

MAY 2026

Executive Brief

In the recruitment of the
President & Vice Chancellor
for Yukon University



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Organizational Profile

YUKON UNIVERSITY

Our 13 campuses are located on the traditional territories of the 14 Yukon First Nations. We respect and honour Yukon First Nations knowledge, worldviews and educational priorities in every aspect of YukonU. Yukon University is Canada's newest university, and Canada's only university north of the 60th parallel. As an institution that offers a broad range of programs and is as committed to the value of skilled trades training as it is to the value of a diploma or a degree, Yukon University meets the education needs of the North. With tailored learning opportunities and programs, the University's thirteen campuses play a critical role in delivering education throughout the Yukon.

Yukon University traces its history to the founding in 1963 of the Whitehorse Vocational and Technical Training Centre, located on the banks of the Yukon River in downtown Whitehorse. College status was granted in the spring of 1983 when the Yukon Vocational and Technical Training Centre became Yukon College, and in 1988 the Whitehorse campus moved from downtown to its current location, 2km up the hill. In spring of 2020 Yukon College was granted university status and all thirteen campuses were renamed Yukon University.

As a new university, YukonU builds on existing strengths and will be known for unique, relevant, niche programming and research in the areas of: Indigenous self-determination and governance; climate change, society and environment; and resource development, technology and innovation. With over 50 degree, diploma, certificate and trades programs, local learners access opportunities without needing to leave home – those from across Canada and internationally are invited to deepen their understanding of YukonU's rapidly changing circumpolar world.

13
campuses

14
Yukon First Nations
Territories

1963
founded

2020
university status

50
programs

STRATEGIC PLAN

Yukon University is about to embark on the development of its second strategic plan as a university. It will engage governments, citizens, and organizations across the territory. The 2022–2027 Strategic Plan, *Becoming* will conclude in June of 2027 having set the stage for the future of the university. We will soon embark on creating a new visionary plan that looks ahead over the next 50 years.

BREAKING THE DAWN: STRATEGIC PLAN

Yukon University's Board of Governors approved [Breaking the Dawn: Reimagining Reconciliation through re-education](#) in December 2024. This document serves as the University's Reconciliation Framework and guides academic and operational matters at the University.

In planning for reconciliation through re-education, Yukon University's reconciliation framework draws from generations of Yukon First Nations pedagogical practices – prayer, story, song, weaving, dreaming – available in materials and recordings from, or prepared for, the Yukon Native Language Centre, Council of Yukon Indians (now Council of Yukon First Nations) and Yukon College (now Yukon University). Much of the thinking, dialoguing, and dreaming that is reflected in the Reconciliation Framework happened long before our

institution became a university. This document is simply reawakening the knowledge and memories of the land and the ancestors so that we all learn to respect and talk to each other. This is the meaning of reconciliation through re-education.

ACADEMIC PLAN

The 2023–2028 Academic Plan is Yukon University's first as a university. Developed with input from over 200 Yukoners – including students, faculty, staff, First Nations and community members – it advances the vision of the Strategic Plan through five goals: ensuring relevance to the North, amplifying Indigenous ways of knowing, being and doing, enabling interdisciplinary learning, advancing access and inclusion, and embedding experiential learning. The Plan deepens the University's commitment to programming and research in the North, by the North, for the North, while reinforcing the importance of trades training, access programs, lifelong learning and community campus programming alongside the development of new degrees and northern-specific research.

VISION AND MISSION

Vision

Yukon University will become a thriving learning and research community leading Canada's North.

Mission

We provide inclusive, quality education experiences that equip learners to seize opportunities, make change and positively impact local and global communities.



OUR VALUES

Integrity

We exist with commitment and responsibility to academic freedom, research integrity and scholarly excellence. Honesty, fairness, respect and ethical behaviour guide all we do. We encourage uncompromising questioning of the status quo, both in our institution and in our impact in the world. We promote bold and confident action in our quest for better solutions to the pressing problems of the North and the world.

Quality

Quality is imperative to bringing our mission to life. We promote high-quality programs and services by aligning our priorities with our resources and investing strategically. We invite external perspectives as required, to help us improve continuously in all facets of our operations. We strengthen a culture of excellence, including in the development and delivery of relevant, innovative programs and courses.

Just society

We embrace our influence as a driver of social and environmental change. Advancing a just society for all means we recognize that we are part of a collective and that we have responsibilities to and for each other. We are committed to Truth and Reconciliation and to support the self-determination of Yukon First Nations. We also see our role in advancing equity, diversity and inclusion in all our endeavours. That's why we empower students, staff and faculty to achieve their fullest potential and help to create a kinder, better future for all.

