



**Academic &
Operational Plan
Annual Report
2026**





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1. Executive Summary

This report provides the Board of Governors and Senate with an annual update on progress made under Nipissing University's Academic and Operational Plan (APOP). The report is intended to support governance oversight, institutional accountability, and a shared understanding of progress toward the commitments set out in Nipissing's Strategic Plan: Pathways: Our Commitments to Water, Land, and People for the Next Seven Generations.

APOP sets out the academic, operational, and institutional actions intended to advance the commitments of Pathways. This report summarizes progress to date, identifies areas where implementation is ongoing, and provides a structured overview of action items organized by the six commitments of the Strategic Plan. It represents the first annual progress update since the creation and implementation of APOP and reflects activity through June 2026, based primarily on information gathered during the 2025-26 academic year. Detailed action-by-action progress updates are provided in Appendix A, with a separate Project Integrate progress update provided in Appendix B.

Overall, the report shows that implementation is underway across all commitments, with several actions completed and many others progressing through planning, consultation, and implementation.



1.1 Progress to Date

APOP is made up of 73 action items developed to support the implementation of the six commitments of Pathways and is organized under the commitment it most closely supports. As of June 2026, progress has been made across each commitment area, with action items categorized as completed, in progress, not yet started/planned for a future phase of implementation.

Summary Table:

Status	Number of Actions	Percentage
Completed	9	12.3%
In Progress	60	82.2%
Not Started/Planned	4	5.5%
Total	73	100%

Summary of progress by Strategic Plan commitment:

Strategic Plan Commitment	Total Actions	Completed	In Progress	Not Started / Planned
Fulfilling our Responsibility to Truth and Reconciliation	7	2	4	1
Nurturing our Relationship with Water, Land and Place	2	0	2	0
Embodying Harmony and Care	16	1	13	2
Inspiring Innovative Growth and Development	23	2	20	1
Building Sustainable Futures	18	4	14	0
Celebrating Who We Are	7	0	7	0



1.2 Key Areas of Progress

Across the first reporting period, progress has been made in several areas that support the commitments of Pathways and the University's academic and operational priorities. Key areas of progress include student-centred service improvement, academic planning and program renewal, research supports, Reconciliation and Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Anti-Racism (EDIA-AR) initiatives, financial sustainability, communications, and external engagement.

Together, these areas show that APOP implementation is helping to connect planning, accountability, student support, academic priorities, and long-term sustainability across the University.

1.3 Considerations and Next Steps

As APOP moves into its next phase, the focus will be on advancing more actions from planning into implementation and moving ongoing work toward completion. This will require continued attention to capacity, sequencing, coordination, and alignment with institutional priorities.

Many actions now have structures in place to support further progress. The next phase will focus on using these structures to guide implementation, monitor progress, support decision-making, and strengthen future annual reporting.



2. APOP in Context

This section explains how APOP relates to Pathways, how progress is organized, and how progress should be understood across action items.

2.1 Relationship Between Pathways and APOP

Nipissing University's Academic and Operational Plan is grounded in Pathways: Our Commitments to Water, Land, and People for the Next Seven Generations, the University's Strategic Plan. While Pathways sets out the University's commitments, APOP identifies the academic, operational, and institutional actions intended to advance them. The annual APOP report supports accountability by showing how the University is moving from strategic planning to implementation.

APOP is organized under the six commitments of Pathways:

1. Fulfilling our Responsibility to Truth and Reconciliation
2. Nurturing our Relationship with Water, Land and Place
3. Embodying Harmony and Care
4. Inspiring Innovative Growth and Development
5. Building Sustainable Futures
6. Celebrating Who We Are

These commitments provide the structure for this report.

2.2 APOP's Overarching Directions

APOP is informed by two overarching directions emphasized in Pathways: advancing Nipissing University's long-term financial sustainability and embracing the University's distinctiveness as a small, student-centred institution.

Together, these directions help keep implementation focused on choices that are mission-driven, realistic, and appropriate to Nipissing's size, strengths, relationships, and student-centred identity. They also reinforce that APOP should be understood as more than a list of separate action items; it keeps financial realities, academic priorities, and operational planning connected.



2.3 Understanding Progress Across APOP

APOP actions are at different stages of implementation. Some actions have been completed or substantially implemented, while others are in progress, or planned for future phases. This variation reflects the different types of work involved, including consultation, resource needs, governance steps, ongoing data gathering, and dependencies on other institutional initiatives.

Accordingly, the status of each action should be read as one indicator of progress, not as the full story of the work completed or underway. An action marked as “in progress” may still represent significant advancement, particularly where foundational work has been completed or where implementation requires continued coordination over multiple years.

For this reason, the report includes both status information and narrative updates. Status counts and percentages provide a snapshot of progress, while the narrative summaries and action-item updates explain what has been accomplished, what remains underway, and what will happen next.



