

UNIVERSITY OF WATERLOO
strategic plan
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

20
HIGHLIGHTS
13

summary

A DISTINGUISHED PAST — A DISTINCTIVE FUTURE

The Mike & Ophelia Lazaridis Quantum-Nano Centre, which opened in 2012, is home to the Institute for Quantum Computing and the Waterloo Institute for Nanotechnology.



UNIVERSITY OF
WATERLOO

WYATT RITCO

strategic plan
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



The world beckons. For a fast-evolving globe, where the pace of emerging challenges often outstrips available answers, conventional approaches to higher education, innovation and discovery are no longer enough.


Answering the world's call requires a bold and unconventional approach — one that combines deep knowledge, extraordinary research, broad-based experience and academic excellence. It requires interdisciplinary approaches and a single-minded and forward-looking focus on advancing knowledge and meeting society's needs. Without hesitation, the University of Waterloo accepts this challenge.

Waterloo's Strategic Plan charts a distinctive course for an institution defined by our distinguished past. It builds on the traditions of excellence established by our founders, with a clear view of where energy and resources must be focused in order to achieve our full potential as a world leader in higher education. It will be anchored by an accountability framework that measures and monitors progress towards our ambitious but achievable goals.

Over the next five years, building on our foundational strengths and propelled by the promises outlined in this strategic plan, Waterloo will answer the call of society and emerge as **one of the world's top innovation universities.**

Our new strategic plan envisions a future made stronger through Waterloo's distinctive **experiential and entrepreneurial approaches to education** and the **transformational research carried out by our faculty and students.** It is rooted in the core strengths that place us among the world's leading post-secondary institutions — **excellence in academic programming, broad global outlook, vibrant student experience, robust employer-staff relationship** and **sound value system.**

The University of Waterloo is the right institution at the right time.

This plan is the collective vision of our campus community and partners, based on consultations and feedback from hundreds of our students, faculty, staff, alumni and stakeholders. **This is our strategic plan, and we each have a vital role to play in its ultimate success.** 



FERIDUN HAMDULLAHPUR
President and Vice-Chancellor, University of Waterloo



strategic plan
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



Over the next five years, Waterloo's foundational strengths will serve as a springboard, propelling the institution towards a single goal:

to be recognized as one of the top innovation universities in the world.

Inspired by our culture of innovation, Waterloo will:

- » Transform education and economies with experiential learning for all
- » Build its reputation as a uniquely entrepreneurial university
- » Change lives and advance industries through high-impact, highly relevant research

To reach this goal, Waterloo must choose to focus energy and allocate resources into the areas that set it apart, ensure the best experience for students and serve as a model for the future of higher education.

Experiential education for all

As a place where learning is enhanced through research opportunities and real-world experience, Waterloo is proof that **higher education can't — and shouldn't — be constrained by classroom walls**. As a pioneer and the world's leading provider of post-secondary co-operative education, Waterloo has long recognized that learning is stronger when knowledge is tried and tested. Experience-based learning produces **graduates who are uniquely** employable — ready to not just fill jobs, but to lead.

Over the next five years, Waterloo will take co-operative education to the next level, making experiential education an integral part of the way all students learn. Through the use of new and emerging technologies, **Waterloo's unique brand of education will reshape lifelong learning for students on and beyond its campuses**. Recognizing the value of broad experiences in a global economy, Waterloo will increase opportunities for international work-terms, exchanges and research opportunities.

A uniquely entrepreneurial university

Entrepreneurship at Waterloo isn't business as usual — extending from our classrooms to global communities, from research labs to innovative startups, it's **a spirit defined by a burning desire to make things better**. Entrepreneurial spirit is part of Waterloo's DNA, from long-standing **intellectual property policy that ensures creators retain control of their ideas** to the **networks of support and mentorship** that enable the commercialization

