



Vision & Strategic Work-plan

Tribhuvan University

Propelling Nepal's Oldest Institution towards Quality, Research Leadership, and
Global Competitiveness

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The concept paper was presented to the VC selection committee, GoN at Singha Durbar, Kathmandu
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Leadership & Academic Journey



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Former Vice Chancellor, Kathmandu University (2021–2025). Demonstrated a deep commitment to advancing higher education in Nepal and developing world-class university frameworks.

Ph.D. Norwegian University of Science and Technology, Norway (2004).

Extensive Leadership: Served as Dean, Registrar, and Acting VC at KU, shaping policies, RDI, and managing complex academic ecosystems.

Global Research: Led massive RDI initiatives like RenewableNepal, EnergizeNepal, and the Turbine Testing Laboratory, Green Hydrogen Lab. Design Lab
Over 140+ journal publications, Distinguished Awards

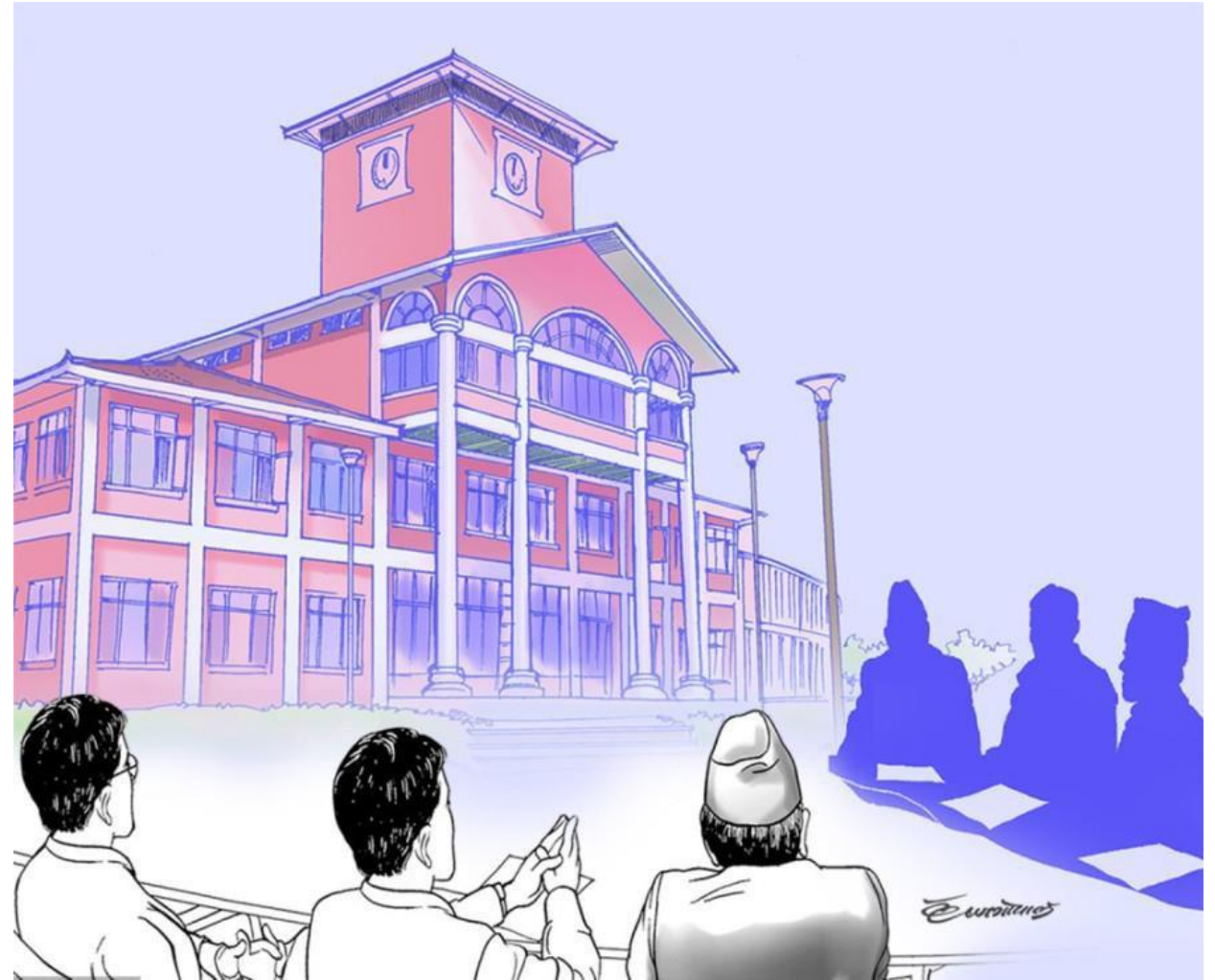
The TU Context & Challenge

TU remains the parenting force in Nepal's higher education, serving more than 500,000 students.

However, we must evolve rapidly.

Core Challenges: A structural decline in domestic enrollment, driven by massive student outmigration and fierce competition from foreign-affiliated institutions within Nepal.

The Mandate: TU must transition aggressively from an access-expansion-driven model to a quality-driven, **research-intensive**, and **digitally enabled** global university.



Strategic Priorities



Academic Excellence

Shifting focus from expanding enrollment to improving quality. Implementing competency-based learning, QAA standards, and ensuring degrees are globally comparable.



RDI & Industry Linkage

Enhancing research capacity through competitive funding, incubation centers, and bridging the gap between academia, industry, and the global market.



Financial Autonomy

Establishing robust endowment management, asset optimization via PPAP, and transitioning away from heavy dependency on traditional funding models.