3. Progress by Strategic Plan Commitment

The following section summarizes APOP progress under each of the six commitments of Pathways. Each section includes a brief overview of the commitment area, a summary of progress to date, key accomplishments, risks and dependencies, and next steps.

3.1 Fulfilling Our Responsibility to Truth and Reconciliation

This commitment focuses on Nipissing’s responsibility to advance Truth and Reconciliation through respectful relationships with Indigenous communities and greater recognition of Indigenous knowledges and ways of knowing in teaching, research, and University processes. This work requires ongoing engagement, consultation, and coordination across the University.

APOP actions under this commitment support the structures, training, relationships, and research supports needed to move Reconciliation-focused work forward.

The following APOP action items are aligned with this commitment:

- **Action Item 2:** Indigenous Reconciliation Targeted Action Plan Working Group
- **Action Item 3:** Faculty and staff training in support of Indigenous Reconciliation work
- **Action Item 4:** EDIA Audit support and implementation planning through the Indigenous Reconciliation Targeted Action Plan Working Group
- **Action Item 41:** Pathways and supports for research by and with Indigenous communities
- **Action Item 43:** Indigenous Reconciliation Targeted Action Plan and Indigenous Academic Advisory Council
- **Action Item 44:** Indigenous Reconciliation and EDIA-AR professional development opportunities
- **Action Item 45:** International partnerships and exchanges for degree programs

Status	Number of Actions	Percentage
Completed	2	28.6%
In Progress	4	57.1%
Not Started/Planned	1	14.3%
Total	7	100%



Summary of Progress

Progress under this commitment reflects foundational work to advance Reconciliation, Indigenization, decolonization, and Indigenous research supports at Nipissing. The Provost's Indigenous Reconciliation Targeted Action Plan Working Group will be confirmed in June 2026 and will hold its first meeting in July 2026, moving this work into a more coordinated implementation phase.

The completion and acceptance of the Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, and Accessibility (EDIA) Audit¹ also provides direction for this work. The audit uses the term EDIA, while some APOP action items use EDIA-AR to refer more broadly to equity, diversity, inclusion, accessibility, and anti-racism work. In particular, Recommendation 1, which focuses on revitalizing and formalizing Indigenization and decolonization, now informs the Indigenous Reconciliation Targeted Action Plan and will help guide future training, programming, and institutional planning.

There has also been progress in strengthening Indigenous research supports. The creation of the Indigenous Research Advisor position, along with the Office of Research, Innovation and Graduate Studies (ORIGS) funded Ownership, Control, Access, and Possession (OCAP) training, helps build institutional capacity to better support research conducted by and with Indigenous communities. While some areas remain in development, including the proposed Indigenous Academic Advisory Council, the work completed this year has established a stronger foundation for continued progress.

International partnership work is also continuing, although within a changed federal policy environment. Given the national study permit cap and provincial attestation letter (PAL) requirements, the University is taking a more targeted approach to international recruitment and partnership opportunities.

¹ The Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, and Accessibility (EDIA) Audit: Final Report and Evaluation Plan is available on the Nipissing University website.

Key Accomplishments

Key accomplishments under this commitment include progress in Reconciliation planning, Indigenous research supports, EDIA Audit alignment, and early coordination of training and implementation work:

- work advanced on the Provost's Indigenous Reconciliation Targeted Action Plan Working Group;
- working toward consensus on the Indigenous Reconciliation Targeted Action Plan;
- completion, presentation, and acceptance of the EDIA Audit recommendations;
- alignment of EDIA Recommendation 1 with Reconciliation, Indigenization, and decolonization planning;
- creation of the Indigenous Research Advisor position;
- ORIGS-funded OCAP training for students, faculty, staff, and senior administrators;
- continued exploration of international recruitment and partnership opportunities.

Together, these accomplishments reflect progress toward more coordinated Reconciliation efforts and Indigenization planning, stronger Indigenous research supports, and continued work to identify recruitment and partnership opportunities.



Risks, Dependencies, and Considerations

Key dependencies and considerations that may affect the pace, scope, or feasibility of implementation include:

- Reconciliation and Indigenous-focused institutional work require sustained coordination across the Provost's Office, OII, ORIGS, academic units, and other areas with related responsibilities;
- training, programming, and implementation timelines need to be aligned with the Indigenous Reconciliation Targeted Action Plan and related EDIA Audit recommendations;
- the proposed Indigenous Academic Advisory Council will require clear purpose, scope, and membership before it can be established;
- international partnership and exchange goals may be affected by federal study permit requirements and the broader international recruitment environment.

Overall, this work will require careful sequencing, sustained coordination, and ongoing consultation as Reconciliation-focused work moves forward.

