

VISION 2030

FROM EXCELLENCE TO PREEMINENCE
FOR OUR STUDENTS | FOR MARYLAND





The University System of Maryland (USM), the state's public higher education system, comprises 12 universities, three regional higher education centers, and more than 200,000 people—students, faculty, and staff—dedicated to pursuing knowledge, advancing discovery, improving lives, and strengthening communities across the state and around the world.

VISION 2030

From Excellence to Preeminence

The University System of Maryland is one of the most diverse and successful public university systems in the country. The education our institutions offer, the research they conduct, and the service they provide promote opportunity, advance social mobility, fuel the state's economy, and improve the quality of life all Marylanders enjoy.

But higher education is at an inflection point, facing pressures on enrollment, disruption within the sector, and changing expectations about the very nature of learning and work. This requires a fundamental shift in what we do and how we do it.

Where the USM's work has been centered on our institutions and processes, it must instead be **centered on our students**. Where we've been focused on degree output, we must be **focused on learner outcomes**. Where we've been siloed, we must be **collaborative**. Where our innovation has been institution-bound, it must be **scaled**. Where our impact has been local, it must be **global**.

Our excellence means we will meet with confidence our unprecedented challenges. We will dedicate ourselves to the needs of a new generation of learners and creators. We will reimagine our instruction, our scholarship, and our research. We will innovate the way we drive economic growth and serve our state and our nation.

We will seize this moment to move from **excellence to preeminence**.

Vision 2030 is—by intention and design—more than a plan to sustain what has been. It is a promise to transform what will be.



Our Mission

To educate and serve the people of Maryland; advance equity, justice, and opportunity; and produce the research and scholarship that improve lives.

Our Vision

To be a preeminent system of public higher education, respected around the world for our leadership in developing learner-centered postsecondary education for all levels and life stages; creating knowledge that solves problems, strengthens communities, and makes meaningful change; and relentlessly pursuing equity, opportunity, and justice for all.

Our Values

Our core values reflect the fundamental principles that guide our work. They serve as standards for those who are daily engaged in the System's aspirations and endeavors, and as affirmation of our principles for our partners.

Knowledge	Diversity, Equity, Inclusion	Excellence	Civility
Service	Collaboration	Accountability	Innovation

THE CHALLENGES WE CONFRONT

In the coming decade, several trends will test our ability to expand and improve our programs and will accelerate our need to develop and deliver an innovative, accessible, world-class model of education.



A CHANGING STUDENT PROFILE

Broad demographic changes will magnify competition for students and require more financial aid and institutional support services.

In the next 10 years, we'll see:

- Fewer high school graduates. The number of U.S. high school graduates will peak in 2025, then decline through 2036.
- Fewer community college students, our largest source of transfers into the USM.
- More nontraditional students, age 25 and older.
- Growing diversity. Maryland is one of only two states that shifted from majority White to majority non-White in the last decade.

THE PANDEMIC EFFECT

The COVID-19 pandemic will have long-term impacts on higher education access, enrollment, and financial stability.

The pandemic has exacerbated enrollment declines nationwide, particularly at community colleges and among first-time freshmen. Suffering the greatest harm are our most vulnerable students and the institutions that serve them, which predicts generational losses in education attainment and lifetime income.

THE VALUE OF A DEGREE

Growing public skepticism about the importance of a traditional college degree presents an existential threat to higher education.

With expectations around learning and work changing dramatically and quickly, faith in the value of a college degree—particularly among young people—is falling. This skepticism accompanies concern about rising college costs, excessive debt, and return on investment.

New standards documenting knowledge and skills—such as serialized credentials—will crowd the landscape, as will alternative models of higher education that tie postsecondary learning and training more directly to work.

TECHNOLOGY, DISRUPTION, COMPETITION

Technology and competition can democratize higher education, but can also disadvantage traditional systems and institutions.

Competition from for-profit and not-for-profit organizations will reshape how higher education is structured, focused, and financed. By emphasizing digital technologies and spurning time- and place-based learning, new models will increase consumer choice and reduce costs. By offering outcomes-based education and awarding nontraditional credentials, they will serve the growing share of learners who reject a traditional degree.

