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FOREWORD BY THE RECTOR

In developing the strategy of Kaunas University of Technology (KTU), our primary focus was on what strengthens us as a community: responsibility for our actions, professionalism in the pursuit of quality, innovation that encourages bold thinking and creativity, and a sense of community that fosters mutual trust and open dialogue. These values shape not only our everyday culture, but also our vision for the future – to nurture a university capable of creating meaningful and sustainable change in society and the state.

The previous strategic period was marked by significant growth at Kaunas University of Technology. The University secured key resources for the development of competence centres, strengthened its potential in research, innovation, and studies, and gained valuable international experience through its participation in the European Consortium of Innovative Universities (ECIU). These achievements reflect our shared efforts and show that a consistent, focused, and trust-based partnership creates space for new opportunities.

Today, we are entering a new stage. Building on the experience we have gained, we will continue the work already underway and place even greater emphasis on each other. The University is shaped by every one of us, through the diversity of perspectives, competencies, and abilities that help build a sustainable future for KTU. Together, we will seek to strengthen our engagement in the knowledge and innovation ecosystem, promote interdisciplinarity, and enhance the quality of studies and the University's international visibility.

Our University's motto, *The Human Side of Technology*, reminds us that behind every technology stands a human being. Our goal, therefore, is for KTU to remain a university that not only responds to change but actively helps to shape it – by bringing people, ideas, and initiatives together to a meaningful, shared action. I believe that this strategy will continue to unite us as a community that is strong, open, and responsible. The University is us: our engagement, our ideas, and our shared will to create the future.

Sincerely,

KTU Rector

Prof. Eugenijus Valatka

INTRODUCTION

In recent years, the results of the University's activities have confirmed the focused and consistent efforts invested in achieving the goals set out five years ago in the previous strategy. Over this period, the University strengthened the quality of its studies and research, expanded international cooperation, and increased its visibility and recognition at both national and European levels.

For KTU, the past five years marked a period of growth. During this time, the University not only completed strategic-level projects launched earlier, but also attracted additional resources for strategic development, strengthened its potential in studies, research, and innovation, expanded its partner network, and gained valuable international experience. Active participation in the European Consortium of Innovative Universities (ECIU) played an important role in this process, providing significant international experience. This period saw the University's strengthened support for professional development of its staff, and fostering of community spirit and cultural values.

Today, the world is changing faster than ever. Environmental dynamics, global transformations, rapid technological advancement, growing security needs, and fast-evolving societal expectations are reshaping higher education. Increasing competition for talent, ideas, and resources is driving universities to strengthen their international competitiveness, more actively develop interdisciplinary connections, and reinforce their role within knowledge and innovation ecosystems.

Drawing on its accumulated experience and placing particular emphasis on the voice of its academic community and partners, KTU is entering a new stage in which it seeks to purposefully shape the innovation ecosystem and become one of its strategic leaders, contributing to sustainable and long-term prosperity for society and the state. Academic integrity, openness, mutual respect, creativity, and responsibility will remain core principles that build trust, empower the University community to act in unity, and support a holistic approach to strategic growth, long-term value creation, and the continuous education of society.

The strategic goals for the coming period will enable the University to become a progressive, open, and inclusive learning environment, an innovation hub built on expertise and competence, a responsible and inclusive employer, and a trusted partner that creates impact. Through proactivity, professionalism, and strategic leadership, KTU will remain a university that not only responds purposefully to change but also helps to shape it by bringing together people, knowledge, and competencies.

VISION AND MISSION

The KTU vision and mission define the identity and direction of the University and its community, as well as a responsible commitment to act, create, drive change, and unite. The University is an engine of thought, creativity, and change, contributing to creating long-term societal well-being.

Vision: an interdisciplinary university of technology, competitive internationally, creating an ecosystem for studies, research, and innovation aimed at a sustainable future and societal well-being.

Mission: to unite and educate creative and responsible individuals, to create and transfer new knowledge, and to foster innovations that have an impact on society.

VALUES

The University's core values reflect its internal culture and aspirations to consistently balance academic excellence and social responsibility, tradition and modernity, individual growth and a shared commitment to community.

Responsibility – *a conscious and honest commitment to take responsibility for decisions, while maintaining a balance between human well-being, respect for nature, and technological progress.*

Professionalism – *a continuous development in the pursuit of the highest quality, guided by standards of academic excellence and ethics, and grounded in scientific knowledge, experience, and respect for the profession.*

Innovation – *an open approach to progress and the search for new solutions, through the purposeful application of new ideas and technologies to advance sustainable development.*

Community – *a vibrant and open community that nurtures co-creation, collaboration, diversity, mutual support and trust, and builds long-term relationships.*

The University's values are more than a declaration – they represent a shared commitment and an enabling foundation for growing together as a community and for contributing to a society prepared for future challenges.