Ongoing Work and Next Steps

Next steps include continued work through the Provost's Indigenous Reconciliation Targeted Action Plan Working Group and further implementation planning connected to the Indigenous Reconciliation Targeted Action Plan. This work will support the development of faculty and staff training aligned with the Indigenous Reconciliation Targeted Action Plan and EDIA Recommendation 1.

Further work is needed to clarify the role, scope, and goals of the proposed Indigenous Academic Advisory Council. Indigenous research supports will continue through the Indigenous Research Advisor position and collaboration between OII and ORIGS.

Internationalization efforts will continue through targeted recruitment and identification of program areas that may be well positioned to support future partnerships, exchanges, and international opportunities.



3.2 Nurturing Our Relationship with Water, Land and Place

This commitment focuses on Nipissing’s relationship with place, including how the University cares for, learns from, and plans for the lands and waters connected to campus life.

APOP actions under this commitment support environmental sustainability planning, revitalization of outdoor spaces, campus master planning, and employee recruitment, all of which contribute to the University’s responsibility to be a good neighbour on and to this land.

The following APOP action items are aligned with this commitment:

- **Action Item 46:** Environmental Sustainability Plan, including academic priorities, energy use, material consumption, outdoor spaces, and campus master planning
- **Action Item 53:** Broad Employee Recruitment Strategy

Status	Number of Actions	Percentage
Completed	0	0.0%
In Progress	2	100%
Not Started/Planned	0	0.0%
Total	2	100%

Summary of Progress

Progress under this commitment has focused on environmental sustainability, campus stewardship, and long-term campus planning. Work is underway to develop an Environmental Sustainability Plan that reflects both academic priorities and operational needs. Early work has focused on better understanding energy use and material consumption, including opportunities to strengthen monitoring and tracking.

Progress has also been made on campus through the completion of a new outdoor classroom, which will be available for use this Summer 2026. This project supports the revitalization of outdoor spaces and creates new opportunities for land-based and experiential learning. In addition, repairs to the campus pond dam are planned for this year, with broader rehabilitation work to follow as part of ongoing stewardship of campus lands and natural spaces.

Nipissing University and Canadore College have initiated a joint effort to update the shared main campus master plan. Early discussions with consultants have focused on future academic growth, major capital projects, and infrastructure priorities, including electrification, parking, waterworks, and deferred maintenance. This work will help align long-term campus development with sustainability priorities, while supporting appropriate engagement and governance as planning continues.

Work has also begun on a broader Employee Recruitment Strategy. Led by Human Resources, this initiative is intended to support a more coordinated approach to attracting and recruiting employees. Additional Human Resources staffing is now in place to help develop and advance the strategy.

Key Accomplishments

Key accomplishments under this commitment include progress in environmental sustainability planning, campus stewardship, shared campus planning, and employee recruitment strategy development:

- work underway on an Environmental Sustainability Plan aligned with academic priorities and operational needs;
- proposal received for enhanced energy monitoring;
- completion of a new outdoor classroom, available for use beginning Summer 2026;
- planned repairs to the campus pond dam, with broader rehabilitation work to follow;
- initiation of a joint Nipissing-Canadore plan to update the shared main campus master plan;
- early campus master planning discussions focused on academic growth, capital projects, electrification, parking, waterworks, deferred maintenance, and alignment with sustainability priorities;
- additional Human Resources capacity to support development of the Employee Recruitment Strategy.

Together, these accomplishments reflect progress toward stronger environmental planning, better use of campus data, improved shared campus spaces, and longer-term planning for sustainable growth and infrastructure renewal.

Risks, Dependencies, and Considerations

Key dependencies and considerations that may affect the pace, scope, or feasibility of implementation include:

- the proposed enhanced energy monitoring system depends on budget approval and procurement processes;
- the Environmental Sustainability Plan will need to remain aligned with academic priorities, operational realities, and campus master planning;
- shared campus planning will require continued coordination with Canadore College;
- campus stewardship and infrastructure work, including pond dam repairs, broader rehabilitation, and future capital projects, will need to be sequenced realistically;
- progress on the Employee Recruitment Strategy will depend on continued Human Resources capacity and coordination.

Overall, this work will require coordinated planning, realistic timelines, and continued alignment between sustainability goals, campus infrastructure needs, and available resources.

Ongoing Work and Next Steps

Ongoing work under this commitment includes continued development of the Environmental Sustainability Plan, further review of energy use and material consumption, and ongoing planning for campus stewardship projects, including the campus pond dam repairs and future rehabilitation work. The joint campus master planning process with Canadore will continue, with more engagement and governance steps to follow as planning continues.

For the Employee Recruitment Strategy, the next phase will involve continued Human Resources work to develop and advance a broad recruitment strategy, supported by the additional capacity now in place.



