

Executive Summary

As one of Canada's top research-intensive universities, the University of Calgary provides an intellectually rich environment that supports innovation, creativity, and discovery. At the core of this environment is the community of scholars and researchers who are engaged in the activities that characterize excellence in research. This excellence in research is at the core of the University of Calgary's *Strategic Research Plan*. The purpose of the plan is to prepare for, guide, and support research excellence. Excellent research influences understanding, creates new knowledge and applications. It meets the highest peer-reviewed and ethical standards and has results that are broadly disseminated and have implications and applications that benefit humanity and the natural world. These properties lead to the defining characteristic of excellent research: It makes a difference.

The Strategic Research Plan, as one of the University's institutional plans, is aligned with the values and principles found within the *Academic Foundations: Principles to Guide University Planning (2009)* document and the broader planning framework and decision-making processes of the University of Calgary. The orientation of the Strategic Research Plan follows from the academic principles elucidated in the Academic Foundations document. These are:

- Student success
- Excellence in research, scholarship and creative activity
- Interdisciplinary education and research
- Return to community.

The Strategic Research Plan is organized under four Cornerstone Strategies that are designed to advance the research mission of the university in significant and measurable ways. These are:

1. Supporting and rewarding research excellence wherever it is found
2. Identifying current areas of established, emerging and potential research excellence
3. Building research bridges through interdisciplinarity, collaboration, and partnership
4. Enhancing domains of research leadership through Institutional Development Priorities

The first Cornerstone Strategy represents our overarching approach for the advancement of research excellence within the institution. Planned actions include the development of key performance indicators for research in 2010 and the development of a research needs survey that will document our most pressing research needs and enable us to track progress in fulfilling them. This Cornerstone Strategy includes the important development initiative of expanding our seed grant program to enable increased participation and success in Tricouncil competitions. We will also develop a university-wide research mentorship program and greatly enhanced administrative support for research.

The second Cornerstone Strategy focuses on the process of excellence identification itself. Faculties will present annually their current areas of potential, emerging, and established research excellence from which foci of research strength across the university are identified. Currently the six Foci of Research Strength at the University of Calgary are:

- Advancing Health and Wellness
- Communication, Culture, Language, and Learning
- Ethics, Social Responsibility, and Governance
- Information Systems and Technologies
- Sustainability of Energy and Environment
- Understanding Life on Earth

In the third Cornerstone Strategy, we lay out plans for the manner in which these Foci of Research Strength can serve as the platforms for the development of collaborative initiatives, advancements in

interdisciplinarity, and the development of engaged scholarship initiatives. This Cornerstone Strategy also underlines the role that research centres and institutes within the university can play in innovation and interdisciplinarity.

The fourth Cornerstone Strategy outlines our plans to enhance the research leadership through Institutional Research Development Priorities. Institutional Research Development Priorities are time-limited foci of university research investment. The research initiatives that may become Institutional Research Development Priorities are typically large-scale and often interdisciplinary. Institutional Research Development Priorities often require very significant investment of university resources. Thus, at any one time, Institutional Research Development Priorities will be relatively few in number. The current Research Development Priorities at the University of Calgary are:

- Energy and Environment
- Biomedical Engineering
- Public Policy

The Strategic Research Plan and appendices will be reviewed annually in consultation with the academic units to ensure that the strategies remain in correspondence to the individual priorities and objectives of the University community. Major revisions to the SRP will occur in consultation with the University community.