Relationships

Respectful relationships bind our common purpose. Above all else, we nurture a culture of deep listening, critical dialogue and respectful engagement. We care about the wellbeing and connectedness of our employees and students; through this profound sense of belonging, together we create the community that is Yukon University. We were built on a foundation of reciprocal relationships with Yukon First Nations, government, community and industry partners, and we will continue to invest in these relationships so that we can remain responsive to the education and training needs of the North



YUKONU AT A GLANCE

There are [13 Yukon University campuses](#) throughout the Yukon.

Home to students and employees across the Yukon

- Over 700 full-time equivalent students
- 371 permanent and term employees – 394 casual and contract staff
- Over 10,000 continuing studies learners
- 20% of all students identifying as Indigenous

7 schools or programs

The University currently has two faculties – Applied Science and Management; and Applied Arts containing the following schools

- [School of Indigenous Governance](#)
- [School of Social Sciences and Humanities](#)
- [School of Health, Education and Human Services](#)
- [School of Skilled Trades](#)
- [School of Science](#)
- [School of Business & Leadership](#)

Recruitment of President & Vice Chancellor

The University currently offers over 50 certificate, diploma and degree programs.

In addition to credentialed programming, the University offers numerous professional and personal interest programs through its Continuing Education division.

Research Focus

Yukon University has a unique focus on northern research and innovation. The YukonU Research Centre, takes pride in investigating distinctly northern questions while drawing on western science and Indigenous knowledge to create and share innovative northern solutions.

"We see research as a way to grow knowledge so that we can improve the wellbeing of our people, the land, waters and all our relations. Research not as an academic exercise. It is deeply relational and must lead to real benefits for our communities, both human and more-than-human."



Polaris Project

As we near the conclusion of our first Strategic Plan, we are embarking on one of our most transformative opportunities to date – the construction of a new science building.

Captured within the project name of "Polaris," the building to be realized will, through its design and intention, invite and cultivate an interplay between Yukon First Nations culture and ways of knowing, and western approaches to learning and knowledge generation. It will become a place to learn, to teach and to create knowledge in new and transformative ways, and a place that opens minds to different approaches and to new ideas for the direct purpose of helping to advance understanding of complex issues of relevance to the North.



GOVERNANCE

Board of Governors and Senate

Yukon University operates under the authority of the [Yukon University Act](#) and is governed by a Board of Governors and a Senate.

The 17-member [Board of Governors](#) acts on behalf of the public overseeing the business affairs of the University. As representatives from both the University and community, their role is to set and govern the University's mission and strategic plan.

The academic governance of Yukon University is vested in [Senate](#), as outlined in the *Yukon University Act, Section 31 (1)*. The Senate is legislatively required to consist of at least 60% faculty members. Currently there are 33 members on the senate with equal faculty representation from the University's two faculties

The President serves on both governing bodies, co-chairing the Senate with a faculty member.

University Chancellor

The [Chancellor](#) of Yukon University is appointed by the Board of Governors and acts as a bridge between the institution, the students, and the broader community.

Community Campuses

YukonU has [13 campuses](#) located in communities throughout the territory, including at the [Whitehorse Correctional Centre](#). Each campus offers academic and vocational programming that is guided by a legislated Community Campus Committee to ensure offerings are aligned with community needs.

ADMINISTRATION

President & Vice Chancellor

The President & Vice Chancellor is the legislated Chief Executive Officer of the University and provides strategic leadership for the University, reporting to the Board of Governors. This is the position being recruited.

President's Executive Council

The PEC is comprised of the Vice-President's and Associate Vice Presidents reporting to the President and representing all the divisions across the institution. The PEC is the decision-making and advisory table for topics and issues that are under the President's authority. Current composition includes:

- Provost and Vice President Academic.
- Vice President Finance and Administration.
- Vice President Reconciliation.
- University Secretary and General Counsel
- Executive Advisor, Human Resources
- Vice Provost and Associate Vice President Research
- Associate Vice President University Relations.

Senior Leadership Team

The Senior Leadership Team is made up of PEC as well as Deans and Directors. The purpose of the senior leadership team is to advise the president on cross-institutional issues and activities and to ensure communication throughout the University.

President's Advisory Committee on First Nations Initiatives (PACFNI)

The [PACFNI](#) is an external advisory committee to the President. It is comprised of educational representatives from each Yukon First Nation, and plays an important role by assisting Yukon University in its goal to increase the effectiveness of programs and services offered, with the ultimate goal being the success of all Yukon University students.

