

Rooted in the North.

STRATEGIC PLAN 2026-2030



NOSM
UNIVERSITY





It is the special mission of the University to provide programs that are innovative and responsive to the needs of individual students and to the unique health-care needs of the people of Northern Ontario and other northern regions of Canada, which includes people living in rural, remote, Indigenous and Francophone communities.

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WHY ROOTED IN THE NORTH

Rooted in the North reflects NOSM University's identity and purpose. Established to serve and be shaped by Northern Ontario, the University's growth depends on the health of the ecosystem around it—the people, communities, and partnerships.

Our strength comes from the reciprocal relationships that connect learners, faculty, staff, and communities across the region.

Like a resilient ecosystem, NOSM University thrives when every part works together. Communities provide the context and support for learning and research; in turn, our graduates, faculty, and programs contribute knowledge, care, and capacity back into those same communities.

Rooted in the North captures this interdependence. It reminds us that our future depends on sustaining strong, balanced relationships that nurture learning, advance health, and strengthen the North as a whole. Whether you have been here from the beginning or are just putting down roots, we all grow stronger together.



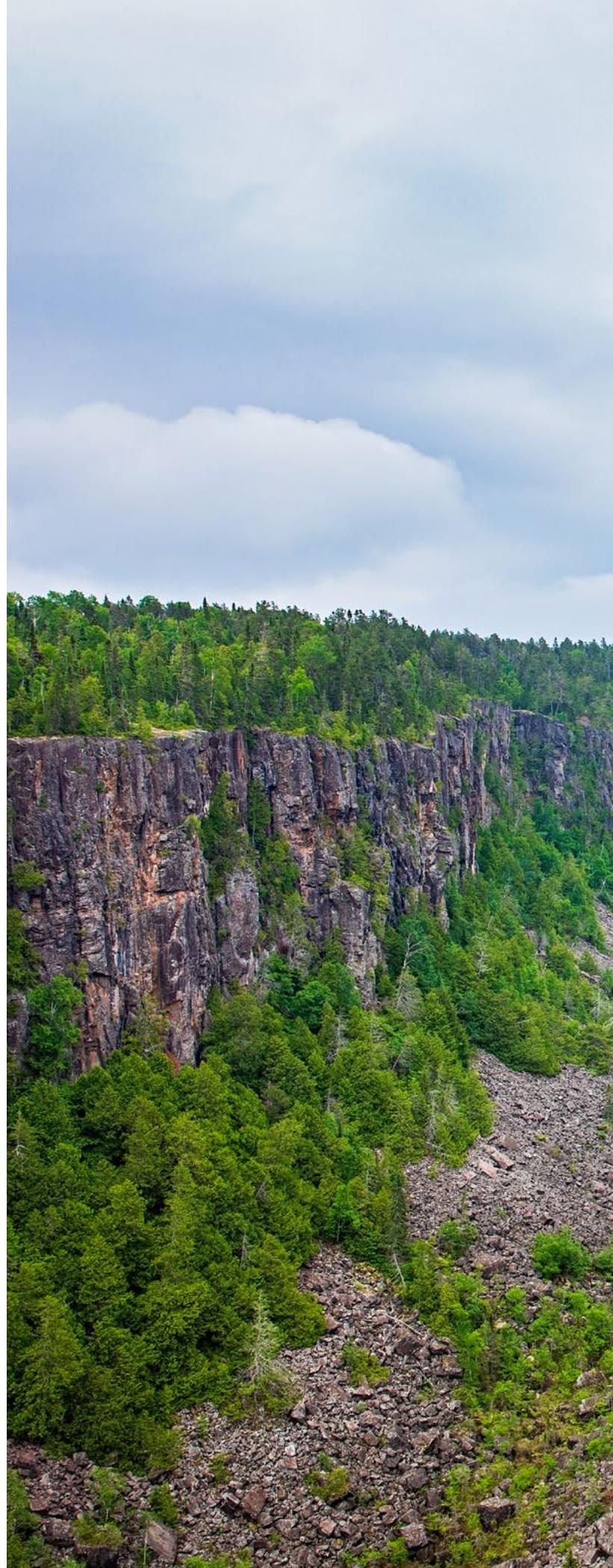
In the spirit of Truth and Reconciliation, NOSM University respectfully acknowledges that our pan-Northern campus is on the homelands of First Nations Peoples.

The university buildings we occupy in Greater Sudbury and Thunder Bay are located on the territory of the Anishinabek Nation, specifically Atikameksheng and Wahnapiitae First Nations and Fort William First Nation.

