

FACULTY OF  
DENTISTRY  
**STRATEGIC  
PLAN**

2021 - 2026



DALHOUSIE  
UNIVERSITY



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## MESSAGE FROM THE DEAN



It is my great pleasure to share the new Strategic Plan (2021-2026) for the Faculty of Dentistry.

In January 2020, we began the process of developing a new Strategic Plan that would guide, motivate, and inspire our diverse community of students, faculty, staff, alumni, and external partners. We worked collaboratively to define our mission, vision, values, strategic priorities, and goals, providing a transition from our previous Plan, *Discovery and Innovation for Health* (2011-21).

Throughout the development of our new Plan, innovation and technology and diversity and inclusion consistently emerged as cross-cutting themes for all our strategic priorities. I am confident you will be able to identify these critically important themes as you read through our Plan.

It's also worth noting that, as we were developing our Plan, Dalhousie University's Strategic Plan, *Third Century Promise*, was also taking shape, providing us with an opportunity to align our direction with that of the university.

I am extremely proud of the work that has gone into developing our Plan and it is my sincere hope that it speaks to you and inspires each of you in some way.

Sincerely,

**Benjamin Davis**

Dean, Faculty of Dentistry

## OUR CONSULTATION PROCESS

The broad engagement of our entire community, both internal and external to our Faculty, was critical to the development of a plan that would truly reflect who we are and what we aspire to become. Our planning process was intentionally iterative, consisting of a series of consultation sessions during which participants could both benefit from and build on the contributions from previous groups.

Each of these sessions was an opportunity for us to welcome and explore the individual aspirations, ideas, and perspectives brought forward by different members of our Faculty of Dentistry community.

Our in-person consultation process began in February 2020, but the arrival of COVID-19 caused us to pause while we dealt with the initial uncertainty and operational impact of the pandemic. In October 2020 we resumed our consultation process with online sessions, and quickly realized we had a unique opportunity to hear from our community before, during, and after the initial impacts that COVID-19 had on our teaching and learning and the ways in which we serve our many communities.

We would like to thank all those who were part of this exciting and important journey, whether through one of our six consultation sessions or as one of the over 230 online survey respondents. Your contribution helped to validate and build on what we were hearing throughout the consultation process.





# OUR MISSION, VISION, & VALUES

## MISSION

To promote oral health as an integral component of overall health through outstanding experiential and evidence-based learning and patient treatment, grounded in a culture of care for the diverse communities we serve and driven by innovation, impactful research, and strong interprofessional collaboration.

## VISION

To be a recognized leader in the advancement of oral health and overall health through an integrated and innovative approach to education, research, and patient treatment, including outreach that provides a comprehensive student experience within and for our diverse local, national, and global communities.

## WHAT WE VALUE

- **ACCOUNTABILITY** — to our students for education, to our patients for care, to our oral health professions, and to our communities for the provision of competent oral health care professionals.
- **RESPECTFUL LEADERSHIP** — we aspire to lead with words and actions that are grounded in ethics, integrity, commitment, transparency, and trust.
- **COMMUNICATION** — that is clear, concise, and respectful.
- **INCLUSION AND DIVERSITY** — to champion and integrate equity, diversity, inclusion, and accessibility (EDIA) within our vision, mission, culture, actions, and interactions with one another.
- **ADVANCING HEALTH** — through impactful community engagement, we provide compassionate care and health promotion to advance the health of members of diverse communities.
- **APPRECIATION** — we appreciate and care for each other by recognizing and celebrating our accomplishments.
- **EVIDENCE-BASED APPROACH** — our approaches to education, research, and service will continue to be based on the current best available research evidence, and we will contribute to the generation of evidence by evaluating new approaches as they are implemented
- **INNOVATION** — we challenge ourselves to be innovative in our approaches to education, research, and outreach.