Yukon University Foundation

The President serves as a director on the University's charitable body, the [Yukon University Foundation](#) which serves as a steward of financial gifts supporting the vision and mission of YukonU. Established in 2015 and overseen by the [Foundation Board](#), the Yukon University Foundation recently successfully concluded a \$4M campaign Together, for the North, to invest in the future leaders and change-makers of the Yukon. A \$1M gift from Northern Vision Development anchors this campaign.

Position Profile

The successful candidate will provide transformative vision, strategy, and leadership to Yukon University as it enters a pivotal period in its evolution. Reporting to the Board of Governors, the President & Vice Chancellor will serve as the chief executive of the University, providing oversight to all academic, administrative, financial, and community engagement functions across thirteen campuses located on the traditional territories of the 14 Yukon First Nations.

The President will lead the development of the University's next strategic plan – a visionary plan looking ahead over the next 50 years – and will work alongside the Vice-President, Reconciliation, the President's Executive Council, Senate, and the Board of Governors to advance the purposes of the University as set out in the Yukon University Act.

ABOUT THE ROLE

- Serve as the chief executive officer of Yukon University, providing strategic leadership and administrative oversight across all campuses and operations.
- Manage and oversee the executive leadership of the University.
- Lead the development and implementation of a new long-term strategic plan engaging governments, citizens, Yukon First Nations, and organizations across the territory.
- Advance the purposes of the University under the Yukon University Act, including advancing learning for the betterment of society, enhancing the well-being of the Yukon, delivering programming rooted in the northern environment, and honouring reconciliation with Yukon First Nations.
- Build and maintain effective working relationships with Yukon Government, Yukon First Nations governments, federal partners, industry, and community stakeholders.
- Oversee the financial sustainability and revenue diversification of the University, including fundraising, government advocacy, and partnership development.
- Champion the full range of programming from adult basic education and trades to diplomas and degrees, serving all campuses and surrounding communities.
- Foster a workplace culture that values transparency, shared governance, and the wellbeing and development of all employees.
- Represent Yukon University nationally and internationally, elevating its profile as a leader in northern post-secondary education.

ESSENTIAL COMPETENCIES

The following competencies are required characteristics that must be demonstrated before appointment.

Indigenization & Reconciliation Leadership

The President will bring a demonstrated record of advancing reconciliation through meaningful, sustained action.. They will bring established relationships with Yukon First Nations and a working understanding of Yukon First Nations governance and sovereignty, including those with Final and Self-Government Agreements and those without, as well as Indigenous history within the territory. The successful candidate will have experience incorporating Indigenous perspectives into curriculum, hiring, and institutional planning, and will support Indigenous faculty, staff, and students. Reconciliation at Yukon University should be meaningful and community-informed, grounded in trust and relationships.

Relationship Building & Community-Based Leadership

The President will be a community-based leader whose approach to relationships has produced tangible results. They will build and maintain authentic, caring relationships with staff, faculty, students, Yukon Government, Yukon First Nations partners, and the broader community. They will be approachable, empathetic, trustworthy, and genuine. The successful candidate will be in service to the institution – a leader of a team who fosters collaboration and prioritizes relationships across a broad base of

internal and external stakeholders.

Humility, Empathy & Self-Awareness

The President will lead with humility and genuine care for others. They will admit mistakes, receive criticism constructively, and change course when necessary. They will be respected for their approachable, diplomatic style and their commitment to accountability and openness. The successful candidate will build trusting relationships and leadership capacity in others through compassion, self-awareness, and an enabling view of leadership.

Visionary Leadership

The President will be a visionary leader capable of walking in many worlds. They will bring people together around a compelling, long-term vision that reflects Yukon University's unique identity, values, place-based mission and unique northern context. They will articulate and implement strategic, academic, and reconciliation plans with clarity and follow-through. The successful candidate will be innovative, open to new ideas, and a progressive thinker with the capacity to guide the institution over a generational horizon.

Communication & Transparency

The President will communicate clearly, consistently, and honestly. They will be an active listener who does not just hear but thoughtfully considers and responds to feedback. The successful candidate will foster open dialogue, ensure information

flows throughout the organization, and be transparent in decision-making — building trust through clarity and genuine engagement at all levels of the institution.

Business Acumen & Financial Stewardship

The President will bring demonstrable business acumen and CEO-level experience leading a complex organization. They will effectively oversee academic, financial, human resource, research and other institutional functions. The successful candidate will have the capacity and interest to diversify revenue, pursue fundraising opportunities, build corporate and institutional partnerships, and advocate for sustained public investment in Yukon University's mission.