Beyond a land acknowledgement, we understand that reconciliation is a practice.

We gratefully acknowledge the Elders and Knowledge Keepers who share their gifts and teachings with us so that we may better understand and honour their wisdom, and that of all of the traditional keepers of this land.

NOSM University will continue to practice reconciliation by listening, learning and fostering a culture of mutual respect and trust.







A MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS

On behalf of the Board of Governors, we are proud to reaffirm NOSM University's special mission to improve access to high-quality health care across Northern Ontario through education, research, and meaningful community partnership.

From the very beginning, communities across Northern Ontario championed the creation of a medical school for the North, by the North. Their collective advocacy and belief in a new model of medical education made NOSM University possible. When NOSM opened its doors, it did so with a bold and hopeful vision to educate physicians and health professionals in and for Northern Ontario, grounded in a deep commitment to social accountability. That founding purpose remains our guiding direction.

By recruiting learners from Northern and rural communities, delivering distributed and community-engaged education, and aligning research with regional priorities, NOSM University has demonstrated that its model works.

Graduates are choosing to practise in the North, strengthening local health systems and improving access to care in communities that have long faced shortages.

The Board recognizes that ongoing health human resource gaps, physician retirements, and system pressures make this mission more important than ever. Our responsibility is to ensure the University remains strong, sustainable, and responsive as needs evolve.

As we look ahead, the future possibilities are inspiring. NOSM University's strategy has proven effective, and the next chapter will build on that success by expanding programs, deepening partnerships, and advancing innovation that enhances health outcomes across the region.

Rooted in its communities and guided by its special mission, NOSM University will continue to improve access to care and help ensure a healthier future for Northern Ontario.

Mr. John Stenger

Chair, NOSM University Board of Governors



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

NOSM University was founded with a bold vision to improve health outcomes across Northern Ontario by educating professionals who understand and serve the unique needs of the North. As Canada's only independent medical university dedicated to Northern and rural health, we stand at an important and defining moment in our journey.

Every day, I see the impact of our mission in the learners who choose to train here, the faculty and staff who lead with purpose, and the communities that place their trust in us. We serve a vast and diverse region that includes urban, rural, Francophone, and Indigenous communities. While health systems continue to evolve, our commitment remains constant: to ensure the people of Northern Ontario have access to the care they deserve.

In response to changing needs, NOSM University continues to educate and retain the next generation of health professionals for the North. We are expanding programs, strengthening partnerships, and advancing research that reflects the priorities and strengths of the communities we serve.

Our new five-year strategic plan, Rooted in the North, sets a clear and ambitious course forward. Informed by input from more than 2,000 learners, faculty, staff, alumni, partners, and community members, the plan sharpens our focus on educational excellence, research impact, meaningful partnership, and institutional strength. It positions us not only to respond to change, but to lead it.

In just two decades, NOSM University has transformed what is possible in medical education and health workforce development. Our graduates are strengthening communities across Northern Ontario and contributing to innovation across Ontario and Canada.

Rooted in the North is more than a strategy. It is our promise to continue leading with purpose, advancing health equity, and building a stronger, more resilient health system for generations to come.

Dr. Michael Green

President, Vice-Chancellor, Dean and CEO

VISION, MISSION AND VALUES

VISION

Health equity across the North.

MISSION

Strengthen Northern communities and health systems through socially accountable health education and research.

VALUES

INCLUSIVENESS

We foster an environment that honours diversity in people, cultures, and perspectives to build trust and mutual respect, and deliver benefits for individuals, the University, and the community.

COMMUNITY

We are grateful that NOSM University is deeply rooted in the people, places, and institutions of Northern Ontario. We prioritize relationships and collaboration to strengthen local education and clinical capacity and improve health outcomes across the region.