KTU STRATEGIC CHOICES AND BREAKTHROUGH DIRECTIONS

The KTU strategy builds on the achievements of 2020–2025 and the experience gained during this period. Over the previous strategic cycle, the University attracted significant resources for the development of mission-driven competence centres, strengthened its potential in research, innovation, and studies, and gained valuable international experience, particularly through its participation in the European Consortium of Innovative Universities (ECIU). These achievements provide a solid foundation for further development towards a competitive, interdisciplinary, and internationally visible university capable of exercising leadership within the knowledge and innovation ecosystem.

In the 2026–2030 strategy, the University’s strategic priorities are focused on creating breakthroughs in areas aligned with the European Union and national smart specialisation priorities. This ensures the University’s contribution to building a sustainable future, advancing technological progress, and enhancing long-term societal well-being. The strategic activities are directed towards the development of sustainable solutions, the synergy of research and innovation, and the application of knowledge to address real-world challenges, thereby strengthening Lithuania’s competitiveness and resilience in the global context.

KTU’s strategic activities are based on proactive action and cooperation among internal and external stakeholders: the academic community, industry, the public sector, and society at large. This approach enables the University to shape an *integrated ecosystem of studies, research, and innovation* in which knowledge is transformed into tangible impact for society, the economy, and the environment.

Five priority breakthrough areas have been identified:

- 1. Energy and Electronics Cluster**

Aligned with the smart specialisation priority *New Manufacturing Processes, Materials, and Technologies* (developed on the basis of the *SmartEcoTech* project). The cluster focuses on developing advanced materials and structures, manufacturing and process management, design technologies, and energy efficiency solutions.

- 2. AI and Cybersecurity Cluster**

Aligned with the smart specialisation priority *Information and Communication Technologies* (developed on the basis of the *SustAIInLivWork* and *DigiDefense* projects). The cluster advances work in artificial intelligence, big data analytics, cyber security, audiovisual media technologies, and social innovation solutions.

- 3. Health Technology Cluster**

Aligned with the smart specialisation priority *Health Technologies and Biotechnologies* (developed on the basis of the *TIFEC* project). The cluster advances work in applied health technologies for individual and public health, advanced medical engineering for diagnostics and treatment, solutions for safe food development, and sustainable agrobiological resources.

- 4. Societal Resilience, Security, and Defence Technology Cluster**

Developed on the basis of the *Competence Centre for Autonomous, Remotely Operated, and Connected Systems* project and consolidating and strategically directing activities across the other four breakthrough areas, the cluster integrates knowledge and competencies of the Energy and Electronics, AI and Cybersecurity, and Health Technology clusters for defence purposes. The cluster advances work in initiatives to strengthen societal resilience, security, and defence technologies, and their strategic application to enhance national security and societal well-being.

5. **The STEAM Didactics Cluster**

Developed on the basis of the KTU Teacher Education Centre, with a long-term objective of improving secondary and high school students' preparedness in sciences, technology, engineering, arts, and mathematics (STEAM). The cluster advances work in innovations in STEAM didactics, hybrid learning models, and educational technologies; conducts interdisciplinary educational research on sustainable development and future competencies, and applies big data analytics to education-related solutions.

The logic of the University's cluster-based activities is built on a consistent flow of knowledge and competencies, from their concentration at the University to their transformation into a tangible impact across the innovation ecosystem. Intellectual potential is concentrated within the University's faculties, institutes, research groups, and competence centres, encompassing the knowledge of experts from diverse fields, their academic experience, and research results.

This knowledge and these competencies are systematically integrated into study processes and lifelong learning initiatives, with a focus on priority thematic areas. At the same time, technological solutions, innovations, products, and R&D results are transferred to business, creating conditions for closer cooperation, the practical application of knowledge, and the implementation of new solutions.

The continuous movement of competencies ultimately results in concrete impact, including the creation of start-ups and spin-off companies. Businesses adopt academic knowledge and apply it to develop their activities and enhance competitiveness, while policymakers draw on scientific insights to develop evidence-based solutions relevant to national advancement. In this way, intellectual potential extends beyond the University and returns to society as long-term social, economic, and technological value – sustainable well-being driven by a culture of innovation and continuous progress.

This operating model will enable the University to emerge as a dynamic cluster of competencies, where academic potential, student education, and business partnerships merge into a coherent framework for action, creating tangible impact on society, industry, and public policymaking.