Understanding of University Purposes

The President will have a deep understanding of, and commitment to, the purposes of the University as set out in the Yukon University Act. As set out in section 2 of the Act, this includes an obligation to enhance the environmental, cultural, social and economic well-being of the Yukon.

The successful candidate will champion the full range of programming – from adult basic education and trades to diplomas and degrees – serving all campuses and surrounding communities. They will value the identity of a teaching-focused, place-based northern university, they will be committed to research grounded in the unique contexts and strengths of the north and resist the replication of southern institutional models, and be, or have the potential to rise to be, a nationally recognized leader in post-secondary education capable of elevating Yukon University's profile and contributing to the broader discourse on the future of learning in Canada.

The following competencies are valued and will strengthen a candidacy. Yukon University is prepared to support the successful candidate's development in these areas through orientation, mentorship, and professional development.

PREFERRED COMPETENCIES

Northern & Yukon Contextual Understanding

The President will develop a thorough understanding of northern realities, including the context of community campuses and life outside Whitehorse. Familiarity with Indigenous governance structures and history, lived northern experience, and an appreciation for the distinct character of place-based education in the North are assets. The successful candidate will understand the reality faced by those living in Yukon communities and will ensure community campuses remain central to institutional planning.

Change Management & Institutional Evolution

The President will have the ability to lead positive organizational and cultural change, bringing the skills and experience needed to guide Yukon University through its ongoing evolution. The successful candidate will build buy-in for new directions while balancing the urgency of change with the patience required for trust-building and meaningful consultation.

Governance & Shared Decision-Making

The President will understand the University's bicameral governance structures, exercise leadership in defending and advancing academic

freedom, and be committed to shared governance with meaningful faculty and staff voice in decision-making. The successful candidate will be open to pursuing co-governance models with First Nations in accordance with section 17.7 of Yukon First Nation Self-Government Agreements and a commitment to working with all Yukon First Nations recognizing their rights as defined in UNDRIP and Section 35 of the Constitution Act, 1982.

Academic Credentials

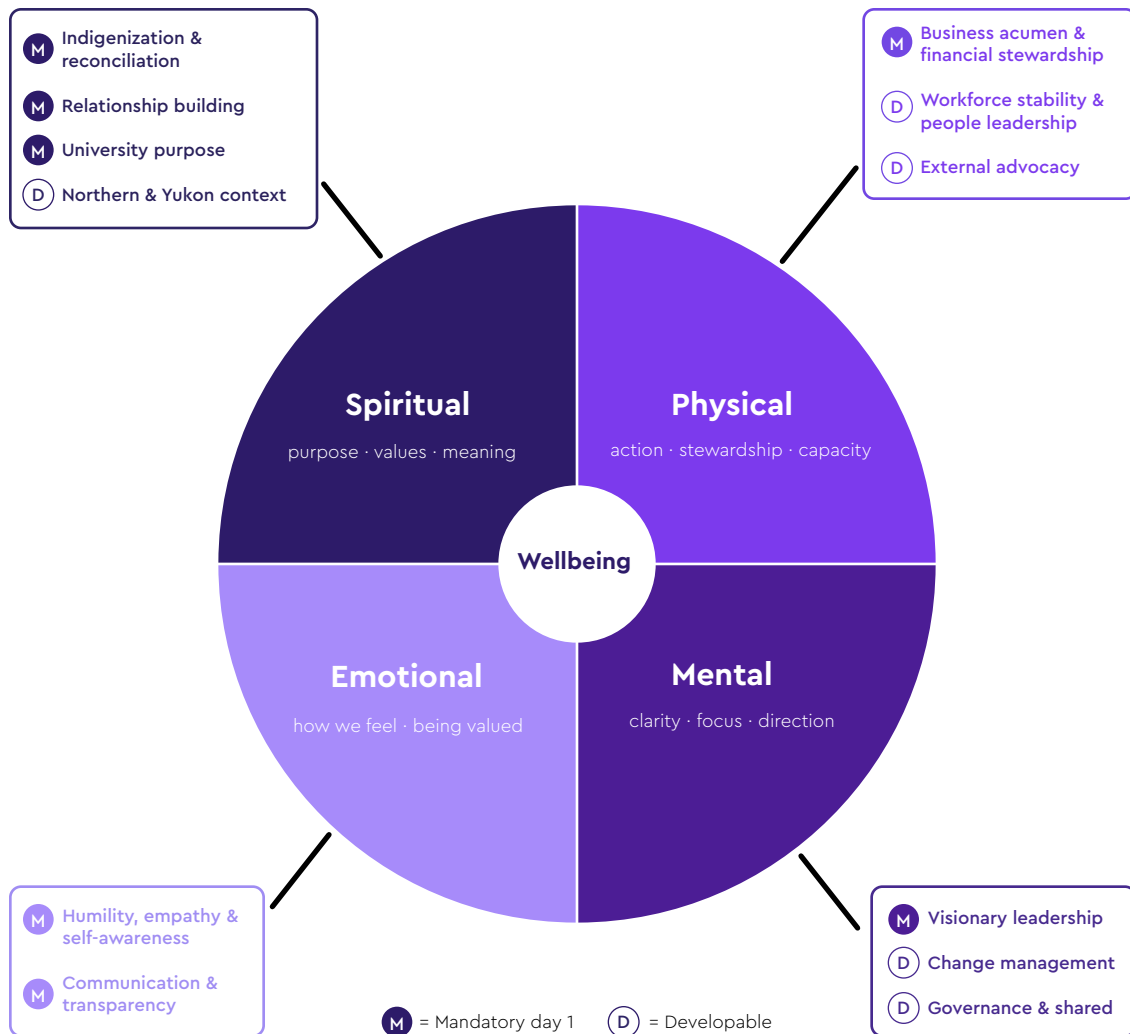
The President will ideally hold a PhD or EdD and bring faculty experience and familiarity with teaching, research, and service.