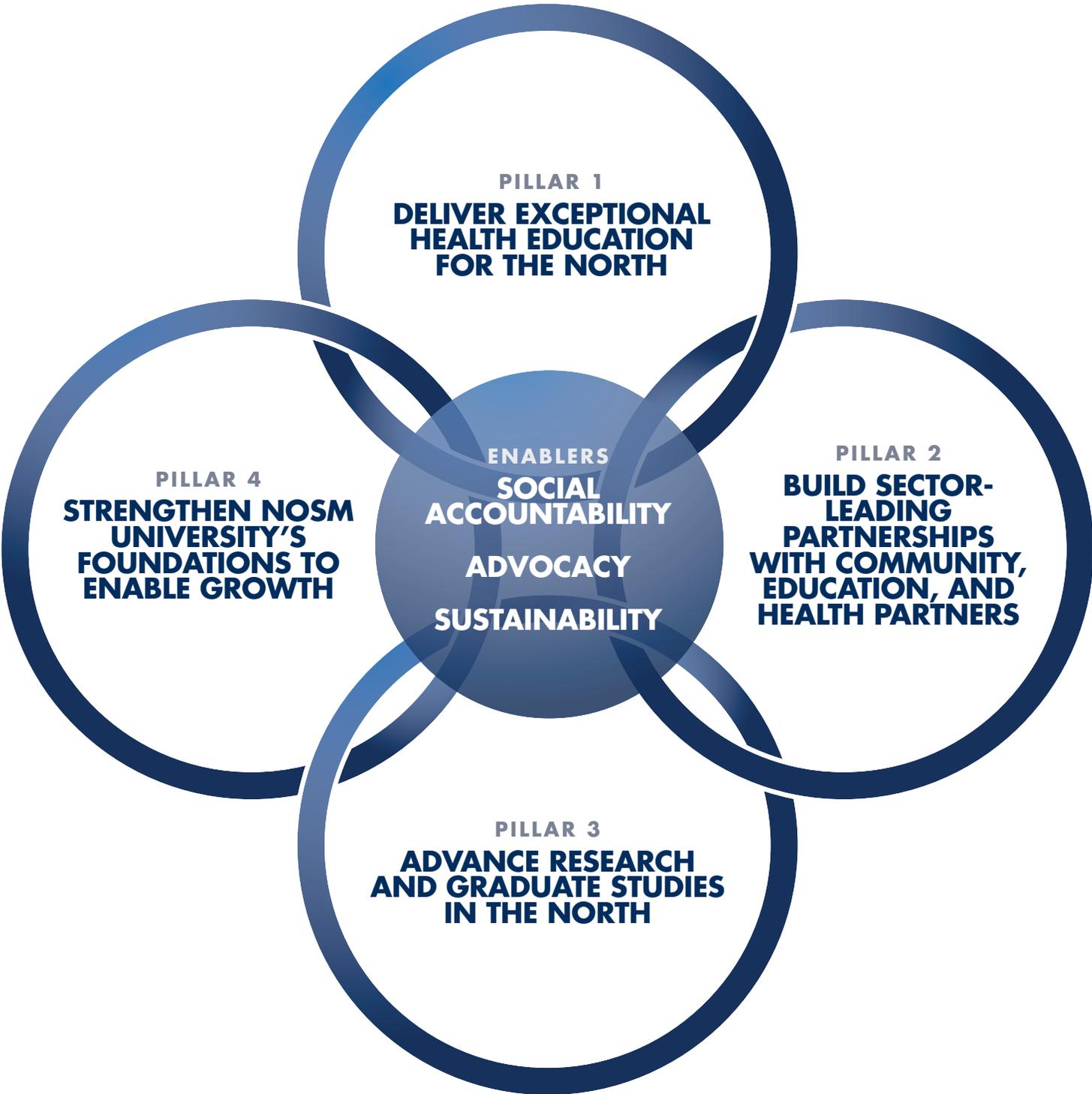
ADAPTABILITY

We are responsive to the unique health challenges and evolving needs of Northern Ontario and readily adjust our approaches to serve learners and communities effectively.

EXCELLENCE

We strive for excellence in education, teaching, research, and leadership that makes a tangible difference in the health of the North.

STRATEGIC PILLARS AND ENABLERS



ENABLERS

To successfully implement NOSM University's strategic pillars, a set of foundational enablers must be activated. These enablers span financial, human, and structural domains and are essential for translating strategic intent into measurable outcomes.



SOCIAL ACCOUNTABILITY

NOSM University will:

- Lead with social accountability in all strategic decisions, aligning education, research, and service with the priority health needs of Northern Ontario.
- Advance health equity by directing institutional planning and investment to improve access and outcomes for Indigenous, Francophone, rural, remote, and other underserved or marginalized communities.
- Ensure accreditation excellence by strengthening institutional capacity to meet national standards while advancing the University's mission and social accountability mandate.
- Champion culturally safe and anti-racist environments that eliminate systemic bias and promote equity in learning and care.
- Advance the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action relevant to medical education and health care.
- Strengthen community partnership and impact accountability by ensuring community priorities shape programs, research, service, and measurable outcomes.