Quality Enhancement & Relevance

The "Learn and Earn" Model

To combat outmigration and support inclusive learning, we will institutionalize a "Learn and Earn" framework. This includes digital-first platforms, modular credit pathways, and flexible Learning options.

Curriculum Reform

Shift away from rote memorization. Programs across all faculties will integrate experiential education, internships, business simulations, and interdisciplinary approaches.

Faculty Optimization

Implement an Academic Resource Redistribution

Framework to deploy faculty equitably based on demand, improving quality at underserved campuses.

Research & Innovation Ecosystem

Strengthening National RDI

TU must become the national hub for research. We will establish competitive institutional grant systems and strictly link faculty recruitment and promotion to measurable research outputs, patents, and high-impact publications

Incubation & Commercialization

Research cannot exist in a vacuum. We will launch dedicated technology incubation and startup centers to encourage entrepreneurship, ensuring research outcomes directly translate to real-world industrial and economic applications.

Financial Self-Reliance

Establishing a professionally governed endowment system to secure scholarships, RDI, and modernization without state dependency.

Asset Optimization: Responsibly utilizing TU's massive land assets through Public-Private-Academic Partnerships (PPAP) to build research parks and academic-commercial zones.

IP & Branding: Creating a dedicated office to manage ethical commercialization, patent facilitation, and leverage our vast global alumni network for sustained funding.



Human Resources: Think Tank for Nation

ACTION

- Human Resources and Organizational Structure Reform
- Legislative Context and Present Status
- Robust Performance Management System
- Enhanced Recruitment and Retention Strategies
- Redefined Roles for Existing Executives

OUTCOME

- Best Brains in Academics: Social Recognition
- Pay Leader: Robust Social Security
- Continuing education and carrier path
- Performance based incentives
- Emerging as local and global Think Tank

Leveraging Alumni Engagement – A Strategic Imperative

The Strategic Context

- TU has produced over **2 million** graduates since its establishment in 1959. While the university does not maintain a single centralized public database of all historic graduates, tens of thousands of students earn their degrees annually
- TU has shaped Nepal's modern history, producing a diverse roster of prominent alumni. Graduates have driven national development, leading in **Science, Engineering, Medicine, politics, justice, literature**

The Evolving Role of Alumni Relations

- Innovation, Entrepreneurship
- Career Development, Industry Linkages
- Academic Excellence and Curriculum Enhancement
- Institutional Branding, Reputation

Operationalizing Alumni Relations Cell?
Alumni Management Platform Proposal?
Re-Cultivating a Culture of Philanthropy?

Decentralization & Autonomy



Structured Institutional Autonomy: Granting constituent campuses academic, administrative, and operational autonomy within a strict accountability framework to enable rapid decision-making.



Regional Specialization: Aligning academic excellence with provincial needs (e.g., Hydropower in Koshi, Tourism in Gandaki, Agriculture in Lumbini/Madhesh).



Integrating Affiliated Faculty: Fully integrating affiliated college faculty into the broader TU ecosystem.



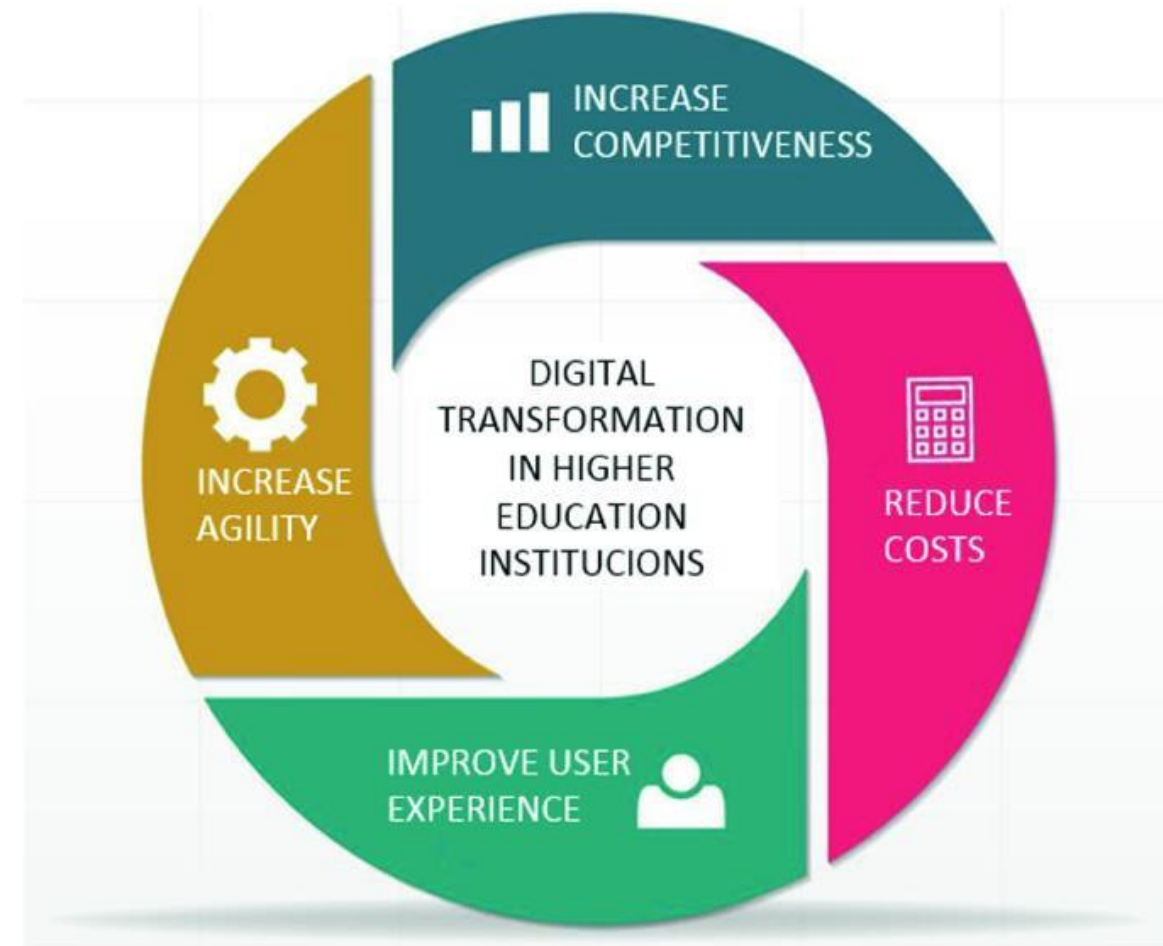
Provincial Policy Outreach: Establishing academic outreach centers in all seven provinces to support evidence-based policymaking with local governments.

