

ECU Foundation 2018-2023 Strategic Plan

Vision, Mission, Key Objectives & Strategies



OUR VISION FOR THE FUTURE

What We Aspire To Be

- The ECU Foundation is a dynamic, forward-looking organization which plays a critical role in advancing East Carolina University. We are widely recognized as a leader among our peers and a model for innovative ideas and best practices in fundraising, stewardship, and advocacy.
- The ECU Foundation continues to develop a highly committed base of regional, national and international donors, including a growing number of students, faculty, alumni, and friends of the university, and effectively manages an ever-increasing endowment to fund the margin of excellence for ECU - supporting scholarships, professorships, fellowships, progressive research, innovative academic programs, and state-of-the-art facilities.
- Renowned for our strong partnership with the university and our responsiveness to institutional priorities, the ECU Foundation is highly regarded for positively impacting East Carolina University ... and making a real difference in the quality of education for students and the quality of life for people throughout the region, the state of North Carolina, the nation, and beyond.

Our Core Mission

The Primary Purpose of Our Organization

Funding the Margin of Excellence for ECU

The Thought Behind the Specific Words in Our Mission

“Funding” is enabled through strong support, aggressive advocacy, successful fundraising, exceptional donor relations, and effective stewardship.

“The Margin of Excellence” is what we underwrite – those things not funded by the state or other resources, but which make the difference in the quality and impact of East Carolina University.

OUR KEY OBJECTIVES

Our Path to the Future

1. Develop and execute innovative fundraising programs and stewardship initiatives to “wow” our donors and secure their satisfaction for continued growth in giving to ECU. **Development & Donor Relations Committee**
2. Expand scholarship programs to attract more top level students to ECU. **Development & Donor Relations Committee**
3. Partner with the university to expand public and private partnerships, identify influencers, and engage more corporations and foundations in the support of our academic programs, research activities, and facility needs. **ECU Real Estate Foundation and Green Town Properties**
4. Maintain a diversified long-term investment strategy that minimizes volatility while achieving an ROI that exceeds both the balanced index and our peer group. **Investment Committee**
5. Be a highly effective board of directors actively engaged in fiduciary oversight, fundraising, and advocacy of the university. **Audit, Budget & Finance, Development & Donor Relations, and Recruitment & Engagement Committees**
6. Ensure effective foundation governance and operating excellence. **Executive and Governance Committees**
7. Continue to strengthen financial operations and data systems to address the challenges and needs of the future. **Audit and Budget & Finance Committees**

OBJECTIVE 1

OBJECTIVE 1: Develop and execute innovative fundraising programs and stewardship initiatives to “wow our donors and secure their satisfaction for continued growth in giving to ECU.

STRATEGIES:

- Identify clear, engaging campaign funding priorities which can be effectively marketed to increase support. (VC/Pres)
- Significantly expand our donor base by partnering with and opening doors of potential major donors and corporate/foundation prospects. (Adv Services & CFR)
- Educate the board on specific, aggressive fundraising and participation goals by campus-wide priority, school, college, and specific program. (VC/Pres)
- Work with campus partners in developing campaign marketing which promotes funding priorities and increases stewardship. (VC/Pres)
- Develop a method for capturing personal stories from both donors and recipients of funds to use in marketing to existing and potential donors. (Comm)
- Adopt best practices in donor relations within the ECU Foundation and with our campus partners to continue to build an exceptional donor recognition program. (Donor Relations)

OBJECTIVE 2

OBJECTIVE 2: Expand scholarship programs to attract more top level merit and need based students to ECU.

STRATEGIES:

- Quantify funding needs for Honors College, EC Scholars, Academic Based Scholarships, Merit Scholarships, Access Scholarships, and Graduate Fellowships to increase both number and size of awards. (VC/Pres)
- Work with Academic Affairs to define and rank scholarship priorities. (VC/Pres)
- Identify and cultivate target donors. (Advancement staff and board members)
- Design and execute an extensive public relations program around scholarships as a campaign priority to enhance the ECU brand that includes print, video, and social media. (Comm)

OBJECTIVE 3

OBJECTIVE 3: Partner with the university to expand public and private partnerships, identify influencers, and engage more corporations and foundations in the support of our academic programs, research activities and facility needs.