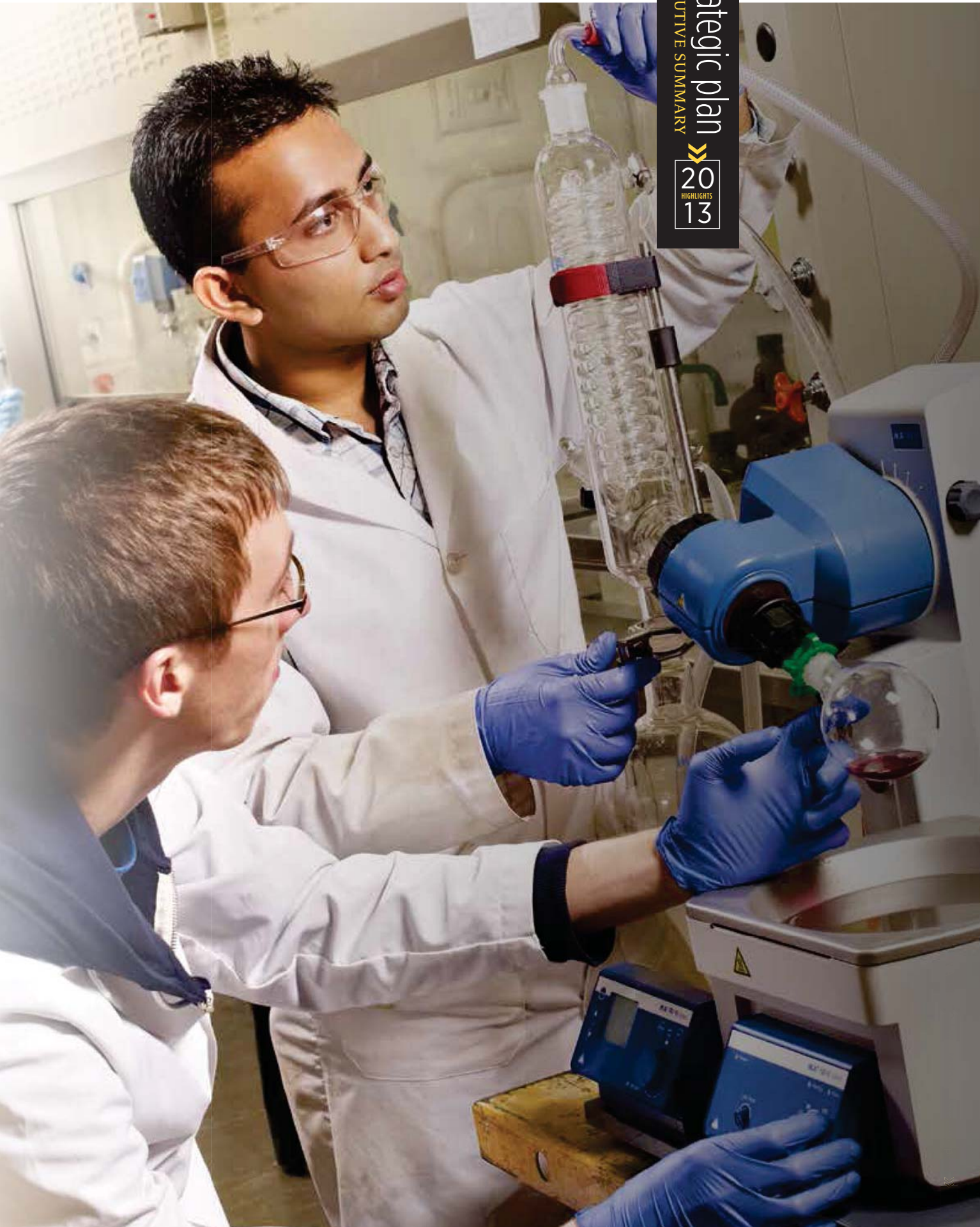
of socially-relevant research. The university embraces entrepreneurial approaches in teaching, learning and scholarship — **educating, inspiring and employing people who lead change**.

Over the next five years, Waterloo will lead Canada's innovation agenda and build its reputation as a uniquely entrepreneurial university. **Waterloo will enable national and international conversations as host of a leading innovation summit**, and increase opportunities for entrepreneurial learning and activity. Waterloo's innovative approaches to technology, social innovation and social entrepreneurship will create recognizable impact — fuelling economic growth and improving the human condition.

Transformational research

Starting at the undergraduate level and extending to senior academics, **research at Waterloo is ignited by a shared passion for discovery and action**. Curiosity becomes a quest to **answer existing and emerging global challenges**. **Learning is enhanced when it includes research, and strong researchers have the tools to be talented teachers**. Waterloo researchers redefine what is known about the world around us. They shed new light on the mysteries of the universe through deep and fundamental research.

Over the next five years, Waterloo will expand research opportunities for undergraduate and graduate students, including the development of research-focused work terms. Waterloo will allocate current resources and align future resources to support areas of research where we have the **greatest potential for world leadership, including quantum science, water and aging**.