Comprehensive Digital Transformation

To overcome bureaucratic delays, and **improve operational efficiency**, TU requires an immediate technological overhaul.

ERP Modernization: Implementing a unified Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system for seamless enrollment, finance, HR, and procurement management.

Digital Governance: Eliminating the culture of delayed results by fully digitizing examination systems, transcript services, and integrating AI analytics for data-driven strategic planning.



Global Ranking & Internationalization

Target: Top 1000 by 2030

Establish a dedicated monitoring unit to systematically track global ranking indicators (research impact, graduate employability, and international mobility).

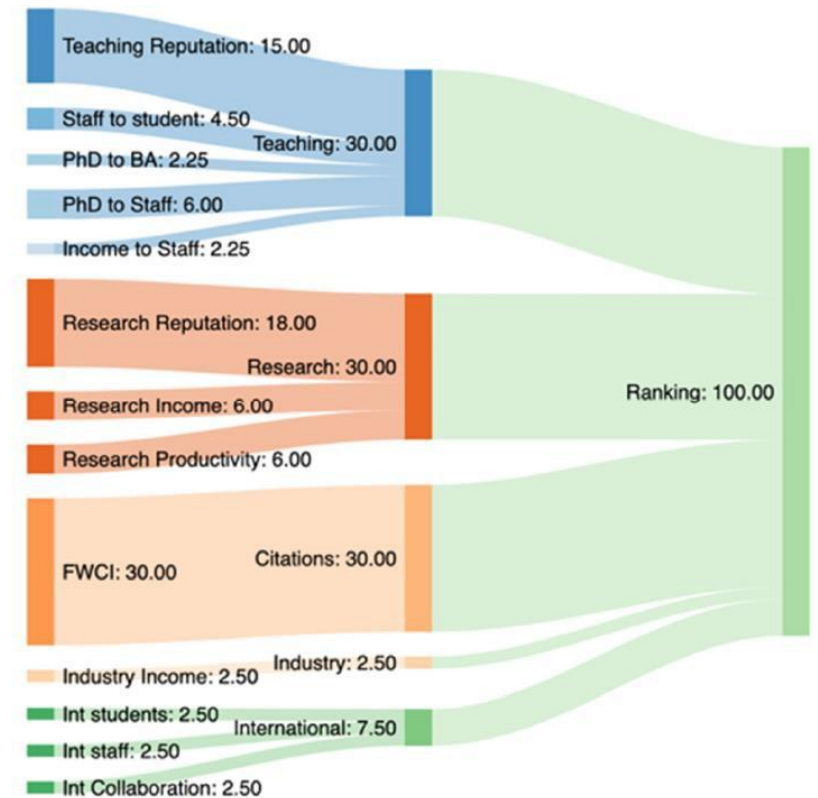
Global Academic Collaboration

Expanding partnerships across SAARC, ASEAN, and broader networks to facilitate dual-degree programs, joint research, and substantial faculty/student exchange programs.

Universal Quality Assurance

All constituent campuses and academic units will be mandated to complete rigorous UGC QAA processes within defined timelines to guarantee international credibility.

Teaching



Strategic Execution Roadmap



Vision 2030: Academic Excellence



Tribhuvan University is Nepal's most significant pillar of intellectual development. Our ultimate goal is not just to issue degrees, but to serve as the nation's primary engine for economic modernization and scientific advancement. By executing this strategic framework, I will retain the brightest minds within Nepal, restore absolute public trust, and transform TU into an internationally recognized, research-intensive university system.

TU VISION PAPER

1. Current Challenges, Quality Enhancement, and Effectiveness

Tribhuvan University (TU), as Nepal's oldest and largest public university, has historically played a foundational role in national human capital development. However, Nepal's higher education landscape is undergoing rapid transformation driven by international student mobility, the expansion of foreign-affiliated institutions, technological disruption in education delivery, and increasing global expectations regarding research output, employability, and institutional rankings.

In this evolving context, TU faces a fundamental strategic challenge: transitioning from an access-expansion-driven institution to a quality-driven, research-intensive, digitally enabled, and globally competitive university system.

a. Declining Enrolment and Student Outmigration

Nepal's higher education system is experiencing a structural decline in domestic enrolment, primarily driven by increasing student migration abroad and the rapid expansion of foreign-affiliated institutions within the country. The annual outflow of over 100,000 students, along with significant financial outflow, reflects growing concerns regarding academic quality, institutional responsiveness, and the global competitiveness of domestic universities. For TU, this poses a major challenge, requiring a shift from enrolment expansion to quality enhancement, retention, and improved institutional credibility.

b. Rising Competition from Foreign-Affiliated Institutions

Foreign-affiliated university programs in Nepal are increasing competition by attracting students with perceived international recognition and employability advantages. TU must respond by strengthening its academic offerings to ensure they are globally comparable, professionally relevant, research-informed, and internationally recognized, shifting focus from quantity to quality-based competitiveness.

