving the management control model and process.

V.1.2. Make an inventory of internal self-development systems and related management data sources.

V.1.3. Integrate the University's key management systems whilst retaining their best features in a single model.

V.1.4. Define roles, decision-making powers and management relationships precisely and transparently.

V.1.5. Improve the risk management process for achieving the University's objectives.

V.1.6. Ensure consistency with the University's current strategy by reviewing objectives in units and optimising organisational structure.

V.1.7. Launch the University Centre for Strategic Analysis responsible for preparing strategic analyses in the University management process.

V.2 **Strengthen the leadership model oriented to support employee performance and team development.**

V.2.1. Define a leadership model for each level of the organisation.

V.2.2. Develop appropriate for academic leaders in leading teams and supporting employee performance.

V.2.3. Strengthen the autonomy and responsibility of employees and involve them in improving the functioning of the organisational unit.

V.2.4. Encourage knowledge sharing and implementation of best practices among managers.

V.2.5. Nurture a new generation of academic leaders by identifying and enhancing leadership talents.

V.3 **Provide advanced technological and administrative support for the University's key processes.**

V.3.1. Support the management of scientific activity by implementing an analytical system based on a common database.

V.3.2. Improve electronic handling of the educational process and student affairs.

V.3.3. Modernise the teaching process through remote and adaptive learning technologies.

V.3.4. Integrate and streamline financial, accounting and human capital management processes by implementing a digital ERP solution.

V.3.5. Simplify procedures through full digitisation of document flow and automation of repetitive processes.

V.3.6. Streamline administrative support by creating specialised units with a matrix structure.

V.3.7. Manage organisational knowledge and ensure staff substitutability in the administration by securing the transfer of knowledge and good practices.

V.4 **Strengthen the sustainability of the University by ensuring, in particular, long-term autonomy and financial stability.**

V.4.1. Improve management of the University's assets, including identification of possible savings.

V.4.2. Standardise finance management at the University.

V.4.3. Actively seek funding from external sources at all organisational levels and in all areas of activity.

V.4.4. Ensure a minimal carbon footprint by incorporating internal environmental impact assessment into University decision-making processes.

V.5 **Make optimal use of and upgrade the University's infrastructure to achieve its strategic objectives.**

V.5.1. Assess the potential and degree of use of currently available infrastructure and standardise its management.

V.5.2. Gain access to unique elements of infrastructure through University partnerships.

V.5.3. Improve the energy efficiency of facilities by reducing energy losses and increasing the use of renewable energy.

V.5.4. Expand accessibility of architecture as well as of social infrastructure and elements of "small infrastructure" with the natural environment, well harmonized with natural environment.

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