World-changing research, experiential education and a **unique entrepreneurial ecosystem** will be the hallmarks of Waterloo's contribution to higher learning over the next five years. These defining endeavours must be built on a rock-solid foundation in order to meet the needs of a fast-evolving world. Over the next five years, Waterloo will intensify its focus in areas where it already stands among the world's top universities in terms of contribution to society and commitment to be a destination of choice for extraordinary students, faculty and staff.

Outstanding academic programming

A shared passion for learning and discovery brings some of the **world's top students and scholars** to Waterloo. They are drawn by a foundational commitment to **top-quality academic programming**, which is **emboldened by an innovative and dynamic approach to learning that is uniquely Waterloo's**. Top students and faculty expect the best from Waterloo's academic programs and supports. Waterloo will continue to deliver.

Over the next five years, academic programming at Waterloo will evolve and grow, supported by **faculty who engage and inspire through their teaching and research**. Waterloo will set an ambitious agenda to lead in the implementation and use of new and emerging technologies. Waterloo will be a leader in developing and employing such technologies to **enhance learning, to reshape the traditional classroom and to expand the impact and reach of Waterloo programs** on its campuses, and beyond.

A truly global institution

Broad impact requires broad understanding and outlook. As **a university committed to improving the world and to educating graduates ready to lead in a global economy**, Waterloo maintains an enviable and expanding **network of international research and industry partnerships, alumni connections, learning opportunities, work placements and field programs**. Research and learning are enhanced by the contributions of top international students and faculty who offer the **diversity of experience and insight vital to the pursuit of knowledge and discovery**. Waterloo is a place the world turns to for answers to its most pressing questions.

Over the next five years, Waterloo will offer more opportunities for international exchange, service learning, field programs and co-op employment. The university will grow its global research network and be **recognized internationally for excellence in education, research and scholarship**. Waterloo will embrace global viewpoints and experience, **attracting a diverse and growing group of the best and brightest international students and faculty** to its campuses.

Vibrant student experience

With a global reputation for excellence and some of the highest entrance averages in the nation, **Waterloo attracts the world's best, brightest and most motivated students**, offering them the opportunity to become something more. Students are inspired in an environment of imagination, innovation and interdisciplinary endeavours. The confluence of remarkable classroom, campus and community experience at Waterloo **transforms excellent students into extraordinary alumni, uniquely equipped to contribute to society and lead change.**

Over the next five years, Waterloo will enrich the student experience with a student-focused approach to services. The university will expand the range of experiences, programs and supports designed to develop student potential, and build a stronger sense of community connection for students both on and off campus.

Robust employer-staff relationship

The success of this institution's programs, research and students hinges on a superior complement of high-functioning staff. As an institution that expects outstanding results from all of its people, **Waterloo aspires to be an employer of choice**, and a place where opportunity and experience inspire **deep institutional pride and professional satisfaction.** Enabling top performance from staff members, who achieve their full potential, professionally and personally, is key to Waterloo's mission as an institution of higher learning.

