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Cal Poly Humboldt Foundation Strategic Plan

2024-2027

Approved March 22, 2024



Introduction

The Cal Poly Humboldt Foundation's Strategic Plan is a living document intended to provide guidance to the Board for the next 3 years. The Plan helps define the Foundation Board's long-term priorities and should be considered in decision making. An annual review of the Plan should be conducted to assess progress as well as its continued effectiveness and relevance regarding both internal and external forces affecting the Foundation's purpose and function. The Plan is subject to revision as necessary.

This Plan was prepared based on input from Board members and a wide range of stakeholders participating in a survey and seven meetings from October 2022 to October 2023.

Guiding Purpose

The Foundation's purpose is to support and advance Cal Poly Humboldt and its students, alumni, faculty, staff, partners, and programs through philanthropy and meaningful engagement. We prioritize sustainable strategies to positively transform the lives of students. In doing so, we honor donor intention and provide responsible financial management of endowed and other assets.

The Foundation commits to represent the lives and interests of our current students, alumni, benefactors, future students, faculty, staff, partners, and other constituents. We support the University in its goal to provide the highest quality affordable and accessible university education in a manner that considers innovation, environmental sustainability, and social responsibility.

External Forces

We are in a time of profound and accelerating change including the climate crisis, demographic shifts, economic stresses, cultural and political upheaval, security threats, global conflicts, health risks, and technological advancements. Foundation strategies must remain nimble and resilient to meet the challenges, and find advantages, in the face of these and other changes to come.

Strategic Focus

The Foundation's strategic focus is on (1) charitable giving and donor engagement; (2) Board development; (3) Environmentally & Socially Responsible (ESR) investing; and (4) property investing.

Strategic Objectives

The suggested actions to consider in support of the strategic objectives are summarized in each section. Some of these actions are already underway and sustained efforts in these areas are encouraged.

► Charitable Giving and Donor Engagement

OBJECTIVE 1: We will support the planning and implementation of the University's fundraising campaigns.

OBJECTIVE 2: We will leverage the sophistication, success, momentum, and lessons of the Boldy Rising Campaign to inform and plan future commitments to fundraising.

OBJECTIVE 3: We will seek to significantly increase the endowment to support the University in perpetuity.

OBJECTIVE 4: We will celebrate and promote the impacts from giving, sharing the "good stuff" using storytelling and various media.

OBJECTIVE 5: We will listen to, and acknowledge, the concerns of local community partners, and act with care and awareness of our important function, value, and impact on the region.

OBJECTIVE 6: We will encourage student engagement and use the energy on campus to inform and build closer ties with constituents.

OBJECTIVE 7: We will stay current with, learn from, and carefully consider the experiences of other CSUs (similar and aspirational) in fundraising.

SUGGESTED ACTIONS

- Assess the lessons learned from the Boldy Rising Fundraising Campaign and seek to answer, "What comes next?" (i.e. options for subsequent fundraising campaigns). Ideas include:
 - Corporate and foundation emphasis.
 - Seeking additional revenue and fundraising sources through research, sponsorships, and leveraged contracts.
 - Clear alignment with specific campus needs/priorities.
- Increase communication and engagement with students, faculty, and other key constituents:
 - Effectively utilize social media.
 - Provide student recipients with opportunities to share stories.
 - Share sources of funding and areas of impact with students and faculty to create better transparency and visibility of philanthropy.

- Share the impact of philanthropy with Humboldt’s many important constituencies, using stories to demonstrate and celebrate successes.
- Embed diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) in our communication and outreach to Humboldt’s many important constituencies.
- Emphasize and facilitate the value of on-campus visits.

▶ **Board Development**

OBJECTIVE 1: We will actively sustain a recruiting effort to add Board expertise and depth.

OBJECTIVE 2: We will increase diverse backgrounds, perspectives, and experiences on the Board and seek representation that better reflects the diversity of our students.

OBJECTIVE 3: We will provide on-boarding orientation, mentoring (including the engagement of past Board members), informational resources, defined pathways to leadership roles, and the tools for each Board member to address concerns and promote greater engagement/outreach.

SUGGESTED ACTIONS

- Review the fundraising campaign success and lessons learned, and use the campaign database/contacts as a potential Board recruitment target pool.
- Continually identify the Board’s diverse representation gaps and needs, and build a pool of recruitment candidates.
 - Obtain and assess existing data for past/current board members’ status and background.
 - Create a gap matrix.
- Reimagine and refine our approach to recruitment of Board members:
 - Seek candidates who better reflect the diversity of our students, with a wide range of backgrounds and leadership experiences across disciplines.
 - Engage/sustain potential board members as committee members to gain experience and interest for future onboarding.
- Create a Board development working group to create an on-boarding guide that provides key tools and addresses defined roles, committee functions, engagement opportunities, mentorship.
- Assess the feasibility/value of creating new committees/work groups, such as a student (“next gen”) group or an alumni group to advise the Board.
- Reactivate Governance & Strategy working committee to review materials and ensure alignment of key governance documents, Strategic Plan objectives, and related actions.

► **Environmentally & Socially Responsible (ESR) Investing**

OBJECTIVE 1: We will support and sustain ESR investing.

OBJECTIVE 2: We will ensure we are aligning ESR investing with the Cal Poly Humboldt ethos.

OBJECTIVE 3: We will set and achieve specific ESR investment goals, which supports the University's efforts to gain and leverage the highest recognition through the Sustainability Tracking, Assessment & Rating System (STARS).

SUGGESTED ACTIONS

- Follow through with the new policy on ESR and confirm the results are what we intended; adjust the approach as necessary.
- Share, gain wider recognition, support, and leverage the good story of accomplishments on ESR.

► **Property Investing**

OBJECTIVE 1: We will facilitate property acquisition and transition opportunities to create value with local property investments and seek a balanced portfolio of property.

OBJECTIVE 2: We will collaborate with Real Estate Holdings (REH) to build its capacity and scope.

OBJECTIVE 3: We will consider accessible/affordable housing, temporary housing, and facility issues—as well as other student, faculty, and community needs—in our due diligence, and we will effectively communicate about our efforts with students and key stakeholders.

SUGGESTED ACTIONS

- Distill and share with the Board lessons learned from the Foundation's property investment involvement over the last 5 years.
- Enhance communication and planning sessions with REH.
- Favor transparency in community communication.
- Identify and act to clear up possible confusion that students and other key stakeholders may have regarding the Foundation role in housing/other community property.