Strategic Directions for 2026–2030

For the 2026–2030 period, four strategic directions of activity have been identified to enable the University to achieve the intended breakthrough:

- Inclusive, transformative, and empowering learning for the future
- Research development for technological advancement
- An inclusive and creative community
- Impact on ecosystems

STRATEGIC DIRECTION OF ACTIVITIES – ENGAGING, TRANSFORMATIVE, AND EMPOWERING LEARNING FOR THE FUTURE

Rapid societal and technological change is fundamentally reshaping teaching and learning in higher education. Advances in technology, artificial intelligence, and digitisation are transforming approaches to curriculum design, teaching and learning methods, and strategies for assessing student achievement. Learning must become increasingly engaging, more personalised and competency-based, placing emphasis not only on the acquisition and application of knowledge, but also on the development of critical thinking, the ability to operate in interdisciplinary contexts, and the capacity to create new value for society. The University aims to ensure a transformative learning experience that reshapes students' ways of thinking, perspectives, and capacity to act in an interconnected global future. This approach to learning is grounded in experience and action through real-world projects, innovation-driven activities, interdisciplinary research, and international internships.

Strategic direction *Engaging, Transformative and Empowering Learning for the Future* commits the University to advancing the success of every student by fostering an engaging and supportive learning environment that enhances career competencies, encourages self-expression, ensures accessibility of studies, and builds psychological resilience. Curriculum grounded in future-oriented competencies, innovative teaching approaches, meaningful student experiences, and flexible lifelong learning pathways enables a dynamic, research-based, and forward-looking learning ecosystem that responds to evolving labour market demands and learners' expectations.

Strategic Priority (S1): Future-Proof Competency-Driven Curriculum

The University implements this priority by developing a competency-based study model that integrates students' formal and non-formal learning experiences, ensuring the comprehensive development of subject-specific, interdisciplinary, and general competencies. The model is being rolled out consistently across bachelor's and master's programmes, supported by advanced digital solutions that enable personalised monitoring of student progress and assessment of acquired competencies. Responding to evolving student needs and contemporary learning trends, the University will introduce new master's study formats that are modular, flexible, and support individual learning pathways, enhancing both accessibility and attractiveness of the programmes. As part of implementing experiential learning, the network of virtual and simulation laboratories is being expanded, providing opportunities to experiment, apply interdisciplinary knowledge, and develop the ability to act in real or simulated contexts. International simulation learning environments are also being introduced, including a model-based system engineering concept. A coordinated experiential learning model will integrate the laboratory network, methodological resources, and a mentoring system, creating a coherent and comprehensive experiential learning ecosystem.

Objective: to deliver excellence-driven, innovative study programmes that develop future-ready competencies and equip students to navigate and succeed in a rapidly evolving labour market.

Strategic initiatives:

- S1.1. Launch of a competency-based study model
- S1.2. Rollout of flexible master's programme formats
- S1.3. Building an advanced physical and virtual simulation lab
- S1.4. Embedding experiential learning across study programmes.

Strategic Priority (S2): Innovative and Research-Informed Teaching

The University is developing a support framework for teachers based on instructional design principles. The framework helps teachers by providing methodological support and practical guidance, enabling them to create pedagogically grounded, engaging, and immersive learning experiences. All study programmes foster experiential learning that encourages students to participate actively in research, create new value, and apply their knowledge in real-world contexts to meet contemporary societal and business challenges. Digital technologies are becoming an integral part of the learning process, and teachers' digital and pedagogical competencies are being purposefully strengthened to ensure their effective application. Targeted technical support helps to integrate digital tools seamlessly into teaching practices and implement innovative teaching and learning solutions. The student assessment model is being updated so that consistent feedback is recognised as a learning tool, helping students to unlock and realise their academic potential. A system for recognising teachers' didactic competencies will be integrated into the University's personnel policy, ensuring continuous development, assessment, and recognition of competencies in pedagogical expertise, innovation, and leadership, thereby contributing to the enhancement of study quality.

Objective: to ensure an innovative, research-informed, and technology-enhanced study process grounded in contemporary pedagogy and focused on the development and recognition of teachers' didactic competencies.