ADVOCACY

NOSM University will:

- Secure appropriate funding by clearly articulating NOSM University's value, aligning with provincial and federal priorities, and engaging a broader range of government bodies.
- Advocate for infrastructure ownership, capital investment, and policy support to advance distributed education and health equity.
- Build internal capacity to administer tri-agency funding and reduce long-term liabilities through infrastructure ownership.

SUSTAINABILITY

NOSM University will:

- Integrate sustainability and planetary health principles into all aspects of operations, AI usage, education, and research to reduce environmental impact and promote long-term institutional resilience.
- Advance planetary health by embedding climate-conscious practices in clinical education, community engagement, and infrastructure planning.
- Utilize NOSM University's AI Policy for Learning and Teaching as part of the sustainability framework for the University.
- Develop and implement a sustainability framework that includes carbon reduction targets, green procurement policies, and climate adaptation strategies tailored to Northern Ontario's unique geography and vulnerabilities.



STRATEGIC PILLAR 1

DELIVER EXCEPTIONAL HEALTH EDUCATION FOR THE NORTH



NOSM University is delivering an exceptional, learner-centric academic experience that equips learners with advanced health expertise and cultural competencies tailored to Northern needs. We are building a dynamic, inclusive, and culturally safe environment, responsive to Indigenous, Francophone, and rural communities. Importantly, we are ensuring our growth is financially sustainable to secure our long-term future as we continue shaping health education in the North. We are committed to continually improving the learner experience through innovation, collaboration, and reflection.

OUR STRATEGIC INITIATIVES

- ▶ Integrate culturally—and contextually—appropriate content into academic curriculum.
- ▶ Improve access and experience for Northern, Indigenous, Francophone, and rural learners from recruitment to graduation.
- ▶ Collaborate with faculty to develop innovative, learner-centric and community-led teaching models such as simulated and layered learning.
- ▶ Develop new academic and continuing education offerings that prioritize community needs and are financially sustainable.

OUR VIEW OF SUCCESS IN 5 YEARS

NOSM University will have an improved integrated curriculum that reflects the cultural and health realities of Northern Ontario. Learners from Indigenous, Francophone, and rural communities will experience improved access, support, and outcomes, with a measurable increase in numbers of graduates choosing to practise in the North. Innovative, community-led teaching models will be embedded across the region, strengthening local capacity and learner-community relationships.





HOW WE WILL MEASURE OUR SUCCESS

- By 2031, all academic programs meet defined standards for culturally and contextually appropriate curricula, as demonstrated through annual reviews confirming alignment with recognized frameworks, considering feedback from persons with lived experience, and increasing faculty participation in cultural competency education.
- By 2031, NOSM University achieves demonstrable, system-wide improvement in equitable access, learner experience, and outcomes for Northern, Indigenous, Francophone, rural, and Black learners, validated through application growth, learner satisfaction metrics, equity-informed quality improvements, and successful accreditation outcomes.
- By 2031, NOSM University financially demonstrates institution-wide readiness for innovative teaching, evidenced by trained faculty/preceptors, active use of layered learning and simulation-enabled models across teaching sites, and documented alignment with curriculum gaps and program accreditation requirements.
- By 2031, at least 75% of new and expanded CEPD and academic offerings meet the needs of the Northern workforce and community partners, are financially sustainable, are accessible across Northern Ontario, and are impactful as reflected by high relevance/satisfaction ratings.

What is a rural Northern Ontario learner? Learners who hail from communities in the Ontario Health North region with a Rurality Index for Ontario (RIO) score of 40 or higher.



STRATEGIC PILLAR 2

BUILD SECTOR- LEADING PARTNERSHIPS WITH COMMUNITY, EDUCATION, AND HEALTH PARTNERS



NOSM University is building strong, collaborative relationships with education, health, and community partners. Through shared initiatives and coordinated engagement, we are unlocking new opportunities in education, research, and health, together shaping a healthier, more connected North.

OUR STRATEGIC INITIATIVES

- ▶ Enhance strategic alignment with health system partners.
- ▶ Build academic offerings in collaboration with peer universities, colleges, and Indigenous educational institutes.
- ▶ Strengthen partnerships with Indigenous, Francophone, and rural communities.
- ▶ Collaborate with municipalities, First Nations, and communities on policy, sustainable operations, and funding opportunities.



