

Guru Nanak Dev University

Strategic Plan

Introduction

Guru Nanak Dev University was established in the year 1969 to mark the five hundredth birth anniversary of Shree Guru Nanak Devji. Since its foundation, the University has risen to be amongst the top Universities of India besides acquiring a global status and has maintained a steady march to achieve academic and high quality research calibre and a respectable reputation worldwide. The University has been conferred with 'Category-I' status by MHRD, Grade 'A++' and 'University with Potential for Excellence' by NAAC. Since its initiation, the University has focused upon bettering itself continuously through incorporation of a long term vision and devising methodologies in line with a strategic plan of action. The strategic plan of the University intends to be a guiding light and a beacon that is driven by the universally renowned philosophy and teachings of the great avatar, Guru Nanak Devji. Under its aegis, the University has steadily marched on towards enhancing academic excellence, producing and disseminating professional knowledge and carving a niche for itself as an undisputable leader in accessible and egalitarian higher education outreach.

Vision of the University

Guru Nanak Dev University, founded on the sacred name of Shree Guru Nanak Dev ji, has and derived its motto, '*The lamp of the Guru's wisdom illuminates*' from the teachings of the great avatar. Since then the University has striven to imbibe and uphold the timeless wisdom and values in all its endeavours.

'The University aspires to impart quality education beyond the confines of any form of disparity, become a harbinger of research excellence and innovation while continuously striving forward to be recognized as an exemplary global institution producing world class human capital and knowledge that empowers, enlightens and leads to societal betterment.'

Mission Statement

As such the mission of the University, as also reflected in its objectives and duties mentioned in *The Guru Nanak Dev University Amritsar Act 1969* affirms;

- *To make provision for imparting education and for promoting research in the humanities, learned professions, sciences, especially of applied nature, technology and such other branches of learning and courses of study as it may think fit.*
- *To undertake study and research on the life and teachings of Guru Nanak Devji and their cultural and religious impact in the context of Indian and world civilizations.*
- *To promote Punjabi studies, culture and literature and provide for its research and development.*
- *To enable spread of University Education among classes and communities which are educationally backward.*

Strategic Action Plan; Sustainability Development Goals (SDGs) and the National Education Policy 2020

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development covers a wide array of inter-related goals, including good health and well being, quality education, poverty eradication, economic growth, environmental sustainability and social inclusion for all people by 2030. Recognizing the relevance and the need to align itself with the attainment of SDG goals, the new National Education Policy, 2020 has made a bold and transformative shift as is visible in its quote, *‘The global education development agenda reflected in the Goal 4 (SDG4) of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, adopted by India in 2015 - seeks to “ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all” by 2030. Such a lofty goal will require the entire education system to be reconfigured to support and foster learning, so that all of the critical targets and goals (SDGs) of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development can be achieve.’* Thereby it is clear that the education policy proposes revamping the education system in line with the aspirations of the SDGs and prepare grounds for realization of the same. The University recognizes that the time has come when institutions of higher education as itself must play a pro-active and exemplary role in this mammoth task of global sustainability accomplishment through the SDGs.

A robust academic eco-system is vital to deliberate, brain storm, engage and sustain the seventeen SDGs and what they intend to achieve. Universities as already developed spaces of learning, research and experimentation have an edge over other sectors as the catalyst is already in place for planting and nurturing the essence of the SDGs into an achievable blueprint. As such, Guru Nanak Dev University has set its intent on becoming a harbinger of

the SDG paradigms through partnerships, research collaborations and containment in curriculums.

Deepen Engagements with SDGs; Unraveling the University's intent

In order to deepen engagements with the SDGs, the University aims to bring SDG goals at the centre stage of its educational agenda. Some of the pre-requisites within its administrative and academic architecture to make this commitment consequential and creditable are listed below.

- i) A revolutionary and radical shift of educational paradigms/goals from the current skill enhancement based to SDG based sensitivity and proficient knowledge and skill development.
- ii) Realignment of existing and creation of new Faculties and disciplines with the SDGs as the nucleus of knowledge production, innovation and experimentation.
- iii) The administrative structures of the University and its core and peripheral policies be devised with the purpose of attaining SDG aims.
- iv) Create a division of the University Internal Quality Assurance Cell (IQAC) which carries out special audits and prepares benchmarks for compliance of SDG based education, research and innovation.
- v) University as a forerunner of change must lead by example by adhering and applying all that is required for the materialization of the SDG aims within the institution, regional campuses and affiliated colleges such as creating a green eco-friendly campuses, providing equitable access to education for all, adopt a system of sustainable consumption of resources, promote and exhibit *institutional social responsibility* (similar to corporate social responsibility as in case of the corporates).
- vi) The University must assume leadership in strengthening public and organizational engagement and participation in targeting and addressing the SDGs. It should initiate and promote multi-stakeholder partnerships and collaborations by leveraging its position to build and conduct an outreach amongst all sections that constitute the society.
- vii) The University must build a robust system to lead policy, decision making and advocacy in context of the SDGs and also assume the role of dynamic pressure groups for implementation of SDG biased policies and directives.