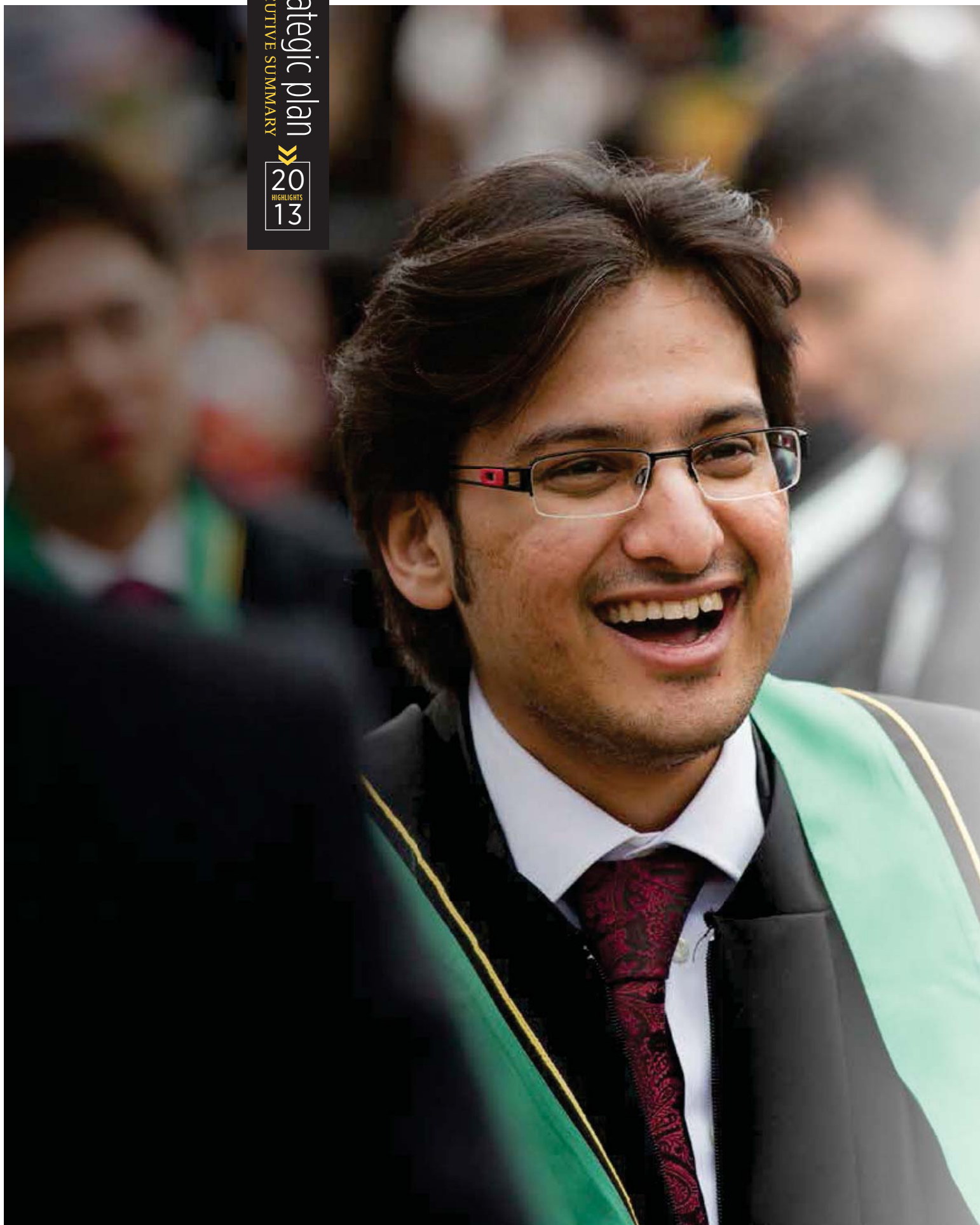
Over the next five years, Waterloo will offer new opportunities for staff to grow professionally, with investments in development and leadership training and an enhanced focus on succession planning. Waterloo will become an international employer of choice for talented, motivated individuals whose support and engagement will ensure the institution's continued successes. In support of achieving our priorities, Waterloo will measure performance against external standards for global excellence, and ensure rigorous management to attain these benchmarks.

Sound value system

As an international leader and standard-bearer in higher education, Waterloo is unshakeable in its **commitment to integrity, equity, diversity and a balanced life for students, faculty and staff.** Without these core values, the university cannot fulfill its mission as a leading institution of higher learning.

Over the next five years, Waterloo will expand its efforts to ensure integrity is a core value instilled in every student, faculty member and staff member. The university will seek new and better ways to support mental and physical well-being, promote school pride and support equity and diversity, enabling the ongoing success of all members of the campus community.

strategic plan
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



A distinguished past

Waterloo has much to be proud of. Built by entrepreneurs, the University of Waterloo is a place **where innovation has impact**.

No ivory tower, this is an institution uniquely connected to the world and committed to making it better — by **fuelling prosperity** and **improving the human condition**. This is a place of constant forward motion.

A magnet for the best and brightest from around the world, Waterloo **converts the strong into the extraordinary** — students who graduate ready to lead in their careers, faculty who inspire through world-class teaching and world-changing research ignited by the spirit of innovation.

A young institution, Waterloo swiftly outpaced its national and global peers to rise through the ranks of higher education. **Unconventional from the start**, Waterloo forges new paths, redefining higher education as relevant and meaningful.

Already a world leader in research that creates new understanding of quantum science, water and aging, **Waterloo aspires to even greater success**.

The University of Waterloo Strategic Plan will create a differentiated university for the province and the country, one that offers a unique experiential learning experience for every student; one that focuses on entrepreneurship to create new companies, new jobs, even new industries; one that manages for global excellence; one that will be a world leader in select and pivotal areas of research with strong research foundations throughout.

This plan reflects deep pride in all Waterloo has accomplished, and aspirations for what can be achieved. Over the next five years, on the collective strength of our stakeholders, Waterloo can and will continue to lead Canada's innovation agenda, redefining higher education for this country and the world.

Waterloo will answer the world's call. 

strategic plan
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