Strategic initiatives:

- S2.1. Develop an instructional design model for teachers
- S2.2. Integrate digital technologies into teaching and learning
- S2.3. Advance innovative pedagogy and engaging assessment strategies
- S2.4. Establish a system for recognising teachers' didactic competencies

Strategic Priority (S3): Inclusive and Growth-Oriented Student Experience

In implementing this priority, actions are guided by a holistic approach, recognising that the student experience is shaped by everything that takes place at the University, from academic processes to non-academic activities. The focus is placed on strengthening students' general competencies through the development of effective systems for building career-relevant skills, including practical training

programmes, employer feedback mechanisms, and models for the development of priority skills. These measures will help establish a strong foundation for students' professional success, enhance their readiness to operate in a global and dynamic environment, and improve graduate employability in highly skilled positions. At the same time, the University is fostering a supportive and inclusive community culture by strengthening opportunities for student self-expression, leadership, and engagement in University activities, introducing new motivation models, expanding arts, sports, and student organisations activities, and reinforcing a sense of belonging to the University community. Over the 2026–2030 strategic period, the accessibility of the study environment will be systematically enhanced through the application of universal design principles, the adaptation of physical and information infrastructure to meet diverse student needs, and the strengthening of international student integration. Particular attention is given to enhancing psychological resilience through the establishment of the student emotional support clinic, *Wellbeing Lab*, and the implementation of emotional health promotion initiatives that support the development of resilience, self-esteem, and emotional balance.

Objective: to create an inclusive, empowering, and growth-oriented learning environment that enables students to fully realise their potential, develop personal and professional competencies, and prepare for successful careers in a constantly changing world.

Strategic initiatives:

- S3.1. Develop a framework for students' career-relevant skills
- S3.2. Empower student self-expression and communities
- S3.3. Enhance accessibility across the learning environments
- S3.4. Strengthen students' psychological resilience

Strategic Priority (S4): Flexible Lifelong Learning Ecosystem

An integrated lifelong learning model brings together diverse learner groups, organisational units, and services into a coherent, value-creating system, enabling the University to position lifelong learning as its fourth mission. Conceptual frameworks for sub-models targeting school students, teachers, career, and business audiences provide the foundation for new learning formats and services. A coherent institutional framework ensures a unified approach to branding and communication, reinforcing the University's profile as a trusted and recognisable lifelong learning partner. A competency-based learning portfolio is being developed, guided by competency maps and artificial intelligence-supported recommendations, enabling personalised learning pathways. The digital lifelong learning platform incorporates progress tracking, micro-credentials, and knowledge management features that allow learners to accumulate and have their achievements recognised, while subscription-based models facilitate continuous and flexible learning. Learning content is enriched through international expertise, joint modules, and collaborative initiatives with European partners. The University positions itself as a national competence partner, supporting diverse societal groups and organisations in the strategic development of human capital.

Objective: to create a flexible lifelong learning ecosystem that enables diverse learner groups to acquire relevant knowledge and skills at different stages of their lives.

Strategic initiatives:

- S4.1. Implement a lifelong learning model
- S4.2. Develop a competitive portfolio of training programmes
- S4.3. Establish a digital information platform
- S4.4. Introduce a competence passport and microcredentials system

Expected Outcomes

The implementation of the strategic initiatives will strengthen the University's position as a forward-looking, open, and student experience-centred institution. A competency-based and personalised study model will increase student engagement and learning satisfaction and contribute to enhanced academic performance. A contemporary learning environment underpinned by innovative pedagogy, flexible learning pathways, and labour market-aligned study programmes will ensure high graduate employability in highly skilled roles and increase employer satisfaction with graduate's preparedness. Graduates will stand out for their interdisciplinary competencies, critical and systematic thinking, entrepreneurial mindsets, and the ability to operate effectively in an international environment. Studies at the University will become a transformative experience that fosters students' creativity, responsibility, and their capacity to address global challenges. The University will attract high-achieving students from Lithuania and abroad, strengthen its academic reputation, and enhance its competitiveness among the leading European universities of a similar profile. A system for recognising the didactic competencies of teachers will create an environment in which teachers are empowered to continuously improve their competencies, while also feeling valued for their pedagogical expertise and innovations in teaching and learning.

STRATEGIC DIRECTION OF ACTIVITIES – RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT FOR TECHNOLOGICAL PROGRESS

The University aims to consistently increase the economic, environmental, social, and cultural impact of its research and art activities by focusing its efforts on priority areas aligned with the country's smart specialisation priorities. The competence and international visibility of researchers are strategically strengthened, cooperation networks expanded, and conditions created for the development of high-value-added knowledge, thus contributing to the progress and competitiveness of the state. Centres of competence and excellence are developed through consistent coordination of their activities, the implementation of open science policy, and greater public involvement in research and art activities. Strengthening researchers' initiative, strategic thinking, leadership, and entrepreneurship will ensure the effective integration of new knowledge, technologies, and solutions into the R&D&I ecosystem. This will encourage closer cooperation with partners in industry, business, science, and the public sector, strengthen the relevance of research, and reinforce its practical value for society.

