

FOCUS URI

A STRATEGIC VISION
FOR THE
UNIVERSITY OF RHODE ISLAND

Strategic Plan 2023–2033



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A MESSAGE FROM PRESIDENT MARC PARLANGE



Dear Members and Friends of the URI
Community,

For more than 130 years, the University of Rhode Island has been dedicated to serving the people and communities of Rhode Island as the state's flagship public research university. Today we are a thriving, welcoming community that attracts faculty and students from around the world. We have been shaped by the educators, entrepreneurs, innovators, leaders, and risk-takers who created our dynamic campuses and global partnerships. I am inspired by and celebrate URI's rich history and all that we have accomplished, and I am looking forward to embracing the many opportunities that lie ahead.

I have always believed that higher education provides the greatest possible potential for driving positive change in the world. Universities like ours have the opportunity—and the responsibility—to educate, inspire, and equip the next generation of learners with the ideas, knowledge, and skills they need to be good global citizens.

This strategic plan is our road map. It will help us navigate challenges, seize opportunities, and create mileposts by which we will measure our success. It will help us distinguish ourselves from our peers, nationally and internationally; it will help us forge new partnerships for the broader good; and it will invigorate and unite us with a renewed sense of purpose.

I am confident that we will elevate our standing as a leading global research institution that drives positive social, economic, cultural, and environmental change. We will deepen our commitment to our land- and sea-grant missions. We will foster an active and engaged learning environment. And we will cultivate a sense of place with endless opportunities to collaborate, network, live, learn, and conduct research.

There is so much we can achieve together. Now is our time, and this plan is our guide.

Marc Parlange



ABOUT THE STRATEGIC PLAN

This plan outlines a strategic vision for the University of Rhode Island for the next decade—articulating our aspirations to broaden our impact, enhance student achievement, foster an inclusive culture, and power the university of the future, and the actions we will take to achieve those goals. This is not a static document, but rather an agile, dynamic plan that will necessarily evolve, enabling us to respond to changes in the world and our communities, while maintaining a firm commitment to our land- and sea-grant missions, our institutional vision, and our foundational values. The ideas in this plan are intended to unify our community and inspire faculty, students, staff, and partners to cultivate new ideas and actions in their areas of work and interest that support the strategic priorities of this plan and accelerate URI's exciting forward trajectory.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Developing a strategic plan, particularly one with a 10-year outlook, takes care and time. This plan is the result of the dedicated work of a strategic plan steering committee comprised of a diverse group of faculty, staff, and students from across our campuses and co-chaired by the University president and the Faculty Senate president. The comprehensive planning process included working sessions and community forums on the Kingston, Narragansett Bay, and Providence campuses that generated more than 800 pages of notes and feedback from hundreds of members of the URI community. The plan highlights the common themes that emerged from the community forums and feedback and its four strategic priorities set an ambitious and inclusive vision for URI's next decade and beyond.

LAND ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The University of Rhode Island occupies the traditional stomping ground of the Narragansett Nation and the Niantic People. We honor and respect the enduring and continuing relationship between the Indigenous people and this land by teaching and learning more about their history and present-day communities, and by becoming stewards of the land we, too, inhabit.






MISSION

The University of Rhode Island is the state’s flagship land- and sea-grant research institution, with a commitment to urban initiatives. A student-centered research institution, URI actively partners with other organizations globally and locally to advance knowledge and to develop informed residents and leaders. URI is committed to high-quality education, community engagement, and solving the world’s most important challenges. Situated on the traditional land and territories of the Narragansett Nation and the Niantic People, URI strives to create a diverse and inclusive environment for researchers, teachers, learners, and community members.



PHOTO: ISTOCK

FOUNDATIONAL VALUES

-  Freedom to learn, teach, create, and conduct research with integrity in the pursuit and dissemination of new knowledge aimed at contributing to the public good.
-  An inclusive, accessible, equitable and diverse community whereby we respect the rights and dignity of all.
-  Intellectual curiosity, lifelong learning, leadership, and scholarship in creating a thriving URI community in service to Rhode Island and the world.
-  Sustainability and care of our environment conducive to the physical and mental health of our community.
-  Self- and institutional reflection of our values in our work, scholarship, and interactions, holding ourselves, each other, and the institution accountable to uphold them to a high standard.