OUR VIEW OF SUCCESS IN 5 YEARS

NOSM University will be recognized as a convener and collaborator across the North. These partnerships will result in shared programs, community-centred care and service, and joint advocacy efforts that amplify NOSM University's impact and reduce duplication across the sector.



HOW WE WILL MEASURE OUR SUCCESS

- In year one, support three Academic Health Sciences Network North (AHSNN) project collaborations.
- Co-develop two program plans with educational partners over the next five years.
- Successful launch of the Circle for Indigenous Health Research and Innovation, within five years.
- Increase new coordinated advocacy initiatives by at least one site per year, for each of the next five years.



STRATEGIC PILLAR 3

ADVANCE RESEARCH AND GRADUATE STUDIES IN THE NORTH



NOSM University is advancing a bold research agenda that tackles the unique challenges and opportunities of the North. Over the next five years, we will build the infrastructure and expertise to drive transformative, collaborative research, leveraging the talent and growing capacity across our communities and partners.

OUR STRATEGIC INITIATIVES

- ▶ Strengthen leadership and impact of Northern-focused health research.
- ▶ Pursue collaborative research opportunities with Northern communities and partners.
- ▶ Set up and support research infrastructure to pursue sponsored research funding.
- ▶ Develop learner and faculty research capability through mentorship, graduate studies and learner-centred research experiences.



OUR VIEW OF SUCCESS IN 5 YEARS

NOSM University will be an international leader in Northern health research, with a thriving research ecosystem that includes faculty, learners, and community partners. The University will have increased its research output, secured major funding, and built infrastructure that supports long-term research capacity.



HOW WE WILL MEASURE OUR SUCCESS

- Achieve a 3% year-over-year increase in peer-reviewed publications authored by NOSM University faculty.
- A 10% year-over-year increase of partnered research activities with Northern communities and partners.
- By 2029 all requirements to independently administer Tri-Agency funding have been achieved.
- Increase annually the number of graduate students supervised by NOSM University faculty by 10% and expand NOSM University faculty participation in graduate studies roles (instructor, supervisor, thesis committee member, program committee member) by 5%.



STRATEGIC PILLAR 4

STRENGTHEN NOSM UNIVERSITY'S FOUNDATIONS TO ENABLE GROWTH



NOSM University is committed to pursuing stable, long- term growth to enable us to deliver on our mission. Over the next five years, we will explore the optimal academic and administrative models to support this growth. We will also ensure our foundations—our buildings, technologies, systems, and people—are secure and adaptable to the needs of the University, and aligned to our commitments to Indigenous, Francophone, and rural interest holders.

OUR STRATEGIC INITIATIVES

- ▶ Update and modernize academic and administrative models to support new growth.
- ▶ Stabilize capital infrastructure.
- ▶ Continue to optimize the way we do things to increase our effectiveness and improve employee satisfaction and retention.
- ▶ Build leadership and staff capacity and capability, supported by succession planning and mentorship.



OUR VIEW OF SUCCESS IN 5 YEARS

NOSM University will have expanded its physical footprint with long-term, safe, and sustainable facilities. Administrative and academic systems will be streamlined and scalable, supporting new programs and increased enrolment. The University will demonstrate strong internal capacity, with high retention and engagement among staff and faculty, and readiness to meet future demands.



HOW WE WILL MEASURE OUR SUCCESS

- By 2028, a new departmental and regional structure developed and implemented at NOSM University.
- Phase 1 of the Capital Master Plan implemented by 2029.
- 20-year lease agreement executed with Infrastructure Ontario by 2027.
- By 2028, achieve bi-annual employee satisfaction rate that exceeds the published Stats Canada rate.
- Annual turnover rate does not exceed the national average rate of 15% (2024).
- Succession planning process including a mentorship program developed and implemented by 2029.

THANK YOU FOR STRENGTHENING NOSM UNIVERSITY'S ECOSYSTEM

NOSM University thrives because of the people and partners who sustain our shared mission across Northern Ontario. At the heart of our ecosystem are our learners, faculty, and staff, whose dedication and leadership advance our commitment to social accountability and health equity.

We exist because of and for the communities and interest holders who believe in our purpose.

To the communities who welcome our learners, the health-care partners who teach and mentor them, the alumni who return to guide the next generation, the educational partners who expand our reach, the donors who invest in our future, and the government ministries who support our special mission, thank you.

Together, you form the ecosystem that sustains and propels NOSM University. With gratitude, we look ahead, rooted in the North and committed to improving the health of Northern Ontario for generations to come.