c. Academic Quality and Curriculum Reform

TU requires continuous modernization of curricula and teaching practices to align with global standards and labor market needs. Reforms must emphasize competency-based learning, experiential education, internships, project-based learning, and interdisciplinary approaches to enhance innovation, critical thinking, and practical relevance across all disciplines.

d. Flexible and Inclusive Learning Systems

Changing student demographics require more flexible learning models for working and economically constrained learners. TU will institutionalize a “Learn and Earn” system through hybrid learning, modular and credit-based pathways, flexible schedules, recognition of prior learning, and lifelong education opportunities to improve access and inclusivity.

e. Faculty Distribution and Human Resource Imbalance

Uneven faculty distribution across TU institutions affects teaching efficiency and academic quality. TU will implement a faculty optimization framework to ensure balanced deployment, strengthen underserved programs, improve teaching quality, and support evidence-based workforce planning.

f. Governance and Administrative Inefficiencies

TU’s governance system is constrained by legacy structures that reduce efficiency and responsiveness. Key issues include slow decision-making, fragmented systems, weak digital integration, and limited performance monitoring. These challenges require governance reform supported by digital transformation and system integration.

g. Financial Dependence and Structural Vulnerability

TU’s heavy reliance on student fees and government funding creates financial vulnerability and limits investment in strategic priorities. This affects infrastructure, research, and academic modernization. Therefore, diversification of revenue sources is essential for financial sustainability and institutional resilience.

h. Research Output and Global Competitiveness Gaps

TU’s research output and global visibility remain below international benchmarks due to weak funding diversity, limited industry collaboration, and low research incentives. Strengthening research capacity is essential to improve global rankings, innovation output, and academic competitiveness.

i. Digital Infrastructure and Technology Transition Challenges

The shift to digital and hybrid education has exposed gaps in TU’s digital infrastructure, integrated systems, and data-driven decision-making capacity. These limitations reduce efficiency and academic effectiveness, requiring a comprehensive digital transformation strategy for a modern, scalable academic ecosystem.

2. Quality enhancement and effectiveness of the university

In this evolving environment, Tribhuvan University must pursue a comprehensive academic transformation that goes beyond expanding access and instead prioritizes educational quality, institutional credibility, and improved graduate outcomes. This transformation should focus on modernizing teaching and learning systems, strengthening academic relevance, and enhancing graduate employability, thereby positioning TU as a nationally responsive and internationally competitive institution of higher education.

a. Strengthening Academic Relevance and Student Retention

Tribhuvan University (TU) should shift its focus from expanding enrollment to improving academic quality. Programs across all faculties need regular review and redesign to enhance employability, critical thinking, practical skills, research exposure, innovation, and problem-solving.

Curricula should emphasize experiential learning through internships, project-based work, labs, field studies, entrepreneurship opportunities, and industry partnerships. Engineering students should complete hands-on infrastructure or technology projects, management students should engage in business simulations and case-based learning, and science and humanities students should gain stronger research and interdisciplinary training aligned with global standards.

The overall goal is to restore TU's position as Nepal's leading university by improving academic quality, public trust, and graduate employability.

b. Competitive Positioning Against Foreign-Affiliated Institutions

TU must position itself competitively not solely on affordability, but on academic equivalence, institutional prestige, research quality, and global recognition.

A structured academic benchmarking framework will therefore be introduced to align TU's curricula, learning outcomes, credit systems, evaluation mechanisms, and academic standards with internationally recognized university systems. Priority will be given to strengthening academic rigor, improving instructional quality, modernizing assessment methods, and ensuring greater comparability of TU degrees in international academic and professional environments.

This approach will help reduce dependency on fragmented foreign-affiliated academic programs operating within Nepal while strengthening confidence in domestic higher education institutions.

The institutional objective is clear: students should increasingly perceive a TU degree as academically credible, professionally valuable, and internationally competitive.

c. Institutionalizing the “Learn and Earn” Academic Model

Recognizing the changing socioeconomic realities of students and the growing need for flexible higher education systems, TU should gradually institutionalize a “**Learn and Earn**” academic framework aligned with Nepal’s National Qualifications Framework (NQF).

This reform agenda will include:

- Expansion of hybrid and digital-first teaching platforms
- Flexible modular and credit-based academic progression systems
- Evening, weekend, and online learning pathways for working students
- Recognition of prior and experiential learning mechanisms
- Continuing education and lifelong learning opportunities

Such reforms will enable students to combine higher education with employment, entrepreneurship, professional training, or family responsibilities without compromising academic continuity.

This model is especially important for students from economically disadvantaged backgrounds, working professionals seeking reskilling opportunities, and learners residing outside major urban centers.

d. Rationalizing Faculty Distribution and Academic Resources

Although TU maintains a relatively balanced aggregate student–teacher ratio, significant disparities remain across campuses, faculties, and disciplines. Certain high-demand programs continue to experience faculty shortages, while some academic units remain comparatively underutilized.

To address this imbalance, TU will implement a **Faculty Optimization and Academic Resource Redistribution Framework** designed to ensure more equitable deployment of academic personnel across constituent and affiliated institutions.

This framework will focus on:

- Strategic faculty redistribution based on student demand
- Strengthening underserved academic programs
- Enhancing teaching quality across regional campuses

- Expanding faculty development and training opportunities
- Improving institutional efficiency through evidence-based workforce planning

The broader goal is to ensure balanced academic delivery, stronger institutional coordination, and improved educational quality throughout the TU system.

2. Income Generation and Financial Self-Reliance

Objective

To reduce excessive dependence on student fees, government financing and establish a diversified, financially sustainable university ecosystem capable of supporting long-term institutional growth, modernization, and academic innovation.