VISION

The University of Rhode Island will be a leading global research university that drives positive social, cultural, economic, and environmental change by contributing and instilling new knowledge to address the world’s greatest challenges.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 1

BROADEN OUR IMPACT

BROADEN OUR IMPACT THROUGH
A REINVIGORATED COMMITMENT TO
OUR LAND- AND SEA-GRANT MISSIONS
AND THE STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

As Rhode Island's flagship public research university, we are committed to addressing the most pressing issues facing our state and the global community.

With hundreds of undergraduate, graduate, and professional degree programs, and through immersive experiential learning and research opportunities, we are equipping students with the skills and knowledge necessary to make a meaningful impact in their communities and on society.

We also are a connector, a convenor, and a hub of ingenuity—a place

where the seeds of ideas and the cutting-edge research conducted by faculty, students, and staff can develop into new solutions, companies, patents, and partnerships.

Rhode Island's future, much like its past, is strongly tied to the ocean. Our University can and will serve as an engine of innovation that will position Rhode Island and New England as the global leader in the Blue Economy, spurring economic development and creating sustainable, equitable career opportunities for the state and region.

The University of Rhode Island will serve as a national model for the role a flagship public research university can play in driving transformative change for the betterment of its state and the global human condition.

GOAL 1:

Contribute to broad and deep impacts on the social, cultural, and economic ecosystems across Rhode Island, the nation, and beyond.

ACTION 1: Position URI as a vital partner and dynamic leader in solutions-based societal change.

ACTION 2: Strengthen relationships with local, state, and federal agencies, as well as community organizations, to identify and implement impactful societal, cultural, and economic initiatives.

ACTION 3: Foster meaningful engagement with alumni, parents, and friends of URI.

GOAL 2:

Evolve into a world-class hub for innovation, entrepreneurship, and public-private partnerships.

ACTION 1: Become a destination for companies across the globe that seek to collaborate with faculty and students in research and research translation.

ACTION 2: Create innovation hubs that serve as connecting points for communities, companies, and government agencies.

ACTION 3: Develop opportunities for students to engage in global exploration and activities that provide valuable real-world experience.

GOAL 3:

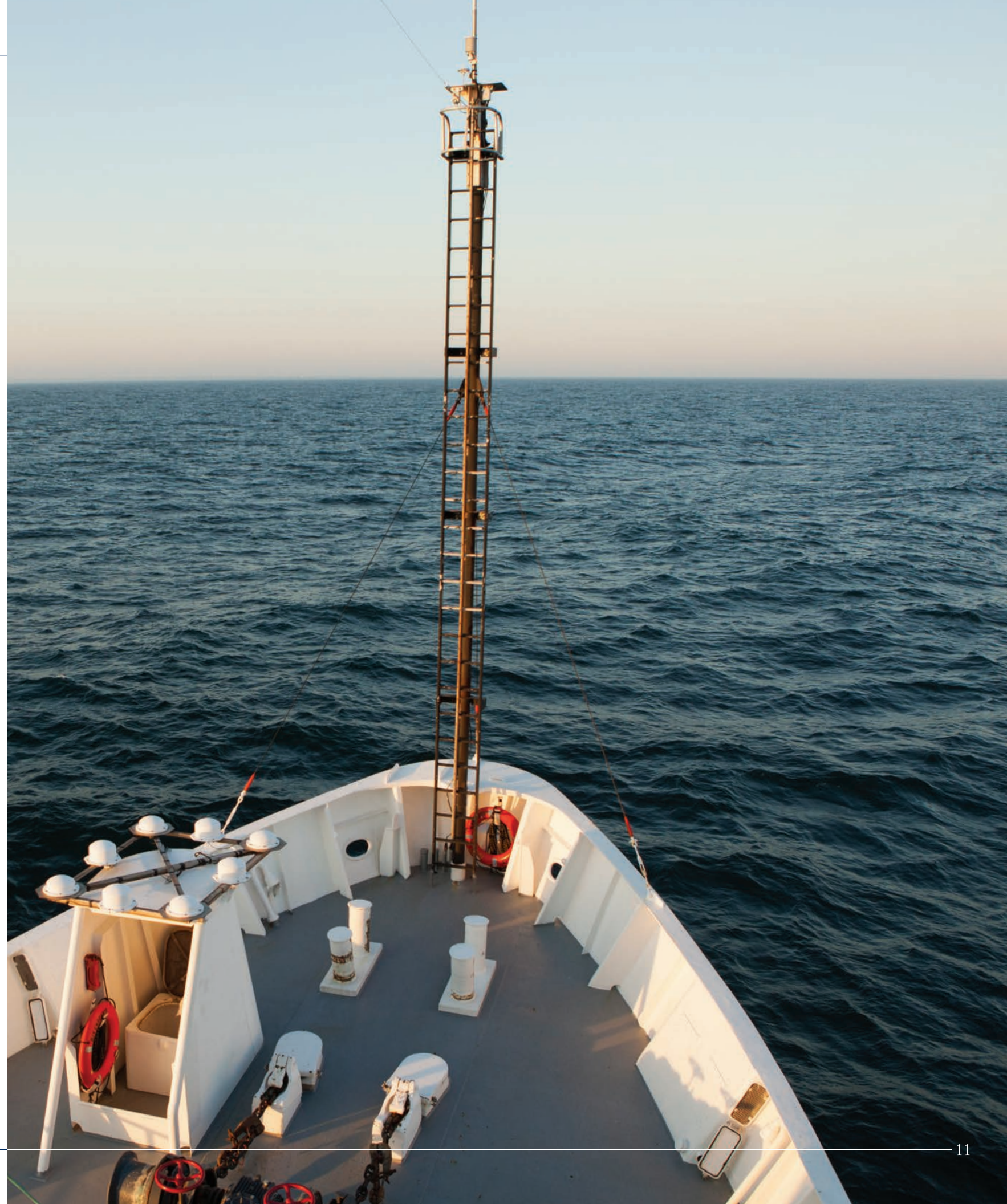
Elevate our research enterprise and emphasize public scholarship.

- ACTION 1:** Create and advance focused and strategic research and education partnerships with institutions around the world, while facilitating and supporting interdisciplinary, emerging, high-risk, and large-scale research endeavors.
- ACTION 2:** In collaboration with the URI Research Foundation, provide practical, logistical, and financial support, training, mentorship, and incentives for the pursuit of all research and technology transfer activities.
- ACTION 3:** Measure, reward, and celebrate research excellence, public scholarship, innovation, leadership, and the creative arts.

GOAL 4:

Position URI and the state of Rhode Island as a global leader in the Blue Economy.

- ACTION 1:** Establish the University of Rhode Island as a major hub of Blue Economy activity.
- ACTION 2:** Lead an ongoing global conversation around the Blue Economy.
- ACTION 3:** Highlight thought leadership on our campuses and beyond in ways that position the state of Rhode Island at the center of the global Blue Economy.



STRATEGIC PRIORITY 2

ENHANCE STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

ENHANCE STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT BY CULTIVATING AN ENGAGED AND INCLUSIVE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

URI is a place for students to learn; to explore career passions and prospects; and to examine real-world challenges that deepen their understanding and appreciation of their communities and the human condition. Our entire community thrives when our students succeed.

Our goal is to ensure a URI education is always within reach for students across the Ocean State. Through initiatives that offer wraparound services, like the Talent Development program and our Center for Military and Veteran Education, we strive to give historically underserved populations the opportu-

nities and the tools to succeed at URI and in life. And our growing investment in institutional financial aid for students and families will provide continuing support for, and investment in, URI students and student success.

Integral to the URI experience is the knowledge that the health and well-being of our community is central to our decision-making. We are, as we emerge from a global pandemic, at an exigent moment that requires of us the need to foster wellness and encourage healthy behaviors in what we do and how we support and serve our community.

By fostering an active and engaged learning environment, the University of Rhode Island will be a community where students are empowered to lead their own academic journey with access to resources and support that places value on inclusion, well-being, and holistic development.

GOAL 1:

Continuously invigorate the learning environment to reflect active learning; student agency; and contemporary, high-impact learning pedagogies.