STRATEGIES:

- Partner with colleagues in Administration & Finance and Research/Engagement/Economic Development to promote and help develop the millennial campus and other public-private partnerships to enhance the economic development of eastern North Carolina. (VC/Pres)
- Continue to utilize the ECU Real Estate Foundation and Greentown Properties to partner with the university to meet facility needs and promote real estate development in Uptown Greenville and the surrounding community. (all)
- Develop fundraising strategies to promote and solicit gifts to support academic programs and research activities that directly tie to economic development, public-private partnerships, and work-force development. (Adv/CFR)
- Increase partnership, engagement, and solicitation of corporations and foundations that align their areas of philanthropic focus with our university mission. (REDE/CFR)
- Coordinate with the three other ECU foundations on prospect strategy to maximize benefit to donor and ECU. (VC/Pres)
- Identify best practices from successful programs across the state and region. (VC/Pres)
- Promote, seek, and explore creative/cutting edge gifting strategies with real estate for the benefit of the university and the ECU Foundation, buy property with ROI objective, and consider making business operations of the foundation(s) educational opportunities for our students. (Planned Giving, Board, VC)

OBJECTIVE 4

OBJECTIVE 4: Maintain a diversified long-term investment strategy that minimizes volatility while achieving an ROI that exceeds both the balanced index and our peer group.

STRATEGIES:

- Maintain members who are knowledgeable and possess expertise in investing. (Investment Committee)
- Maintain a well-defined investment policy and asset allocation. (Investment Committee)
- Maintain investment performance objectives and measure results quarterly. (Financial Services/Investment Consultant/Investment Committee)
- Formally evaluate our investment consultant quarterly. (Investment Committee)
- Utilize investment industry tools, industry specific benchmarks, and published peer data to evaluate the portfolio. (Financial Services/Investment Committee/Investment Consultant)
- Ensure key financial policies involving investments are properly revised/developed based on current trends and conditions. (Financial Services/Investment Committee/Investment Consultant)

OBJECTIVE 5

OBJECTIVE 5: Be a highly effective board of directors actively engaged in fiduciary oversight, fundraising, and advocacy for the university.

STRATEGIES:

- Communicate expectations and ask each director for an annual self-assessment of their engagement and consider an evaluation process led by a qualified 3rd party. (Chair)
- Recruit new directors to continually broaden the demographic profile of the board, to include a focus on needed skill sets. (Recruitment Comm)
- Develop an outstanding new board member orientation program and continuing education program. (VC/Pres/Chair)
- Implement succession planning to facilitate orderly transitions in leadership. Explore new ideas to freshen and strengthen the board.. (Recruitment Comm)
- Board meetings should be meaningful, interesting, and interactive to all directors. (VC/Pres/Chair)
- Ensure honesty, integrity, accountability, and transparency in all operations and transactions. (VC/Pres/Chair)
- Ensure people with professional expertise lead the key administrative committees. (Ex Comm)
- Document all financial policies, procedures, and guidelines. (Audit Comm/Financial Services)
- Develop a multi-year strategic plan for the foundation policies, procedures, and guidelines (Audit Comm/Financial Services)
- Develop a multi-year strategic Plan for the foundation' financial operations. (Ex Comm and Financial Services)

OBJECTIVE 6

OBJECTIVE 6: Ensure effective foundation governance and operating excellence.

STRATEGIES:

- Maintain board members who are knowledgeable and possess expertise in business management, operations, and the operations of the university. (Ex Comm/Recruitment Comm)
- Ensure honesty, integrity, accountability, and transparency in all operations and transactions. (VC/Pres/Chair)
- Review the articles of incorporation, bylaws, policies and procedures, and any operating agreements on an annual basis for general operating and statutory compliance. (Governance Comm)
- Evaluate the foundation's organization structure and the responsibilities of officers and committees. (Governance Comm)
- Ensure that all committee charters and key operating policies are reviewed by the affected committee for operational compliance and recommended changes. (Governance Comm)
- Ensure people with professional expertise lead the key administrative committees. (Ex Comm/Recruitment Comm)
- Revise the centralized tool for measuring and tracking general operating compliance. (VC/Pres/Governance Comm/Financial Services)

OBJECTIVE 7

OBJECTIVE 7: Continue to strengthen financial operations and data systems to address the challenges and needs of the future.

STRATEGIES:

- Assess funding models to meet foundation operational and staffing needs in coming years. (Financial Services)
- Assist in improving communications and sharing of resources, ideas, and policies among all the advancement entities at ECU. (VC/Pres/Financial Services)
- Develop an onboarding and annual training program on financial matters for new and existing staff. (Financial Services)
- Coordinate the annual budget of the foundation with the advancement state budget and other advancement entities. (Budget Comm/Financial Services)
- Review and assess current financial systems for potential technology improvements or expansion of existing infrastructure to help streamline and automate processes. (Financial Services)
- Continue to assess/analyze the donor database (VC/Pres)