Strategic Priorities

a. Endowment Growth and Professional Investment Management

TU will establish a professionally governed endowment management system with the long-term objective of expanding institutional reserves to NPR 5 billion.

A dedicated investment and financial oversight committee comprising financial experts, economists, alumni representatives, and institutional stakeholders will be established to ensure transparent, accountable, and risk-sensitive management of endowment assets.

The endowment system will support:

- Scholarships and student support programs
- Research and innovation initiatives
- Infrastructure modernization
- Strategic institutional investments
- Emergency financial resilience mechanisms

This approach will strengthen institutional financial stability while reducing vulnerability to fluctuations in enrollment and public funding.

b. Land Asset Optimization through Public-Private-Academic Partnerships (PPAP)

TU possesses significant institutional land assets across Nepal, many of which remain underutilized. A structured Public-Private-Academic Partnership (PPAP) framework will therefore be introduced to strategically develop selected university assets into sustainable academic and commercial ecosystems.

Priority areas will include:

- Innovation and research parks
- Student housing and residential infrastructure
- Academic-commercial mixed-use zones
- Technology incubation and startup centers
- Conference, training, and professional development facilities

The objective is not privatization of institutional assets, but productive utilization of university resources in ways that strengthen long-term financial sustainability and academic-industry collaboration.

c. Institutional Branding and Intellectual Property Management

An official Intellectual Property, Innovation, and Branding Office will be established to strengthen TU's institutional identity and responsibly manage commercial opportunities associated with university assets and academic innovation.

The office will focus on:

- Ethical commercialization of TU branding
- Development of TU-certified products and merchandise
- Intellectual property protection and patent facilitation
- Industry partnerships and innovation transfer
- Alumni engagement and institutional outreach initiatives

Such efforts will diversify revenue streams while strengthening institutional visibility and public engagement.

d. Strengthening Research Funding and Institutional Grants Management

TU will progressively transition toward becoming a national research facilitation and coordination hub.

The university will strengthen institutional systems for:

- International research grant management
- Collaborative academic partnerships
- Research administration and compliance
- Proposal development and funding acquisition
- Monitoring and evaluation of research outputs

Improved research governance systems will not only enhance academic productivity but

also generate sustainable administrative overhead revenues that can be reinvested into institutional development.

3. Strengthening Constituent and Affiliated Colleges

Objective

To strengthen constituent and affiliated institutions as decentralized centers of academic quality, regional innovation, and local economic development.

Strategic Priorities

a. Structured Institutional Autonomy Framework

Constituent campuses will be gradually provided with structured academic, administrative, examination, and operational autonomy within clearly defined accountability frameworks. Regional academic specialization will be encouraged based on provincial comparative advantages and local development priorities. Examples may include:

- Hydropower and infrastructure studies in Koshi Province
- Tourism and hospitality management in Gandaki Province
- Agriculture, agribusiness, and rural innovation in Madhesh and Lumbini Provinces

This model will enhance regional relevance while supporting balanced national development.

b. Integration of Faculty Capacity Across the TU System

Faculty members serving in affiliated colleges will be more systematically integrated into TU's broader academic ecosystem through:

- Eligibility for PhD supervision roles
- Participation in competitive university research grants
- Joint curriculum development initiatives
- Faculty mobility and collaboration mechanisms
- Participation in university-wide academic training programs

Such integration will strengthen institutional cohesion, improve academic standards, and expand research participation across the TU network.

c. Provincial Academic Outreach and Policy Engagement

TU will establish academic outreach and policy research centers across all seven provinces

to strengthen collaboration with provincial and local governments.

These centers will function as regional knowledge platforms supporting:

- Evidence-based policymaking
- Applied regional research
- Professional and technical training
- Community outreach and innovation initiatives
- Provincial academic coordination

This approach will further strengthen TU's national presence and developmental role.

4. Development as a Center of Academic Excellence

Objective

To transform TU from a predominantly teaching-oriented institution into a research-driven university system recognized for academic excellence, innovation, and intellectual leadership.

Strategic Priorities

a. Merit-Based Academic Advancement

Faculty recruitment, evaluation, promotion, and institutional incentives will increasingly be linked to measurable academic performance indicators, including:

- Peer-reviewed international publications
- Research citations and scholarly impact
- Patent development and innovation outputs
- Competitive grant acquisition
- Academic leadership and mentorship contributions

This system will strengthen research culture, institutional accountability, and academic professionalism.

b. Interdisciplinary Academic Structure

TU will actively promote interdisciplinary teaching, learning, and research by reducing traditional academic silos.

Students from engineering, management, humanities, education, science, and social sciences will be encouraged to pursue interdisciplinary minors and collaborative research in areas such as:

- Public Policy and Governance
- Sustainability and Climate Studies
- Artificial Intelligence and Data Science
- Innovation and Entrepreneurship
- Digital Society and Emerging Technologies

This reflects the reality that contemporary global challenges increasingly require multidisciplinary solutions.

c. Digital Governance and ERP Modernization

A comprehensive Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system will be implemented to modernize TU's administrative and academic operations.

Key areas of digital integration will include:

- Admissions and enrollment management
- Examination systems and result processing
- Academic records and transcript services
- Financial and procurement management
- Human resource management
- Institutional data analytics and reporting

Digital transformation will improve transparency, reduce bureaucratic delays, strengthen accountability, and support evidence-based institutional decision-making.

5. Global Ranking and Internationalization Strategy (Top 1000 by 2030)

Objective

To position Tribhuvan University among the world's leading universities by strengthening research visibility, international collaboration, academic quality assurance, and institutional competitiveness.