Student Access, Retention & Experience

The President will bring a passion for students and student learning through a variety of pathways. They will value the priorities of a teaching-focused university and recognize the importance of flexible programming, strong instructor-student relationships, and supports for diverse student populations, including Indigenous and gender-diverse students. The successful candidate will champion improved access, transitions from K-12, and a fulsome student experience across all campuses.

COMPETENCY FRAMEWORK

The fourteen presidential competencies are organized within a wellbeing framework reflecting four interconnected dimensions: Spiritual (purpose, values, meaning), Physical (action, stewardship, capacity), Emotional (how we feel, being valued), and Mental (clarity, focus, direction). The competency wheel graphic is provided as a separate file for inclusion by the designer.



COMPENSATION

This is a 5-year term renewable by the Board of Governors, upon recommendation from the President Reappointment Committee as per Board Governance Policy 6.0, Yukon University President Reappointment. The successful candidate is expected to live in Whitehorse and work from the Ayamdigut Campus though regular travel – territorially, nationally and internationally – is required.

The position comes with a comprehensive pension and benefits package.

Salary is competitive and will be commensurate with the experience and qualifications of the successful candidate.



Deciding to Become a Candidate

The competition is being overseen by the President's Recruitment Committee of the Board of Governors..

The following is a list of steps that we anticipate in the Presidential recruitment process.

The Recruitment Committee will consider all candidates and invite a small group to move forward. If there is a desire to move forward with your candidacy after the initial interview with the Recruitment Committee, you will be invited for further conversations with the Recruitment Committee and University community. The format and nature of these conversations will allow you to learn more about Yukon University and the University community and begin to set the conditions for successful integration of the next President. The Committee commits to respecting the confidentiality of your interest throughout this process. Shortly after these conversations, if both you and the Recruitment Committee wish to proceed, we will work with you and Yukon University to create mutually acceptable terms of employment subject to the Committee's satisfaction with background and reference checks.

If you progress to the interview stage, you will be asked to provide information to allow our client to conduct a thorough background check, including reference checks and verification of your education, designations, and awards. We will seek your permission to perform these verifications before we proceed. Should you decide not to allow verification of your background, credit or criminal history, our client will be informed, and they will decide how to proceed with your candidacy.

Estimated Search Timeline

While every search is dynamic and time frames are hard to predict, the following is an overview of the expected timeline and details for this search:

Application Deadline: July 31, 2026

Shortlist Candidates: August 2026

Shortlist Interviews: September/October

Board Confirmation: December 2026

Start Date: Early 2027

Recruitment of
President & Vice Chancellor

Yukon University is open to a candidate who meets all essential qualifications but may require further support or development opportunities to fully engage in the role.

We know that making the decision to apply for any position is a big decision and we would like to thank you for considering this most important leadership position with Yukon University.

Mahsi, Mahsi-cho, Shaw nitha, Gunalchish, Thank you

To be considered, or for further information, please reach out to:

Trika Macdonald

Executive Advisor, Human Resources

tmacdonald@yukonu.ca

Expressions of interest will be accepted until July 31, 2026, at 4:30 pm local time.