THE TRANSFORMATION IMPERATIVE

Five priorities will steer the System's work before 2030

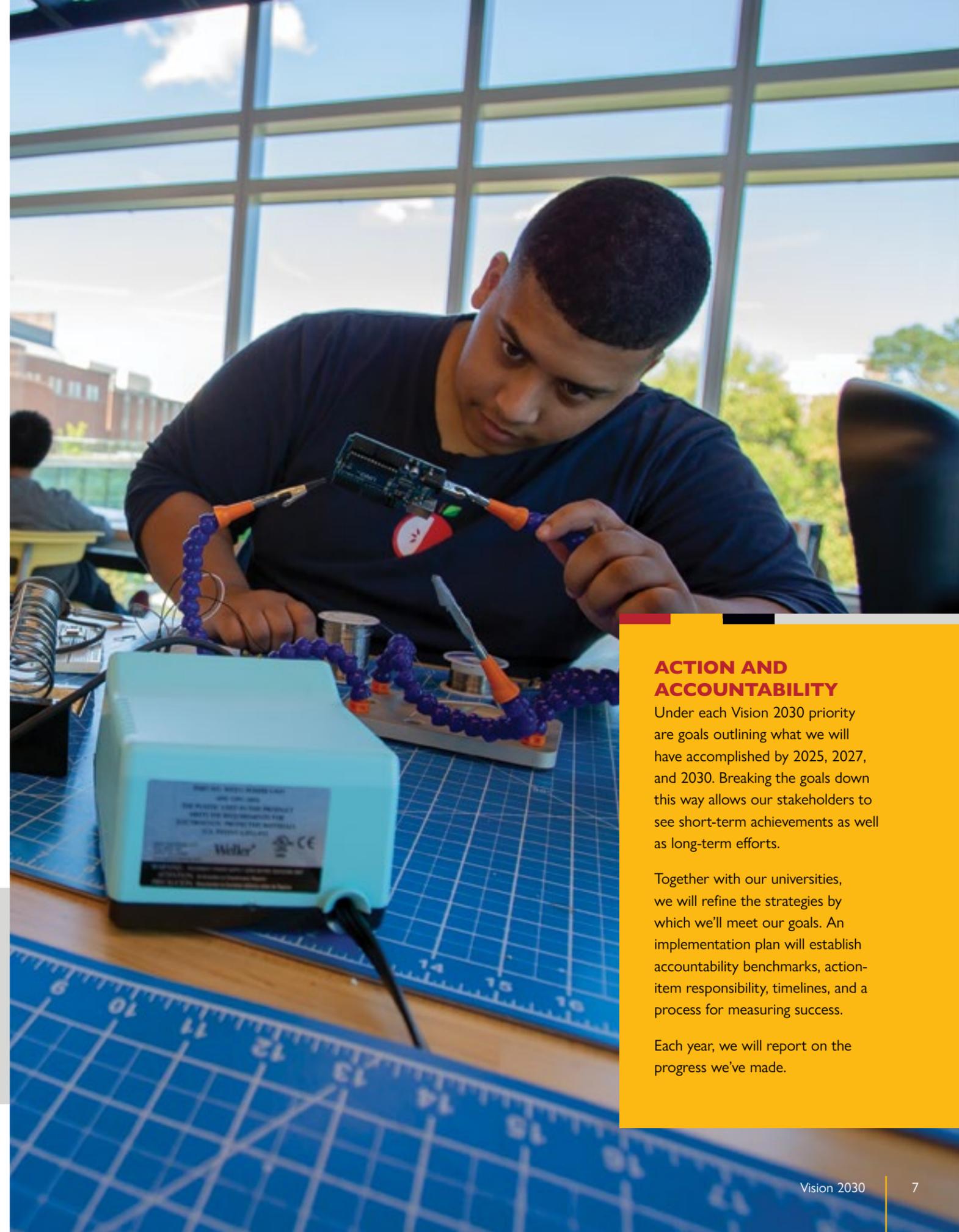
In these priorities is the conviction that the USM and our universities must fundamentally shift from process-oriented management to learner-centered leadership. Vision 2030 is a mandate for innovation and agility as we prepare for our next era of service to our students, to the state, and to the nation.



DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION

While DEI is a discrete priority, it's also foundational to our entire strategic plan. Achieving equity and justice will shape how we approach everything else we do—the access we promise all students and the way we nurture their success; the support we provide our historically Black institutions so that their students lead in academic gains; the way we graduate more underrepresented students in fields critical to Maryland's innovation economy; the way our research on race and racism steers the national conversation.

Embedded in this DEI imperative is our mission in civic education: equipping students for engaged and ethical citizenship; preparing them to preserve, protect, and defend our American democracy as the true path to change; cultivating their capacity to address the challenges that imperil human health and happiness; and nurturing their ability to secure equity, opportunity, and justice for all.



ACTION AND ACCOUNTABILITY

Under each Vision 2030 priority are goals outlining what we will have accomplished by 2025, 2027, and 2030. Breaking the goals down this way allows our stakeholders to see short-term achievements as well as long-term efforts.

Together with our universities, we will refine the strategies by which we'll meet our goals. An implementation plan will establish accountability benchmarks, action-item responsibility, timelines, and a process for measuring success.

Each year, we will report on the progress we've made.

PRIORITY 1

ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE AND INNOVATION

We will invest in our people, our ideas, and our institutions.

Maryland's elected leaders value the USM, and their historically strong financial support enables our excellence. And yet resources are an evergreen source of tension in higher education, especially for the USM, as we struggle to balance competing priorities—opening access to college, on one hand, and keeping tuition costs down on the other.

As a leading public university system, we must continuously innovate in all areas of our operations. Through our deep and sustained commitment to innovation—and the investment that must accompany it—we will better meet the learning and development needs of our students, reach new learners, amplify the impact of our education, research, and service, and demonstrate to Maryland citizens our significant return on investment.

SELECT GOALS

- Attract, retain, and graduate more Maryland students.
- Recruit, retain, and develop exceptional faculty and staff, and nurture a dynamic environment in which they thrive.
- Build and maintain world-class facilities and technology infrastructure, emphasizing flexibility to expand into new markets across Maryland and the world.
- Leverage investment in digital technologies to increase program flexibility and learner personalization, and improve student support.
- Pilot learning pathways for working professionals that meet workforce demands.
- Amplify the influence and impact of the USM as a system by deepening cross-functional collaboration among our institutions.
- Tell the System's story in a way that attracts and engages students, faculty, and staff, and draws partners, donors, and citizens to our work.



PRIORITY 2

ACCESS, AFFORDABILITY, AND ACHIEVEMENT

We will give every learner
the chance to succeed.

Higher education is essential to solving the greatest challenges of our age—crises of poverty and inequality, racial and social injustice, population health and health disparities, climate change and environmental degradation, civic disengagement and a weakened democracy.

Fixing these problems relies on opening access to more learners—opening access to every learner who wants a higher education. “Access for all” means students just graduating from high school, learners with some college but no degree, working adults, and immigrant and underserved populations. But the work to which we’re committed is far more than getting these learners into our universities; it’s giving them everything they need to succeed once there.

SELECT GOALS

- Ensure the System reflects the full diversity of Maryland’s people and embraces a culture of equity and inclusiveness.
- Strengthen the connection between learning experiences and the knowledge, skills, and abilities needed to succeed.
- Develop innovative education programs resulting in new credentials.
- Design financial and business models that meet changing student needs.
- Invest in signature pipeline programs connecting USM universities with preK–12 schools.
- Improve transfer pathways.
- Create innovation hubs at our regional higher education centers.
- Support continuous improvement in student services to increase retention and graduation, with a priority focus on our HBCUs.



PRIORITY 3

WORKFORCE AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

We will drive Maryland's prosperity.

Maryland is consistently ranked among the top states in education attainment, in the prevalence of science and technology jobs, and in the proportion of scientists and engineers employed in the private sector.