Targeting SDGs through a five tiered approach

Having brought the SDGs to the centre stage and at the heart of future directives and agenda, the University proposes to contribute to the same through its five tiered approach as elaborated below. The SDGs can be grouped under four clusters, i.e, Social, Environmental, Economic and Institutional and these shall form the core to be targeted through the five tiered approach;

- (i) Academic progression and erudition
 - (ii) Efficient governance and financial management
 - (iii) Innovation, collaboration and social outreach
 - (iv) Environment enrichment and carbon footprint reduction
 - (v) Public, private, NGO and community partnerships
- i) Academic Progression and Erudition:** The University prepares an annual academic plan for implementing updated curriculums, introducing new programmes in line with national and international developments as well as through its own periodically conducted assessments. The Annual Academic Calendar serves as a navigational guide towards achieving academic targets within a set time frame. Academic progression is also ensured through the creation of the requisite infrastructures in the form of additional buildings, extension and up-gradation of existing facilities. Knowledge production through edge-cutting research is given prime attention and to meet this objective, the University has established various centres and chairs. Following the institutional action plans, several new departments have been added to the University in the recent past as Department of Education, Department of Civil Engineering, Agriculture Department, Department of Tourism and Hospitality and new buildings to house these disciplines have been constructed on the main as well as regional campuses.
- ii) Efficient Governance and Financial Management:** Digitization of core administrative and financial functions as a part of its e-governance reforms, the University has implemented a complete switch to e-procurement and Government e-Market Place (GeM). Near 100% digital financial transactions by the University Accounts and Audit, Branches has been achieved through the pursuit of the

outlined strategic plan related to the same. Almost all University services are now available to staff and students through the online mode.

- iii) **Innovation, Collaboration and Social outreach:** The University has rolled out several reforms for promoting initiatives such as the establishment of the University-Industry Linkage Programme (UILP) in recent times which has facilitated the growth of numerous collaborations and placement opportunities for the students. Several MoUs with foreign Universities, other national and international institutions have been signed to promote inter-organizational academic exchange and organize joint seminars, conferences and symposiums annually. In pursuance of its social objective as mentioned above, the university has adopted five villages (total population of 8500) to develop them as model villages with all basic facilities of clean air, water, sanitation and education.
- iv) **Environmental enrichment and carbon footprint reduction:** The University has been spearheading the planning and implementation of ecological strategies in the Campus that has started to bear results over the last few years. These have greatly contributed to environmental enrichment through its landscape strategy supported by other strategies such as zero waste, zero carbon emissions, rain-water harvesting, grey-water recycling, vehicle-free zones and a wide range of other macro and micro initiatives. Landscaping and water conservation plans with annual targets are in place to aggressively pursue the objective of reducing the University's carbon footprint and marching on to become one of the most eco-friendly campuses of the country.
- v) **Public, private, NGO and community partnerships:** The University intends to establish meaningful partnerships with public and private sector institutions with the purpose of exploring possibilities for job creation, intellectual support from academia to the public and private sector institutions that could ensure positive social and economic upliftment of the society. Also partnerships shall be forged with the NGOs working at grassroot levels to target regional problems like drug menace, enhancing small businesses and livelihoods. Further community partnerships aim at conducting an outreach wherein urban and rural community groups particularly those who are vulnerable such as the poor and down trodden, become the beneficiaries of programmes and projects initiated by the University. The SDG goal of poverty alleviation through such like initiatives shall be one of the prime focus in the *way forward* for the University in times ahead.

Concluding Remarks:

The strategic plan preview reveals the intent of the University to reform and overhaul its operations towards achieving its vision and mission in times ahead and in sync with national and international agendas evident in the SDG framework. The strategic plan shall stand to guide the University's efforts and initiatives towards creative and visionary academic development, continuous self improvisation and deliver quality education and research. By doing so, the University also aims to be a pioneer and a leader for other institutions to emulate. The University shall continue its momentous efforts towards evolution and achieving high quality academic development in tune with contemporary and futuristic requirements, nationally and internationally. It is assured that the University shall not rest on its existing laurels but continue to better its performance and upgrade infrastructure and human resource with a view to elevate the institution to a world leader amongst HEIs.