Strategic Priorities

a. Strategic Data Management and Institutional Visibility

A dedicated institutional analytics, monitoring, and rankings unit will be established to strengthen TU's performance in global ranking systems.

The unit will systematically monitor and report indicators related to:

- Research publications and citations

- Graduate employability outcomes
- International academic collaborations
- Faculty performance and research productivity
- International student and faculty mobility

This data-driven approach will improve institutional visibility, benchmarking capacity, and strategic planning.

b. International Academic Collaboration and Exchange

TU will expand its international academic engagement through stronger partnerships within SAARC, ASEAN, and broader global university networks.

Priority areas will include:

- Faculty and student exchange programs
- Joint research collaborations
- Dual-degree and collaborative academic programs
- International conferences and mobility initiatives
- Increased international student enrollment

These partnerships will strengthen TU's global outlook, academic reputation, and research competitiveness.

c. Institutionalization of Quality Assurance and Accreditation (QAA)

All constituent campuses and eligible academic units will be required to complete Quality Assurance and Accreditation (QAA) processes within a defined institutional timeframe.

This initiative will establish standardized academic quality benchmarks across the university system and strengthen consistency, accountability, and institutional credibility.

6. Human Resource and Governance Reform Objective

To establish a transparent, merit-based, professionally managed, and institutionally accountable governance system capable of leading TU through long-term academic transformation.

Strategic Priorities

a. Merit-Based Recruitment and Promotion Systems

The TU Service Commission will be modernized through:

- Independent academic peer review mechanisms
- Transparent evaluation procedures
- International benchmarking standards
- Digital recruitment and promotion systems

These reforms will strengthen institutional credibility, academic professionalism, and governance integrity.

b. Workforce Digital Transformation and Capacity Building

A comprehensive institutional skills-gap assessment will be conducted to retrain academic and administrative personnel in:

- Digital governance systems
- Data-driven institutional management
- Modern administrative technologies
- Financial and procurement systems
- Research management and academic analytics

This transformation will strengthen institutional efficiency and prepare TU for a digitally integrated future.

c. Inclusive and Equitable Academic Leadership

TU will adopt a structured framework for inclusion, diversity, and gender-responsive leadership development.

Key initiatives will include:

- Research fellowships for women scholars
- Leadership development and mentorship pathways
- Institutional childcare and family-support systems
- Inclusive recruitment and retention practices

These reforms will strengthen equity, institutional participation, and diversity in academic leadership.

Conclusion

Tribhuvan University is not only a higher education institution but also one of Nepal's

most significant national institutions and a key pillar of the country's intellectual and human capital development. Its transformation is closely linked with Nepal's broader aspirations for economic modernization, scientific advancement, social progress, institutional strengthening, and global competitiveness. The TU 2030 vision sets a strategic pathway grounded in academic excellence, institutional self-reliance, digital modernization, decentralization, research meritocracy, and international engagement. The core objective is not only to retain Nepal's brightest students and scholars within the national system but also to reposition TU as a leading regional center for higher education, innovation, public policy, and research excellence. By 2030, TU is envisioned to evolve from a traditional degree-granting institution into a globally recognized, research-intensive, and innovation-driven national university system that serves as Nepal's enduring intellectual anchor and a symbol of academic confidence.

1. Current State of the University

Tribhuvan University (TU), established in 1959, is the oldest and largest public university in Nepal and remains the dominant institution in the country's higher education system. It currently serves approximately 490,000–500,000 students, making it one of the largest universities in South Asia in terms of enrollment. TU operates through a widespread institutional network comprising around 62 constituent campuses and more than 1,000 affiliated colleges distributed across all seven provinces of Nepal, giving it a strong national presence and accessibility.

The university employs an estimated 7,000–8,000 academic staff along with a large number of administrative personnel, supporting a highly decentralized academic structure. TU offers a broad range of academic programs across major disciplines including humanities and social sciences, management, education, science and technology, engineering, law, and health sciences. This wide academic coverage has historically made TU the primary institution responsible for producing Nepal's civil servants, professionals, and academic workforce.

In terms of performance, TU accounts for a major share of higher education enrollment in Nepal, reflecting its strong domestic dominance. However, despite its national scale and influence, TU's global competitiveness remains limited, with its ranking placed in the 1501+ band in the Times Higher Education World University Rankings. In recent years, the university has shown gradual improvements through the introduction of new academic programs, expansion of research centers,

and early steps toward digital and institutional reform, but it is still transitioning from a mass-access education system toward a quality-driven and research-oriented university model.

The university operates through a highly decentralized system consisting of constituent campuses, affiliated colleges, and centralized academic and administrative structures. TU has historically prioritized access expansion, making higher education widely available across Nepal.

Over time, TU has also expanded its academic offerings and introduced diverse programs across disciplines. However, the institution is now operating in a highly competitive environment shaped by:

- increasing student migration abroad,
- rapid growth of foreign-affiliated universities in Nepal,
- rising expectations for global academic standards,
- and digital transformation in higher education.

TU continues to hold a dominant national position in terms of size and reach, but faces increasing pressure in areas of quality assurance, research output, governance efficiency, and international competitiveness.