The USM is the primary producer of graduates fueling this knowledge economy. But that's not the only way we drive innovation and growth. Our universities have launched and nurtured several hundred startups, and the System invests in university-linked companies to bridge the early-stage funding gap. We've created policies to promote greater faculty entrepreneurship, and we advocate for state initiatives that make Maryland more attractive to researchers.

Going forward, we must recruit and graduate more students overall, focusing on those areas where job creation will exist—teacher education; health professions; IT and cyber; business, finance, and management—and serve students with traditional degrees and micro-credentials. We must make it easier for students and faculty to translate their ideas into market-ready solutions.

SELECT GOALS

- Maintain our place as the dominant producer of graduates, from all populations, prepared to enter and lead Maryland's knowledge economy.
- Be the primary source for reskilling and upskilling the state's workforce.
- Grow the number of underrepresented minority students entering and graduating from fields critical to Maryland's economy.
- Make it easier for students who want to become teachers to become teachers.
- Develop a data-informed academic portfolio reflecting the needs of students and employers.
- Develop strong and deep relationships with preK–12 schools, improving student pathways and outcomes.
- Grow the number of startups launched and developed through USM venture support.



PRIORITY 4

RESEARCH

We will develop the ideas that change the world.

Maryland is unique among states in the impact research and development has on its economy, particularly federal R&D. With \$18 billion in research funding flowing annually to Maryland-based agencies, labs, and academic institutions, research fundamentally shapes key sectors of the state's economy. It also attracts a highly educated workforce that's unsurpassed in the nation.

The USM serves as the primary workforce feeder for Maryland's R&D sector, and our universities account for \$1.5 billion in external grants and contracts. Through university-based and USM-supported technology transfer, we turn our research into commercial innovations that improve our health and well-being, protect our safety, and defend our natural world.

Over the next decade, the System's R&D enterprise must be better aligned with emerging federal opportunities, notably in climate and environmental research, clean energy, and health care. We must leverage existing areas of USM strength where possible, and develop new areas where warranted. Expanding our portfolio of basic and applied research in medicine, engineering, social sciences, and public policy will drive our contributions to human welfare, racial equity and justice, and environmental health.

SELECT GOALS

- Align areas of USM research strength with emerging national R&D priorities.
- Advance our leadership in environmental sciences and deepen our international reputation for climate change and sustainability research.
- Expand community-based research to strengthen the neighborhoods, towns, and cities where our universities are based.
- Grow the number of cross-institutional, interdisciplinary, and interprofessional research collaborations among USM universities and centers.
- Grow the number of research partnerships with industry, agencies, NGOs, and academic institutions, domestically and internationally.
- Diversify and expand our research portfolio, attracting private-sector investment for basic research.
- Develop a nationally significant research initiative on diversity, equity, and justice; globalization; and sustainability, examining the role that race, identity, and systemic racism may play in them.



PRIORITY 5

DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION

We will achieve equity and justice within the USM and advance them in the communities we serve.

The USM is one of the most diverse higher education systems in the country, with a longstanding commitment—in policy and practice—to diversity, equity, and inclusion. We are dedicated to instilling in our students the values of fairness, open-mindedness, and civic engagement, and harnessing the collective power of people with different experiences, ideas, and points of view.

The USM has developed a framework to help us identify and dismantle structural racism within the System and our institutions; to elevate issues of race and racism in our teaching, research, and scholarship; and to redress racial inequity and advance social justice within the System and in the communities we serve. Central to our mission is cultivating a civic engagement imperative—nurturing in our learners the ability and inclination to use their influence, expertise, and activism to advance the public good.

SELECT GOALS

- Increase diversity among our students, faculty, and staff so that, ultimately, they reflect the full diversity of Maryland.
- Raise the profile of our historically Black institutions, and support them in implementing an ambitious set of enrollment management and student success strategies.
- Create a significant research initiative on diversity, equity, and justice; globalization; and sustainability, accompanied by a renewable source of funding.
- Establish the USM's scholarly prominence in race, identity, and systemic racism.
- Enhance global engagement by expanding study abroad programs, increasing support to international students, and emphasizing international research efforts.
- Integrate civic education into general education curricula and implement new programs that foster an ethos of committed public engagement.





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