# OUR STRATEGIC PILLARS & PRIORITIES

## EXCEPTIONAL ACADEMIC EXPERIENCE

### 1. Transformative student learning and experience

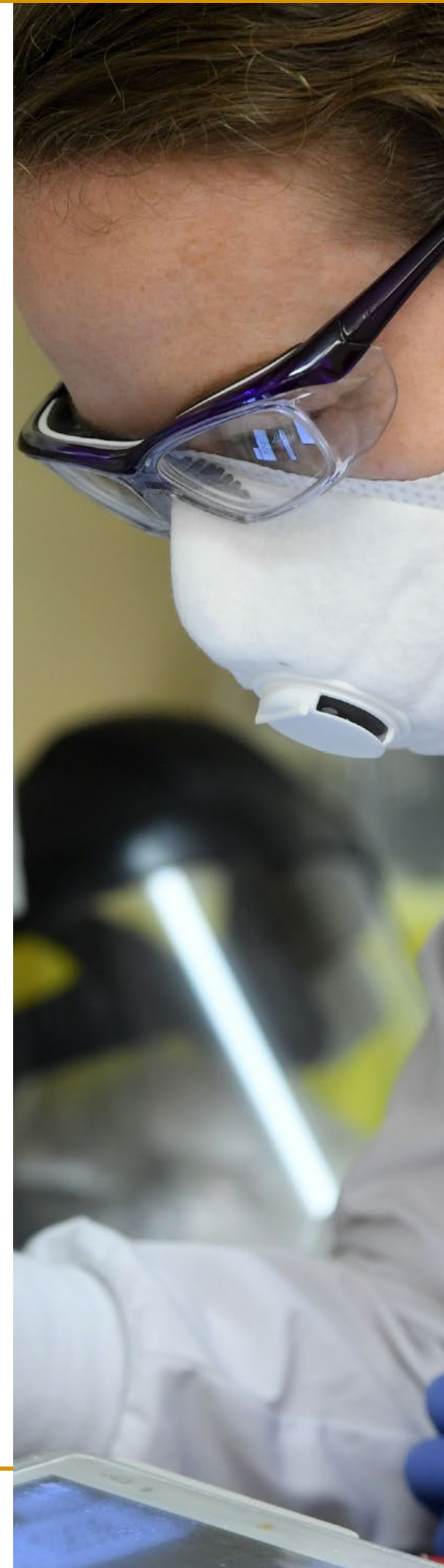
We will achieve this by:

- 1.1 Cultivating positive student experiences through small class sizes and low instructor: student ratios
- 1.2 Providing multiple opportunities for experiential, hands-on, patient-centred learning throughout each program, beginning in year one
- 1.3 Integrating new evidence-based technologies into the curriculum as they emerge
- 1.4 Ensuring that our exceptional clinical education is maintained
- 1.5 Preparing learners to provide patient-centred, evidence-informed clinical care through the training and modelling of behaviour
- 1.6 Providing multiple opportunities to model and assess professional, ethical, quality care, and behaviour
- 1.7 Expanding teaching and modelling of essential skills to include emotional intelligence, self-care, professionalism, integrity, diversity and inclusion, communication, physical and mental wellbeing, and resilience

### 2. Provide excellent, innovative teaching, and student assessment

We will achieve this by:

- 2.1 Maintaining the Faculty's reputation as a leader in innovative curriculum development and teaching innovation, including the advancement of digital dentistry and other leading technologies
- 2.2 Provide excellence and innovation in teaching and student assessment.
- 2.3 Committing to ongoing curricular renewal.





