

# BECOMING

## Strategic Plan 2022–2027

Carcross | Carmacks | Dawson City | Faro | Haines Junction | Mayo  
Old Crow | Pelly Crossing | Ross River | Teslin | Watson Lake | Whitehorse

*Yedèlè  
kwadalhè*

*Nihè dāhday', hōzō wètāzul*

*ch'ijuk t'saii gwitr'it tagwahaa'yaa ts'at gwiinzii gwitoh hiidadaa*

*Nee'eh dahdj' hōsōq taateel Gūtīe nédzedēlél*

*Áxh Yaa Nastéen Dān kí soóthān dān elídok*



Gūtīe nédzedēlél

Nihè dāhday',  
hōzō wètāzul

ch'ijuk t'saii gwitr'it  
tagwahaa'yaa ts'at  
gwiinzii gwitoh  
hiidadaa

Dān kǐ soóthān  
dān elídok

kwadalhè

Áxh Yaa  
Nastéen

Nee'eh  
dahdj',  
hōsōo  
taateel

Yedèle

to come into  
existence

to come to be

to realize our potential

to work in a  
different way

# BECOMING

We are in an exciting place of transformation at Yukon University; the place between what is, and what is yet to come. To imagine this future, we drew on the strength and pride of our past and we opened our hearts to the fullest of possibility. We also reached deep into the core of our existence and reminded ourselves of all that could not be compromised. Now, as we step confidently into our future, we aspire to create change, to make tomorrow better, and to boldly, humbly lead Canada's North.

**Join us, on this journey of BECOMING.**

Yukon First Nation language translations provided  
by the Yukon Native Language Centre.

# Developing Yukon University's first Strategic Plan

The establishment of Yukon University in May 2020 achieved a significant objective of the institution's 2013 and 2016 strategic plans. Both plans were created following extensive consultation with Yukoners and set by the Board of Governors, which draws representation from Yukon First Nations, Yukon communities, students, staff and faculty. Since 2012, the Board of Governors, senior executives, staff and faculty have consulted extensively with Yukoners, researched new universities in Canada and universities across the circumpolar North, collaborated with the Government of Yukon to establish quality assurance through Campus Alberta Quality Council and developed and launched two degree programs.

In late 2020 Yukon University embarked on the development of its first five-year strategic plan as a university. Due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic restrictions, we sought input and feedback digitally. We engaged with Yukon First Nations governments, the business community, municipal leaders, the Yukon University Foundation, as well as The President's Advisory Committee on First Nations Initiatives, Indigenous youth and elders, Yukon Community Campuses, Yukon staff and faculty, the Governing Council of the Centre for Northern Innovation in Mining and the general public.

The Board of Governors has been integrally involved, both in evaluating the progress we made on our last strategic plan and in setting the direction for this Strategic Plan. In August 2021, the Board appointed a new president to finalize and implement this Strategic Plan.

The 2022–2027 Strategic Plan is bold and aspirational; it will stretch us, as a good strategic plan must. In this plan we outline the fundamental aspirations and priority actions for Yukon University as we step into our first years as a university. As our key framing document, this Plan informs and is integrated with the detailed implementation plans that are developed or updated during the life of this plan. The Board of Governors will monitor progress of the implementation of this Strategic Plan on an annual basis. Status updates will be included in the Annual Report, which is the institution's primary public reporting document.

Thank you to everyone involved in the development of this plan.

**David Morrison**

Chair of the Board of Governors

**Lesley Brown, PhD**

President & Vice Chancellor

# Strategic Plan at a glance



## Our mission

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

Our values and commitments are designed to put us on the path to become uniquely Yukon University.

Situated on the traditional territories of Yukon First Nations in 12 communities, we are guided by the indomitable spirit of the Yukon wilderness and millennia of resilience and resourcefulness. We prioritize the uniqueness and values of the North in all that we do. We draw strength from our northern environment, cultures, societies and economies. We approach with ingenuity the unique challenges of our growing territory, changing climate, and remote communities.

# Who we are

We are of the North.

Situated on the traditional territories of Yukon First Nations in 12 communities, we are guided by the indomitable spirit of the Yukon wilderness and millennia of resilience and resourcefulness.

We have been responding to and leading change in the Yukon for nearly six decades. With the founding of Yukon's first post-secondary institution in 1963, the Whitehorse Vocational and Technical Training Centre, our story began. Responding to the needs of a growing territory, we broadened post-secondary education and became Yukon College in 1983. Yukoners continued to demand more options for education closer to home and we expanded into research. In 2020, we became Yukon University—a progressive post-secondary institution that supports learners, organizations and communities on their paths of transformation. Through offering trades training, certificates, diplomas and degrees alongside adult basic education, and continuing education, we deliver what the North needs.

We prioritize the uniqueness and values of the North in all that we do. Our thirteen campuses play a vital role in creating access to education to Yukoners and providing opportunities for students from across Canada and internationally to learn about Canada's North. We also affirm our commitment to Yukon First Nations. It's why we continue to focus on making the changes needed to help Yukon First Nations to heal from the past and revitalize their cultures, languages and knowledge; we do this to support Indigenous self-governance and self-determination, now and for generations to come.

We are adaptable and tenacious. We draw strength from our northern environment, cultures, societies and economies. We are part of a circumpolar network of research and educational institutions. Through research and scholarship, we empower Yukoners and grow our renown and influence. We approach with ingenuity the unique challenges of our growing territory, changing climate, and remote communities.