Strategic direction *Research and Development for Technological Progress* aims to increase the impact of research and art activities on society and the economy. This will be achieved by pooling resources in key areas, strengthening researchers' capabilities and international recognition, and expanding partnerships to create innovative solutions and knowledge that contribute to the country's progress and competitiveness.

Strategic Priority (M1): Development of Priority Fields of the Science and the Arts

The University consistently strengthens its position in the international and national scientific community, increases participation in external funding programmes and advanced research infrastructures, and expands partnerships. It also systematically improves the quality of these activities and enhances their impact on society, increasing added value and competitiveness.

Objective: to promote the development of priority research and art fields through funding attracted from external sources and the effective utilisation of research infrastructure.

Strategic initiatives:

- M1.1. Increase targeted participation in competitive international and national research and innovation funding programmes
- M1.2. Coordinate researchers' participation in international scientific networks and partnerships
- M1.3. Strengthen the role of Lithuanian and European research infrastructures and promote the University's participation in new infrastructure networks
- M1.4. Develop R&D&I activities with high-quality impact and practical applicability

Strategic Priority (M2): Targeted Strengthening of Scientific Potential

The planned initiatives focus on involving doctoral students and early-career researchers in project-based R&D&I activities and promoting mobility while simultaneously developing their strategic thinking and

leadership skills. This will ensure the growth of the potential of a new generation of researchers and strengthen the University's international visibility and reputation.

Objective: to ensure faster integration of doctoral students and early-career researchers into the academic community by strengthening international cooperation, mobility, and opportunities for knowledge sharing.

Strategic initiatives:

- M2.1. Strengthen the general and subject-specific competencies of early-career researchers
- M2.2. Develop doctoral students' leadership, scientific independence, and innovation development skills
- M2.3. Promote the mobility and participation of doctoral students and early-career researchers in international scientific networks

Strategic Priority (M3): Interdisciplinary Research and Art Knowledge Creation

Implementing an effective management model for research and art activities will ensure the successful integration of competencies developed at the University and its centres of excellence, promote the application of open science principles, and increase access to scientific knowledge, helping to maintain sustainable funding for research and art activities. Organising high-level international events and involving the public in research and art processes will strengthen the University's visibility and increase the societal impact of science.

Objective: to create innovative knowledge, technologies, and solutions by developing centres of competence and excellence, and promoting active cooperation with partners across science, business, industry, and the public sector.

Strategic initiatives:

- M3.1. Develop and implement a model for managing research activities and clusters operating in priority areas
- M3.2. Consistently plan and coordinate research and art activities
- M3.3. Implement the open science policy
- M3.4. Organise high-level international scientific events and involve public to participate in research and art processes

Strategic Priority (M4): Transfer of Technologies and Products, and Value Creation

The aim is to accelerate the application of new knowledge and technologies that create added value for society and promote economic progress. The implementation of strategic initiatives strengthens researchers' entrepreneurial and leadership skills and improves the process of protecting and transferring intellectual property.

Objective: to transform new knowledge and technologies into values that benefit society and promote economic progress.

Strategic initiatives:

- M4.1. Develop knowledge and technology transfer competencies
- M4.2. Promote entrepreneurship among researchers by involving them in innovation creation and business development processes

Expected Outcomes

The implementation of initiatives under this strategic direction will strengthen the University's contribution to national smart specialisation priorities and to the creation of high added value for the state. It will enhance the sustainability of research funding by diversifying funding sources, promoting innovation development, strengthening partnerships with business, industry, the public sector, and research institutions, and improving evaluation results of the quality of R&D activities. The development and implementation of a career pathway model for early-career researchers will enable doctoral students to acquire the competencies required for an academic career, increase the number of dissertations defended on time and the number of third-cycle fellowships, and accelerate the integration of doctoral students and early-career researchers into the academic community. The effective operation of competence and excellence centres will increase the number of researchers and the volume of external funding attracted. Improved research results' quality and active networking will strengthen the University's competitiveness and international recognition. Promoting technology transfer will further enhance the positive impact of research results on the national economy and reinforce the innovation ecosystem.

STRATEGIC DIRECTION OF ACTIVITIES – ENGAGING AND CREATIVE COMMUNITY

The strength of the University, like any other organisation, is determined by people, their talents, ideas, and ability to work together. It is the participation and creativity that shape an environment in which new ideas are born, mutual trust is strengthened, and the courage to embrace change is cultivated. However, it is important that engagement and creativity remain more than just declared values but become a living everyday practice that is revealed in the study process, research activities, a culture of collaboration, and interpersonal relationships.

This strategic direction reflects the University's commitment to creating conditions that allow employees to strengthen their general and professional competencies, encourage active community participation in activities and change, foster their overall well-being, and consistently strengthen the employer's image. At the same time, this direction is focused on creating a value-based culture and environment in which everyone feels seen, heard, and valued.