ACTION 1: Create and ensure flexible academic pathways, curricula, global and experiential learning opportunities, and career advising that meets student interests and career trends.

ACTION 2: Grow URI Online to increase access for all students at every life stage.

ACTION 3: Foster lifelong relationships that more strongly connect faculty with alumni, friends, and industry, government, and nonprofit partners.

GOAL 2:

Increase graduate student enrollment and degree completion.

ACTION 1: Develop new professional master's degree programs that respond to labor market trends, as well as student interests and needs.

ACTION 2: Enhance flexibility in Ph.D. programs, as well as course and credit requirements, allowing graduate students to take full advantage of the breadth of programs and services.

ACTION 3: Grow Ph.D. student populations in areas of emerging and key strengths and strengthen interdisciplinary faculty and student collaboration.

GOAL 3:

Create a diverse learning community and ensure that a URI education is within reasonable reach for all students.

ACTION 1: Articulate an enrollment strategy that champions diversity, a culture of belonging, and access for all students.

ACTION 2: Increase and allocate financial aid to support enrollment and persistence goals.

ACTION 3: Develop strategies and programs that cultivate a sense of belonging and ensure student success, retention, and timely degree completion.

GOAL 4:

Make community well-being a priority, reflected in partnerships, as well as academic, recreational, and cocurricular programs and services.

ACTION 1: Create and offer new facilities and spaces that foster a more collaborative approach to community wellness.

ACTION 2: Develop new and expand existing evidence-based programming, courses, and interventions so that faculty, staff, and students consistently engage in healthy behaviors and attain their highest level of mental health and well-being.

ACTION 3: Assess and increase access to state-of-the-art recreational facilities that meet the needs of all students.

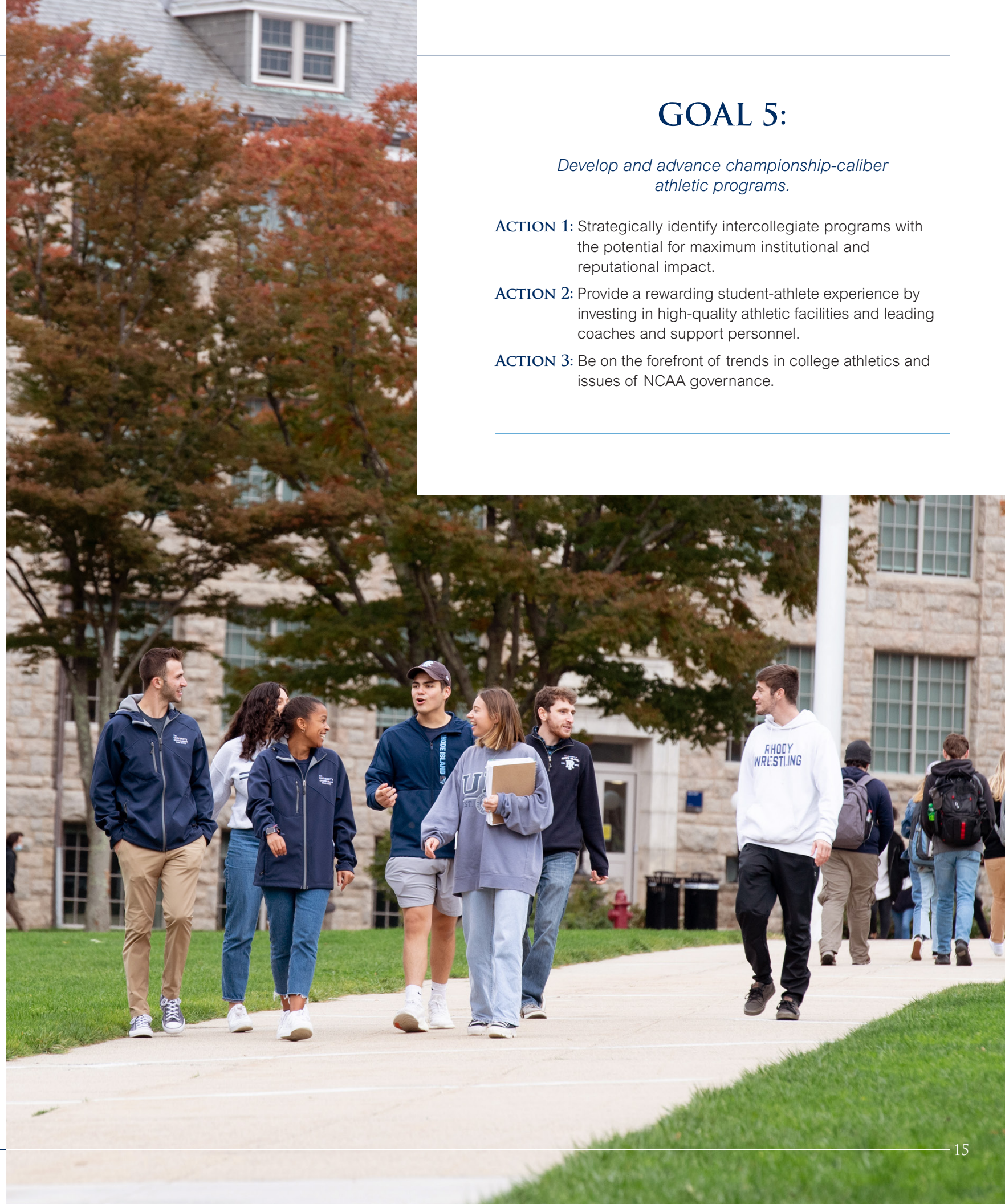
GOAL 5:

Develop and advance championship-caliber athletic programs.

ACTION 1: Strategically identify intercollegiate programs with the potential for maximum institutional and reputational impact.

ACTION 2: Provide a rewarding student-athlete experience by investing in high-quality athletic facilities and leading coaches and support personnel.

ACTION 3: Be on the forefront of trends in college athletics and issues of NCAA governance.



STRATEGIC PRIORITY 3

FOSTER AN INCLUSIVE CULTURE

FOSTER AN INCLUSIVE, PEOPLE-CENTERED CULTURE

URI is deeply committed to cultivating a diverse, inclusive, equitable, and accessible learning, living, and working environment. We value intellectual curiosity, creativity, scholarship, and the global exchange of ideas that enrich our community and contribute meaningfully to the world.

We respect and appreciate the unique contributions of every member of our community, and we will not tire in our efforts to foster a true sense of belonging by ensuring that the values of diversity, equity, and inclusion are imbued in all that

we do—in our policies, programming, collaborations, and conversations.

We have witnessed seismic changes wrought by a global pandemic. And we must, as we emerge, adapt to those changes and, even more, harness the opportunities they present by ensuring that we continue to promote collaboration, reward excellence, maintain flexibility, provide and support opportunities for personal and professional growth, and be responsive to new ideas so that we may attract and retain the very best students, staff, and faculty.

The University of Rhode Island will be a diverse, equitable, and inclusive community—a vibrant, integrated university that celebrates the uniqueness of its members and fosters a culture of valuing people, excellence, and giving back.

GOAL 1:

Cultivate a sense of community—‘one university’—where all students, faculty, and staff find themselves included and their work valued.

ACTION 1: Enhance the University’s human resources organization to address the whole employee and embrace modern and competitive practices, including organization and employee development, workplace flexibility, and employee support.

ACTION 2: Institute regular assessments of the workplace environment, provide community updates, and make related improvements.

ACTION 3: Grow professional development and learning opportunities for the Rhode Island workforce and alumni.

GOAL 2:

Build an innovative, contemporary, and professional learning environment and workplace that values and advances diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility with leadership that is principle-centered and effective.

ACTION 1: Enhance search and hiring processes to prioritize the recruitment, hiring, and retention of faculty and staff of color.

ACTION 2: Implement professional development programming focused on anti-racism and building awareness of anti-Black racism, and encourage active discourse and develop opportunities for interaction between diverse groups and individuals.

ACTION 3: Ensure a diversity-infused curriculum, with equitable support for diversity fellowships and mentors for faculty of color, and value evidence-based faculty contributions to anti-racism and diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility.