2.4 Developing and communicating curriculum mapping of all courses in each program to ensure consistency in concepts and skills taught at appropriate points, while building upon previous knowledge and skill development

2.5 Exploring and integrating best practices for assessment of students' knowledge, skills, aptitude, and professionalism

**3. Develop strong interprofessional learning and teaching**

We will achieve this by:

3.1 Developing and communicating a formal interprofessional strategy with shared definitions

3.2 Expanding co-curricular activities with other Dalhousie University health faculties and schools

3.3 Integrating interprofessional opportunities throughout the duration of each program

**4. Enhance our outstanding programs and facilities**

We will achieve this by:

4.1 Establishing broader graduate and post-graduate programs

4.2 Increasing capacity for current graduate and post-graduate programs

4.3 Establishing clear, transparent decision-making protocols for resourcing around facilities, materials, and technology that are informed by the best available evidence

4.4 Developing plans for more efficient use of limited clinical teaching spaces

## STRONG CULTURE OF INQUIRY AND IMPACT

**1. Enhanced research training**

We will achieve this by:

1.1 Increasing emphasis on research training in the DDS and DH/BDH curricula

1.2 Increasing emphasis on research in the clinical graduate programs

1.3 Creating new graduate programs with a robust research component

1.4 Expanding student research to include interprofessional and international research opportunities

**2. Increased engagement of faculty and staff in research**

We will achieve this by:

2.1 Fostering a culture of research engagement in both the professoriate and instructor faculty streams

2.2 Supporting the engagement of staff in research

2.3 Increasing awareness of ongoing research and creating opportunities for research collaboration and interprofessional research

2.4 Supporting the development of new tenure-track faculty research programs

2.5 Providing ongoing research training opportunities for faculty and staff

**3. Growth of our research enterprise**

We will achieve this by:

3.1 Identifying and growing diverse sources of research support

3.2 Upgrading and creating new research space and equipment, with an emphasis on multi-user shared/collaborative infrastructures

3.3 Increasing external research funding through priority-setting, collaboration, and peer review

3.4 Investing in personnel to support and facilitate research activities

3.5 Pursuing additional research chairs in priority areas

3.6 Strengthening collaborative research partnerships and visibility, ensuring alignment with external stakeholders and internal interests

**4. Strengthen research translation and impact**

We will achieve this by:

4.1 Facilitating activities that move bench-top discoveries to real-world applications

4.2 Building external partnerships with government/the public sector, professional bodies, and priority communities to promote meaningful knowledge exchange

4.3 Supporting activities that use research findings and best evidence to develop and/or enhance oral health policy, address oral health service needs, improve clinical practice, and scale up oral health

## SERVICE TO OUR COMMUNITIES

**1. Serve regional and local communities through increased opportunities for community outreach**

We will achieve this by:

1.1 Exploring new partnerships for additional community clinics

1.2 Building on our focus to provide and improve access to quality oral health care for underrepresented populations and remote communities

1.3 Creating a community engagement and outreach coordinator position to facilitate and advance expanding community relationships and priorities

**2. Build on our commitment to attract and retain typically underrepresented students**

We will achieve this by:

2.1 Investigating new opportunities to attract applicants to our programs, with a focus on African Nova Scotian, Indigenous, and francophone students

**3. Establish partnerships and networks locally, nationally, and internationally**

We will achieve this by:

3.1 Strengthening established international partnerships for student recruitment and academic exchange

3.2 Exploring new national and international opportunities for student recruitment and experiences



3.3 Expanding on current partnerships to translate research knowledge into practice and policy

**4. Provide additional opportunities for staff and faculty to make contributions within local and regional communities**

We will achieve this by:

- 4.1 Creating volunteer opportunities
- 4.2 Not-for-profit involvement

## INVESTING IN OUR CULTURE AND PEOPLE

**5. Provide faculty members with opportunities to develop and advance their skills around teaching and learning and student assessment**

We will achieve this by:

- 5.1 Strengthening our relationship with and support from the Centre for Learning and Teaching
- 5.2 Providing opportunities for formalized credentialing
- 5.3 Expanding faculty development offerings
- 5.4 Encouraging and supporting peer mentorship

**6. Enable leadership and personal development**

We will achieve this by:

- 6.1 Promoting leadership training and development opportunities for staff, students, and faculty
- 6.2 Identifying opportunities to recognize and celebrate staff, student, and faculty excellence

**7. Enhance lifelong partnerships with alumni**

We will achieve this by:

- 7.1 Recognizing students as key drivers for reputation and legacy
- 7.2 Establishing sustainable mentorship opportunities between students and alumni

7.3 Broadening opportunities for continuing professional development and post-degree credentialing to help alumni acquire new skills and knowledge

7.4 Reinforcing our commitment to lifelong learning through the early introduction of continuing professional development to new graduates

**8. Recruit and retain outstanding faculty and staff**

We will achieve this by:

- 8.1 Streamlining the hiring and recruitment processes and improving retention for staff and faculty
- 8.2 Working with Dalhousie Human Resources to establish a more inclusive strategy for faculty and staff recruitment and retention, particularly for members of the African Nova Scotian and Indigenous communities
- 8.3 Introducing new inclusive succession planning and career transition strategies for staff and faculty

**9. Prioritize health and wellness for students, staff, and faculty**

We will achieve this by:

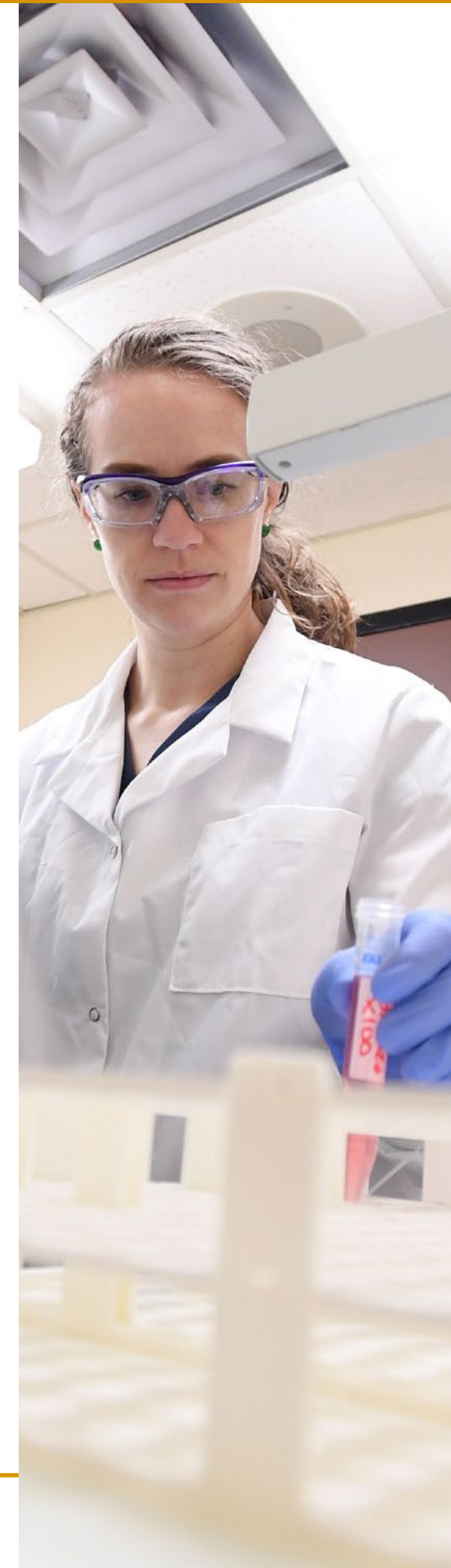
- 9.1 Continuing to build on our Faculty-wide wellness strategies, in collaboration with HR (staff and faculty) and Student Affairs (students)
- 9.2 Identifying new opportunities and challenges for maintaining responsive and flexible work-life balance

## NEXT STEPS

This Strategic Plan is the work of many hands. We are grateful for all the thoughtful and valuable input we received during both the consultation process and the creation of the Plan. It now forms the framework that will guide the work of the Faculty of Dentistry over the next five years.

Our next step is to share the Strategic Plan with our communities within Dalhousie University, our alumni, our partners, and our patients. Progress against our goals will be measured regularly and reported on annually.

We see this Strategic Plan as an exciting beginning to the next five years. We look forward to bringing it to life.





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