The strategic direction *Engaging and Creative Community* commits the University to strengthening community spirit, fostering an open and supportive organisational culture, upholding the principles of equal opportunities, promoting psychological well-being, and creating conditions for every member of the University to grow, create, and act responsibly in shaping the University's future.

Strategic Priority (B1): Ensuring Employee Well-Being and Strengthening Organisational Culture

Strengthening of the organisational culture based on trust, cooperation, and open dialogue, which encourages employee engagement and motivation. Employee well-being policy is focused on a balanced workload, a clear system of responsibilities, and a supportive management culture that strengthens trust between managers and teams. Much attention is paid to strengthening psychological security, social support measures, and ensuring a work-life balance.

Objective: to foster employee well-being and strengthen organisational culture as the foundation for the activities of a sustainable university.

Strategic initiatives:

- B1.1. Improve the employee experience in the organisation
- B1.2. Implement the employee well-being programme
- B1.3. Strengthen organisational culture and embed values in practice
- B1.4. Strengthen the community spirit

Strategic Priority (B2): Strengthening the Competitive Employer Identity

A value-based organisational environment is created in which employees feel empowered, valued, and motivated to pursue personal and institutional progress. By investing in competence development, leadership strengthening, and work culture improvement, the University aims to retain existing talent and

attract new talent with the highest competencies. This helps build a strong employer identity based on responsibility, community spirit, and a long-term perspective on value creation.

Objective: To strengthen the employer's image by emphasising the University's courage to lead and create in areas where people are valued above all else, and technology becomes a means for their progress and prosperity.

Strategic initiatives:

- B2.1. Strengthen the University's employer image and communication
- B2.2. Develop and implement a model for attracting and onboarding new employees, including international staff

Strategic Priority (B3): Improvement of General and Professional Competencies

The competencies of the University employees are strengthened, ensuring the highest-quality activities in studies, research and innovation, and organisational management. Implementing this priority is based on continuous professional development, developing general competencies, leadership, cooperation, and creativity skills. The focus is on both individual employee growth and the ability of teams to work harmoniously and effectively. Targeted strengthening of employee potential creates conditions for the University to remain competitive as an attractive and responsible employer, as well as an innovative higher education centre that fosters international relations.

Objective: to strengthen the competencies of the University community members necessary for academic, research, and administrative activities and to increase international competitiveness.

Strategic initiatives:

- B3.1. Integrate professional competencies (didactic, subject-specific, and research) into the employee competency model and refine the assessment system
- B3.2. Develop and implement the concept of an academy for employee competency development

Expected Outcomes

The implementation of the initiatives of this strategic direction of activities will strengthen the University's value-based, engaging, and open organisational culture, encouraging active involvement of the members of the University community in the life of the organisation, increasing mutual trust, community spirit, and cooperation, and strengthening the organisational identity. The working environment at the University will become even more flexible and emotionally secure, responding to the various needs of employees and ensuring their well-being, inclusion, and diversity. These results will ensure long-term employee satisfaction, lower staff turnover, and organisational sustainability. The strategic activities will strengthen the University's image as an attractive, responsible, and contemporary employer at the national and international level, increase the visibility of the institution, and improve the effectiveness of the employer communication.

Professional competencies will be integrated into the overall KTU employee competency model, strengthening a systematic approach to competency assessment, development, and applicability. The created and implemented concept of an employee development academy will ensure targeted competency development in line with the strategic needs of the organisation and the individual growth potential of employees. This will create long-term value for the University by strengthening employee engagement, organisational resilience, and the ability to sustainably pursue strategic goals.

STRATEGIC DIRECTION OF ACTIVITIES – IMPACT ON ECOSYSTEMS

Industrial transformation, accelerating digitisation, breakthroughs in artificial intelligence, and the rise of green technologies demand a bolder, forward-looking approach to how knowledge is created, tested, and applied. Today, value is not generated by isolated innovations, but by the capacity to connect science, technology, industry, and society into effective ecosystems that translate ideas into impact, accelerate progress, and support sustainable development. In this context, the University must move beyond its traditional boundaries in education and research and strengthen its role as a partner within innovation ecosystems – bringing stakeholders together, mobilising talent and expertise, and working towards shared progress.

The strategic direction *Impact on Ecosystems* commits the University to creating and transferring knowledge, strengthening its role as a trusted strategic partner and a leading expert voice, and laying the foundations for a smart, resilient, and globally competitive society of the future.