2. SWOT Analysis

Strengths	Weaknesses
• Oldest and largest university in Nepal TU has nationwide presence and a long-established academic legacy, making it the most accessible public university. • Extensive institutional network Operates multiple constituent campuses and affiliated colleges across all provinces, ensuring broad geographic coverage.	• Declining academic quality perception Public perception of inconsistent teaching quality and outdated academic delivery systems. • Weak curriculum relevance Many programs are not fully aligned with global labor market demands and emerging disciplines. • Weak research culture

• High student enrollment base Enrolls the largest number of students in Nepal, giving TU strong national reach and influence in higher education. • Diverse academic programs Offers programs across humanities, management, science, education, engineering, medicine, and law. • Strong public trust and recognition Degrees from TU are widely recognized within Nepal for government jobs and professional pathways. • Affordable higher education access Provides low-cost education, supporting equity and access for students from diverse socioeconomic backgrounds. • Contribution to national human capital Has historically produced a large share of Nepal’s civil servants, professionals, and academics.	Limited research output, low publication impact, and insufficient funding for innovation. • Governance inefficiencies Centralized, slow decision-making processes and bureaucratic administrative structures. • Uneven faculty distribution Significant disparities in staffing levels across campuses and disciplines. • Weak digital infrastructure Limited integration of ERP systems, data analytics, and digital learning platforms. • Financial dependency Heavy reliance on government funding and student fees with limited diversification of income sources. • Low international competitiveness Weak global ranking, limited international partnerships, and low visibility in global academia. • Student outmigration Increasing number of students prefer foreign universities due to perceived quality and career advantages.
• Opportunities	• Threats

• Rising demand for quality public education Growing need for affordable, high-quality higher education within Nepal. • Digital transformation in education Expansion of online learning, hybrid models, and EdTech integration opportunities. • International collaboration Scope for joint degrees, exchange programs, and research partnerships with global universities. • Industry-academia linkages Opportunity to connect education with employment through internships, incubation, and innovation hubs. • Growth of skill-based and vocational education Increasing demand for practical, employability-focused programs. • Government policy support Potential alignment with national education reforms and research funding initiatives. • Diaspora and alumni engagement Strong global Nepali diaspora can support funding, mentorship, and collaboration.	• Student migration abroad (brain drain) Large-scale outflow of students to foreign universities reducing domestic enrollment. • Competition from foreign-affiliated institutions Increasing presence of international universities inside Nepal attracting students. • Global university competition International universities offering better facilities, rankings, and career outcomes. • Economic constraints Limited national investment in higher education and student affordability challenges. • Political instability Policy disruptions and governance instability affecting long-term planning. • Declining student pool Lower pass rates and shrinking eligible student population in higher education pipeline. • Rapid technological disruption
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• Regional education hub potential Opportunity for TU to become a South Asian academic and research hub.	Universities not adapting quickly to AI, digital learning, and modern education models risk falling behind • Talent retention challenges Difficulty retaining high-quality faculty and researchers due to limited incentives.
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3. Analysis of TU’s Relationship with other Universities

Tribhuvan University (TU) occupies a central and foundational position within Nepal’s higher education ecosystem and maintains a multi-layered network of relationships with national and international institutions. At the national level, TU has historically played a key role in the development of higher education in Nepal, including providing academic leadership, faculty development, and institutional support during the establishment of several newer universities. Many of Nepal’s public universities, including Kathmandu University, Pokhara University, Lumbini Buddhist University, Madhesh University, and Gandaki University, have engaged with TU through joint academic programs, curriculum development initiatives, academic advisory roles, and faculty-level collaboration. TU also contributes to national higher education governance through its coordination with the University Grants Commission (UGC) and active participation in national academic forums, policy dialogues, and vice-chancellors’ coordination platforms.

At the international level, TU has established academic partnerships with universities across Asia, Europe, and Australia, supporting student and faculty exchange programs, collaborative research projects, and emerging dual-degree initiatives. While these collaborations reflect gradual progress toward internationalization, the scale, depth, and consistency of global engagement remain limited compared to international benchmarks. TU’s global academic visibility and integration are still in an evolving stage, with relatively low levels of sustained research collaboration and international mobility.

In addition to universities, TU maintains relationships with key stakeholders including the Government of Nepal, which plays a central role in policy direction, funding, and

regulatory oversight; industry and private sector organizations, which provide limited but growing engagement through internships and applied research opportunities; local governments, which collaborate through community outreach and development initiatives; and development partners and research agencies that support targeted academic and research projects. Overall, TU functions as a national anchor institution with expanding but still underdeveloped international linkages, highlighting the need for deeper institutionalized collaboration and stronger global integration.

4. Identification of Areas where Strategic Reforms are Necessary

The following are some of the domains where TU can build on its strengths and overcome existing challenges:

1. Student Enrollment and Retention

Tribhuvan University faces declining domestic enrollment due to increasing student migration abroad and growing competition from foreign-affiliated institutions within Nepal. This trend reflects concerns about academic quality, employability outcomes, and institutional reputation. Strengthening enrollment and retention therefore requires improving academic attractiveness, enhancing student services, and building stronger trust in TU degrees through quality assurance and improved graduate outcomes.

2. Teaching and Learning Quality

The current teaching-learning system is still largely traditional, with limited use of modern pedagogical methods such as experiential learning, project-based learning, and industry integration. This reduces the practical skills and employability of graduates. Strengthening teaching quality requires curriculum modernization, faculty development, and stronger linkage between academic content and real-world professional demands.

3. Research and Innovation Capacity

TU's research output remains below international standards due to limited funding diversity, weak research incentives, and insufficient commercialization mechanisms. This restricts its global academic visibility and innovation potential. Enhancing research capacity requires stronger funding systems, research support structures, and improved linkages between academia, industry, and international partners.

4. Financial Sustainability

The university is heavily dependent on government grants and student fees, making it

financially vulnerable to fluctuations in enrollment and policy changes. This limits investment in infrastructure, research, and innovation. Financial sustainability can be improved through diversification of income sources such as endowments, partnerships, consultancy services, and innovation-based revenue.

5. Governance and Institutional Efficiency

TU's governance system is characterized by centralized decision-making, bureaucratic delays, and fragmented administrative processes. These inefficiencies reduce institutional responsiveness and slow down reforms. Strengthening governance requires decentralization, digital integration, and performance-based management systems.