GOAL 3:

Attract, recognize, and retain outstanding faculty and staff.

ACTION 1: Institute streamlined, contemporary, and equitable talent acquisition and retention processes and practices, including a competitive and equitable salary structure.

ACTION 2: Articulate and expand opportunities for faculty and staff career progression.

ACTION 3: Foster a culture of excellence that provides development opportunities, recognizes achievement, and rewards outstanding performance.



STRATEGIC PRIORITY 4

POWER THE UNIVERSITY OF THE FUTURE

IMPLEMENT LEADING-EDGE ADMINISTRATIVE AND FINANCIAL SYSTEMS AND PRACTICES TO POWER THE UNIVERSITY OF THE FUTURE

Universities are places where ideas are tested and launched into the world, where lifelong relationships are formed, where hobbies are honed into passions, and where life-changing innovations and technologies are discovered and developed. To realize our full potential as an incubator of innovation and ideas, and to deliver on our full promise to Rhode Island and the broader global community, we must invest in modern spaces and services that make URI among the very best places to learn, live, work, and achieve.

Central to this vision is improved financial stability and accountability, built upon modern budget models; ambitious fundraising, partnership, and stewardship practices; the rigorous pursuit of state and federal funding; and an increased focus on generating new revenue that can be reinvested in our teaching, research, and service missions.

With enhanced resources, URI will intensify its positive impact as a leader in education, research, and entrepreneurial activity to become a university of and for the future.

URI will invest in and implement administrative and financial practices that position the University for long-term success and that transform the institution into a high-performing, fiscally sound, and agile university with the physical facilities necessary to achieve its strategic vision.

GOAL 1:

Enhance and maintain a physical environment that provides quality opportunities to learn, live, collaborate, recreate, and conduct research.

ACTION 1: Develop and implement housing and residential life plans that support a diverse and engaged community.

ACTION 2: Improve learning, research, and collaboration spaces on all University campuses.

ACTION 3: Create robust, integrated communal spaces throughout our campuses that are separate from established learning and living spaces.

GOAL 2:

Maximize the University's physical assets and strategically utilize campuses in a manner that promotes a 'one university' philosophy.

ACTION 1: Launch a campus master planning process that addresses the unique strengths and needs of each of URI's campuses, advances sustainability efforts and environmental responsibility across the University, and positions URI as a world-class destination that contributes positively to its local communities.

ACTION 2: Strengthen capital and facilities maintenance and improvement plans.

ACTION 3: Ensure a transportation system that effectively connects each of the campuses and facilitates transportation within the Kingston Campus.

GOAL 3:

Secure the necessary resources to sustain and grow the University and implement systems to ensure financial stability and accountability.

- ACTION 1:** Partner with the State of Rhode Island, as well as federal agencies, to ensure that the University has the financial resources necessary to deliver on its land- and sea-grant missions and fully realize its potential to improve the lives of all Rhode Islanders.
- ACTION 2:** Implement a budget model that ensures effective revenue growth and use of resources in staffing, facilities, technology, and other areas.
- ACTION 3:** Implement financial systems and practices that provide both the stability and flexibility to make strategic investments and pursue emerging opportunities.

GOAL 4:

Expand research and new academic programs and services through an increased focus on revenue generation.

- ACTION 1:** Identify new and enhanced revenue sources, including research partnerships, degree programs, philanthropic opportunities, auxiliary enterprises, and expanded online courses.
- ACTION 2:** Expand public-private partnerships to drive new University endeavors.
- ACTION 3:** Leverage philanthropic efforts of the URI Foundation and Alumni Engagement.

GOAL 5:

Improve the efficiency of administrative processes and foster a commitment to service excellence.

- ACTION 1:** Achieve operational excellence across University systems and departments, with an initial focus on key service areas such as purchasing, human resources, and financial planning and budgeting.
- ACTION 2:** Facilitate a culture of service excellence that is reflected in the development of a unified system for service request and delivery.
- ACTION 3:** Implement contemporary and cost-effective models for the deployment of financial, human, and digital resources.







THE UNIVERSITY OF RHODE ISLAND

uri.edu/strategicplan

URI is an equal opportunity employer committed to the principles of affirmative action.

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