Strategic Priority (P1): **Cross-Sector Partnerships in Innovation Ecosystems**

The University aims to become a strategic partner in knowledge exchange, technology transfer, and competency development in priority industries. To deliver this priority, the University focuses on developing new models of cooperation with business, expanding international networks, and adapting proven global practices. Academic entrepreneurship is strengthened, start-up engagement encouraged, and knowledge exchange and co-creation initiatives with partners in priority industries are developed, creating added value within competence clusters.

Objective: to serve as a strategic partner in knowledge exchange, technology transfer, and competency development across priority industries.

Strategic initiatives:

- P1.1. Launch and further develop the Open Innovation Centre
- P1.2. Develop and implement a strategic partnership model
- P1.3. Integrate start-ups and academic entrepreneurship into the open innovation ecosystem
- P1.4. Cultivate a strong culture of philanthropy

Strategic Priority (P2): **Research / Evidence-Based Policymaking and Dissemination of Expertise**

The University's role as a trusted partner in knowledge creation and analysis for public policy is being strengthened to ensure that decision-making is grounded in research and evidence. A systematic and proactive model for knowledge translation and dissemination is being developed, enabling University experts to provide evidence-based recommendations, contribute to EU and national policymaking, and shape forward-looking visions of technological development that support the competitive and sustainable progress of Lithuania and Europe as a whole.

Objective: to position the University as a proactive leader of expert opinion, providing insights into future technological trends, and strengthening the role of science in evidence-based policymaking and public discourse.

Strategic initiatives:

- P2.1. Establish expert groups for technology monitoring and evidence-based policy shaping, and develop an operating model for their work
- P2.2. Strengthen the University's role in shaping public discourse on advanced technologies and innovations

Strategic Priority (P3): Bringing Together and Empowering Stakeholders in Regional Ecosystems

The University is strengthening its engagement in enhancing regional competitiveness by cooperating with local governments, businesses, and educational communities. The priority is to build regional innovation networks, mobilise talent, strengthen the education and skills base, and co-create place-based solutions grounded in knowledge, partnership and sustainable development. Particular emphasis is placed on strengthening the University's value proposition and reinforcing its presence in Vilnius and Panevėžys regions.

Objective: to act as a strategic partner in enhancing regional competitiveness through sustained cross-sector cooperation among local government, industry, and education communities.

Strategic initiatives:

- P3.1. Develop and implement an operating model for a cross-sector cooperation platform connecting local government, businesses, and educational communities
- P3.2 Strengthen the University's regional presence through KTU information centres with a particular focus on Vilnius and Panevėžys regions

Expected Outcomes

Once the initiatives under this strategic direction are implemented, the University will act as a creator of tangible impact at both national and international levels. The Open Innovation Centre will evolve into a global platform that brings the business community together for partnership development and knowledge exchange. The strategic partnership model, together with stronger engagement of start-ups and academic entrepreneurship, will support breakthroughs across the innovation ecosystem. Strengthening leadership in expert opinion will enhance the role of science in politically significant decision-making processes. A regional cooperation platform, supported by targeted measures in Vilnius and Panevėžys regions, and the establishment of KTU information centres will further increase the University's contribution to regional competitiveness. Together, these outcomes will enable the University to strengthen its impact across innovation, policy, and regional ecosystems more systematically, increasing their maturity, interaction, and the value they create for society.

OPERATING PRINCIPLES AND THEIR INTEGRATION

The success of a university in today's context is no longer defined solely by strong academic performance or outstanding research outcomes. It is also shaped by the institution's ability to operate in an integrated way, where core strategic priorities are supported by horizontal, day-to-day operating principles that promote a holistic approach to long-term institutional development and value creation.

Internationalisation. Priority is given to attracting international talent while ensuring inclusive academic, social, and cultural integration; expanding joint and double-degree programmes, embedding international simulation environments into curricula, increasing mobility opportunities, and developing micro-credentials delivered in English. The quality of education is strengthened through the engagement of international faculty, interdisciplinary and intercultural teaching teams, and academic staff participation in international academic networks.

In research and innovation, the University strengthens its participation in European and global research and innovation ecosystems, particularly Horizon Europe, Digital Europe, and related programmes. It develops intellectual property management and patenting capacity, actively promotes technology transfer and licensing in international markets, and expands R&I services and co-creation partnerships with the international industry. These efforts promote the development and scaling of start-ups and spin-offs with global market potential. Visibility and leadership in the European Research Area are reinforced through international networks, consortia, European University alliances, and high-level conferences.

Equal opportunities and inclusiveness underpin internationalisation through support for international staff, broader access to mobility for socially vulnerable groups, and international professional development initiatives. The University also develops a globally connected innovation ecosystem that brings together philanthropic partners, start-ups, and the academic community, while strengthening its international reputation through clear, evidence-informed communication of research excellence, international projects and expert contributions.