We are Yukon University.



Photo: GBP Creative

## 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

These values are distilled from the feedback received in the strategic planning consultation process. They will inform our day-to-day behaviours and regard for one another and our partners as we strive to meet the commitments contained herein. We uphold these values and remind each other of their importance.

## 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.





Photo: archbould.com

## Our commitments

The following commitments are the heart of Yukon University's direction for the next five years; they represent aspirations for actions that will generate impact and collectively help to shape Canada's North. Our capacity to realize these commitments is predicated on a deep need to revitalize our critical physical and digital infrastructure.

### Over the life of this plan, Yukon University will:

Build our identity and nurture our culture as a university

Take our place in advancing reconciliation

Continue to develop our northern expertise

Develop bold thinkers and confident change leaders

Be leaders for the common good



Photo: archbould.com

## Build our identity and nurture our culture as a university

As Canada's first university North of 60, we will claim our rightful place amongst Canada's league of universities in the quest for truth, understanding, and a more just society. Our journey will be guided by an unwavering commitment to meeting the needs of Yukoners through access to education and skills training, and to life-long learning. We will become the place where people come together to explore concerns of today, including difficult and controversial topics. And, we will achieve this with reason, intellect and the passions of critical thinking, rigour and civil discourse. Through our research pursuits, we will provide the evidence that informs new solutions and drives better outcomes. We will promote a collective, community-centred spirit that is built upon a healthy, vibrant culture of inclusivity, collegiality, trust and steadfast pride in Northern identity. In achieving this commitment, we will:

- Nurture a culture of staff and faculty engagement, development, and satisfaction.
- Develop new academic programs and grow our research impact and intensity.
- Recognize and celebrate excellence in teaching, research, and service contributions.
- Strengthen ongoing engagement and knowledge sharing with our communities.
- Strengthen our impact beyond Canada's borders.
- Increase our communications and brand awareness across Canada.



## Take our place in advancing reconciliation

We will embrace the invitation to help Canada make right our collective failings of the past and we will be a leader in this change. This means we blaze the trails — and share our progress — for decolonizing education and Indigenizing scholarship in Canada. We will strengthen our collaboration with Yukon First Nations to meet their goals in education while working to heal the devastating effects of colonization, in general, and residential schools, in particular. We honour and respect the cultures, languages and heritage of Yukon First Nations, their traditional knowledge and world views by proudly walking alongside them on their paths to self-determination. In doing so, we will make space for Yukon First Nations ways of knowing, doing and being in all that we do. In achieving this commitment, we will:

- Centre Indigenous knowledge in curricula, teaching practices, physical spaces and planning, hiring and review practices, leadership styles, organizational structures, governance.
- Work together with First Nations governments to support and prioritize their needs for education and research, and to uphold their self-determination.
- Redress social injustice through truth-seeking, education and decolonizing actions.
- Create an Indigenous student centre as a place of gathering for connection and cultural practice.



Photo: Greg Martin

## Continue to develop our northern expertise

We will work to become a recognized leader and catalyst for education and knowledge that is relevant to the North. We will remain committed to the value of skilled trades training in creating an agile workforce to bring prosperity and sustainability to the North, and we will conduct teaching and research that prioritizes northern relevance and strengthens northern cultural heritage for generations to come. In achieving this commitment, we will:

- Work in partnership with governments, industry and other post-secondary institutions, to respond to emergent needs of the North.
- Strengthen existing and build new areas of research focus aligned with Northern priorities.
- Uphold the distinct cultural identities of the North and support their enduring contribution.
- Present our place in the North as a unique attractor to the programs and opportunities that we offer.
- Influence and inform conversations related to issues of Northern relevance and national concern.



Photo: Alistair Maitland

## Develop bold thinkers and confident change leaders

We centre students in all we do. This means we will prioritize exceptional student experiences that create a profound sense of belonging through a socially active and civically engaged student life. Through innovative teaching and learning practices, we will prepare learners with adaptable skills and resilient mindsets, empathy and compassion, and we will ready them to shape the rapidly changing world they will inherit. In achieving this commitment, we will:

- Grow student enrolment and improve retention.
- Expand experiential and community-based learning for students.
- Enhance opportunities for unique land-based teaching and learning.
- Provide students with opportunities to engage in knowledge creation, critical dialogue, reason and debate.
- Improve infrastructure and learning spaces to create inclusive places for students to connect, create, discover and share ideas.



Photo: Erik Pinkerton

## Be leaders for the common good

We will establish Yukon University as a civic leader in setting standards for social change, environmental stewardship and equity. We understand that diverse backgrounds, cultures and perspectives enrich our learning environment and university culture, and we are committed to creating the equitable systems that make space for diversity and inclusion for students, staff and faculty in all that we do. We will take our place in the important conversations about mental health and wellbeing so that we do our part in building healthy futures and in creating vibrant communities. In achieving this commitment, we will:

- Work to dismantle systemic racism, oppression and inequity through truth seeking and truth informed actions.
- Recognize the climate crisis by aligning institutional decisions with Territorial and Federal objectives for emission reduction, clean growth, and climate resilience.
- Provide learning opportunities that address social and environmental justice.
- Design new physical infrastructure to aspire to achieve net zero status.
- Promote a culture of healthy living, and holistic well-being.

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