6. Digital Transformation

Weak digital infrastructure and limited integration of ERP and data management systems hinder TU's operational efficiency. Many academic and administrative processes remain manual or partially digitized. A comprehensive digital transformation is required to enable data-driven decision-making, improve transparency, and modernize service delivery.

7. Internationalization

TU's global engagement remains limited in terms of international partnerships, student mobility, and global visibility. This affects its competitiveness in global rankings and academic reputation. Expanding internationalization requires stronger collaboration with foreign universities, increased joint programs, and efforts to attract international students and faculty.

8. Infrastructure and Resource Constraints

Insufficient academic infrastructure, outdated laboratories, and limited research facilities constrain teaching quality and innovation. These resource gaps reduce the university's ability to compete globally and support advanced research. Addressing this requires strategic investment in modern infrastructure and better resource allocation across campuses.

5. Details of the Overall Reforms and Workplan

The following is an overview of the planned reforms that align with TU's long-term goals and the potential to become the center for academic excellence:

Goal 1: Enhance Student Enrollment and Retention

Activity	Timeline (Quarterly)	Expected Outcomes
Introduce multidisciplinary, market-responsive academic programs	Q2 2026 – Q4 2029	Increased enrollment in high-demand and applied disciplines
Expand scholarships, fee support, and financial aid schemes	Q2 2026 – Q2 2030	Improved access and reduced dropout rate
Develop Learn and Earn flexible academic pathways	Q3 2026 – Q2 2030	Higher retention of working students
Strengthen career counseling and placement support	Q2 2026 – Q4 2029	Improved employability
Launch student outreach campaigns	Q3 2026 – Q4 2028	Increased enrollment nationwide

Goal 2: Improve Teaching and Learning Quality

Activity	Timeline (Quarterly)	Expected Outcomes
Curriculum revision based on competency-based education	Q2 2026 – Q4 2028	Modernized curriculum
Faculty development and pedagogical training	Q2 2026 – Q2 2030	Improved teaching quality
Experiential learning expansion	Q4 2026 – Q2 2030	Higher practical skills
Digital learning integration	Q4 2026 – Q2 2030	Technology-enabled learning
Industry collaboration in curriculum design	Q3 2026 – Q2 2030	Improved relevance

Goal 3: Strengthen Research and Innovation

Activity	Timeline (Quarterly)	Expected Outcomes
Establish competitive research grant system	Q2 2026 – Q4 2027	Increased funded research
Incentives for publications and patents	Q2 2026 – Q2 2030	Higher research output
Research incubation centers	Q3 2026 – Q4 2029	Stronger innovation ecosystem
Industry-academia collaboration	Q3 2026 – Q2 2030	Applied research growth
Centralized research management system	Q4 2026 – Q4 2028	Better governance

Goal 4: Financial Sustainability

Activity	Timeline (Quarterly)	Expected Outcomes
Establish endowment fund	Q2 2026 – Q4 2028	Financial stability
Diversify revenue streams	Q3 2026 – Q2 2030	Reduced dependency
Optimize assets and infrastructure	Q3 2026 – Q4 2029	Revenue generation
Strengthen financial governance	Q2 2026 – Q4 2027	Transparency
PPP-based projects	Q4 2026 – Q2 2030	Sustainable income

Goal 5: Governance Efficiency

Activity	Timeline (Quarterly)	Expected Outcomes
Reform decision-making structure	Q2 2026 – Q4 2027	Faster decisions
Performance-based management	Q3 2026 – Q4 2029	Accountability
HR and procurement reform	Q3 2026 – Q4 2028	Reduced delays
Monitoring system	Q3 2026 – Q2 2030	Data-driven governance
Decentralization	Q4 2026 – Q4 2029	Better responsiveness

Goal 6: Digital Transformation

Activity	Timeline (Quarterly)	Expected Outcomes
ERP implementation	Q2 2026 – Q4 2027	Digitized operations
EMIS development	Q2 2026 – Q4 2027	Real-time data
Digitization of exams/admissions	Q3 2026 – Q4 2028	Efficiency
Online/hybrid learning expansion	Q3 2026 – Q2 2030	Flexible learning

AI analytics	Q3 2027 – Q2 2030	Data-driven decisions
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Goal 7: Internationalization

Activity	Timeline (Quarterly)	Expected Outcomes
Expand global partnerships	Q2 2026 – Q2 2030	Higher collaboration
Joint/dual degrees	Q3 2026 – Q2 2030	Global recognition
International recruitment	Q3 2026 – Q2 2030	Diversity
Research collaboration	Q2 2026 – Q2 2030	Global visibility
International conferences	Q4 2026 – Q2 2030	Academic presence

Goal 8: Infrastructure Development

Activity	Timeline (Quarterly)	Expected Outcomes
Upgrade labs and libraries	Q2 2026 – Q2 2030	Improved facilities
Green campuses	Q2 2026 – Q4 2029	Sustainability
Digital infrastructure	Q3 2026 – Q2 2030	Modern system
PPP funding mobilization	Q4 2026 – Q2 2030	Investment growth
Innovation hubs	Q4 2026 – Q2 2030	Startup ecosystem

Goal 9: Human Resource Development

Activity	Timeline (Quarterly)	Expected Outcomes
Skills gap analysis	Q2 2026 – Q4 2026	HR mapping
Training programs	Q3 2026 – Q2 2030	Skilled workforce
Performance HR system	Q4 2026 – Q4 2028	Efficiency
Leadership development	Q4 2026 – Q2 2030	Strong leadership
Faculty mobility	Q2 2027 – Q2 2030	Capacity building