Sustainability. The principles of sustainable development are integrated into studies, research, innovation, and community activities. Sustainability-related competencies are strengthened across all study programmes, and sustainability topics are consistently embedded in student projects. Responsible resource use and energy efficiency solutions are increasingly applied across study infrastructure. Sustainable behaviour is promoted through community events, communication campaigns, and cross-sector partnerships with social partners, the public sector, and business. The University ensures the creation of sustainable research results, the responsible use of materials, and the proper management of laboratory waste. Sustainability also includes ensuring equal opportunities, strengthening engagement, providing safe working conditions, and supporting professional well-being. Civic participation, non-formal education initiatives, and the active involvement of social partners in improving studies and the environment are encouraged. The organisation follows transparent, responsible, and sustainable management practices, from financial management to green public procurement. Infrastructure for employees is continuously improved, and universal design principles are applied to ensure a sustainable working and study environment.

Interdisciplinarity. Knowledge from diverse science fields is systematically integrated into studies, research, and innovation. All study programmes develop interdisciplinary competencies, and their curricula consistently combine the disciplines of engineering, informatics, social sciences, humanities, and the arts. Students have access to interdisciplinary laboratories and creative spaces. Students and teachers involved in interdisciplinary projects receive motivational incentives, methodological assistance, and specialised training. Students and doctoral students from different fields are engaged in the activities of research groups, and early-career researchers are encouraged to take part in project activities. Interinstitutional initiatives are expanded to strengthen the shared research base and combine competencies. The University aims to create an enabling environment for the creation and development of interdisciplinary start-ups, supporting the progression of new ideas from concept to practical application.

Entrepreneurship. Partners from business, the public sector, and non-governmental organisations are actively involved in study activities by contributing to lectures, proposing project topics, and participating in product development processes. Students have access to creative spaces and prototyping infrastructure. The University actively seeks new partners for applied research, prototyping, testing, and commercialisation. Learning and professional development opportunities are expanded for the academic and non-academic University community. Researchers' competencies in project preparation and management are strengthened, and their cooperation with businesses is coordinated. Pre-incubation and incubation programmes are expanded, partnerships with investors, accelerators, and business angels are developed, and students and early-career researchers are encouraged to contribute to scientific publications. The quality of entrepreneurial competency development is systematically monitored, with impact and results regularly assessed.

Enabling environment. The University creates an enabling study and work environment: classrooms and laboratories are modernised, virtual and simulation learning spaces are introduced, ensuring accessibility and universal design principles. Student living conditions are improved, sports and leisure infrastructure is expanded, and study and administration processes are digitised. The University systematically strengthens the infrastructure of competence centres and updates the technological base; digital platforms for cooperation and technology dissemination are created, and AI tools and advanced analytics systems are implemented for more effective process management. At the same time, employee motivation and expert evaluation systems are improved. These operating principles enable synergy across the University's strategic directions, from strengthening the quality of studies and research to ensuring the community's well-being, developing innovation, and expanding the partner network. Their integration ensures that the organisation's activities remain sustainable, engaging, open, and value-creating.

PREREQUISITES FOR SUCCESSFUL IMPLEMENTATION OF THE STRATEGY

Successful implementation of an organisation's strategy requires clearly planned, targeted, and consistently implemented activities to accompany strategic goals. The new KTU strategy is backed by a long-term action plan, which ensures that strategic goals are supported by specific actions and that responsibilities, necessary resources, and expected results are defined.

Developing the 2026–2030 strategy involved reviewing, assessing and strengthening annual planning processes. The planning of activities, resources, and goals became more integrated, timely, and focused on greater added value. This allows to plan activities more effectively and ensures a consistent transfer of the strategic goals to the plans of individual departments and the objectives of individual employees. This further enhances each community member's ability to clearly see and assess their contribution to the University's overall strategic goals and achieved results.

Strategies and long-term plans are implemented based on clearly defined responsibilities and continuous monitoring of progress, ensuring transparency, continuity, and accountability. Therefore, once the strategy implementation period begins, the progress of long-term strategic initiatives will be periodically and regularly monitored, and the necessary adjustments will be initiated in response to changes in the environment, if required. By implementing these processes, the University will be able to strike a balance between successfully developing long-term strategic initiatives and being able to respond quickly to changes in the environment.

Belief in the strategy and united community participation in its implementation are key factors that will help us to identify potential challenges more rapidly and make bold decisions in time. Participating in the implementation of strategic activities and supporting each other's initiatives, we strengthen trust among the community and create long-term, sustainable change at the University.