3.3 Embodying Harmony and Care

This commitment focuses on creating and maintaining strong relationships among students, staff, faculty, and regional communities. In Pathways, this commitment emphasizes the importance of a supportive and inclusive University environment, where students and employees can feel connected and valued.

APOP actions under this commitment support these priorities through work related to student support, EDIA-AR, accessibility, wellness, communications, community relations, and continuous improvement in services and supports.

The following APOP action items are aligned with this commitment:

- **Action Item 1:** Full implementation of Project Integrate
- **Action Item 5:** EDIA-AR Plan working group
- **Action Item 6:** SWOT analysis of current for-credit systems and practices related to AODA compliance
- **Action Item 7:** EDIA Audit support and implementation planning through the EDIA-AR working group
- **Action Item 28:** Review of academic processes, procedures, and policies to identify opportunities for more direct student support
- **Action Item 29:** Review of student mental health frameworks and development of a mental health strategy
- **Action Item 30:** Standard approach to student service evaluation and quality assurance
- **Action Item 31:** Analysis and proposal for a distinctive First Year Experience
- **Action Item 32:** Report to Senate’s Teaching and Learning Committee on Records of Student Development
- **Action Item 47:** Wellness Strategy
- **Action Item 49:** Implementation of recommendations from the EDIA Audit
- **Action Item 51:** Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan required under the Canada Research Chair Program
- **Action Item 52:** Review of University structures to better promote EDIA-AR initiatives
- **Action Item 55:** Adoption of Canada Research Chair Program EDI best practices for recruitment, hiring, and retention
- **Action Item 67:** Strategic Communications Plan for internal and external audiences
- **Action Item 70:** Comprehensive Community Relations Strategy

Status	Number of Actions	Percentage
Completed	1	6.2%
In Progress	13	81.3%
Not Started/Planned	2	12.5%
Total	16	100%

Summary of Progress

Progress under this commitment reflects work across student support, EDIA-AR, wellness, communications, and community engagement. Project Integrate remains a significant multi-year initiative and is addressed in more detail in Appendix B. In this section, it is noted as part of the broader effort to improve student-facing processes and coordination.

Several actions have moved from early planning to implementation. The President is convening an Equity Action Steering Committee to support development of the EDIA-AR Plan, which will also inform next steps related to the EDIA Audit recommendations. Work is also underway to strengthen student service functions, develop quality assurance metrics for student services, and assess the University's current mental health framework. This work helps identify where processes, supports, and services can be improved or better aligned.

Progress has also been made in communications, community relations, and employee wellness. Internal communications are supported through regular newsletters, Community Forums, Senate updates, and "Coffee and Conversation" events with senior administration. The approval of a new Manager of Communications role provides additional capacity to develop a broader strategic communications plan. Community relations work has also become more intentional, with increased focus on sponsorships, local initiatives, and relationships with youth, alumni, and industry partners.

Taken together, these actions show progress in strengthening student support, employee wellness, communications, and community relationships at Nipissing.

Key Accomplishments

Key accomplishments under this commitment include progress in student support, EDIA-AR planning, wellness, communications, community engagement, and service improvement:

- continued implementation of Project Integrate, with detailed reporting included in Appendix B;
- the convening of an Equity Action Steering Committee to support development of the EDIA-AR Plan;
- reorganizing of some student service functions and areas to better support students;
- development of student service quality assurance metrics through Student Development and Services and the Manager of Quality Assurance;
- completion of the Records of Student Development report to Senate's Teaching and Learning Committee;
- securing an annual and ongoing budget for employee wellness initiatives and events;
- continued strengthening of internal communication practices;
- approval of a new Manager of Communications role through the 2026-27 budget process;
- continued community engagement through sponsorships, local initiatives, youth, alumni, and industry partnerships.

Together, these accomplishments reflect progress toward more coordinated student supports, stronger internal communication, and deeper connection with the broader community.



Risks, Dependencies, and Considerations

Key dependencies and considerations that may affect the pace, scope, or feasibility of implementation include:

- EDIA-AR implementation will need to be sequenced so that EDIA Audit follow-up, the EDIA-AR Plan, and Canada Research Chairs Program EDI-related actions remain aligned;
- student service improvement work will rely on clear metrics and assessment tools to evaluate service quality and identify where processes can be improved;
- mental health framework and First Year Experience work will require further review and decision-making before next steps can be finalized;
- Project Integrate remains a significant cross-institutional initiative and will require continued coordination across multiple portfolios.

Overall, this work will require continued attention to coordination, capacity, and measurement so improvements to student support, EDIA-AR, wellness, communications, and community engagement can be sustained over time.

Ongoing Work and Next Steps

Next steps include continued development of the EDIA-AR Plan through the Equity Action Steering Committee. Once further developed, the plan will help guide EDIA Audit follow-up, the Canada Research Chairs Program EDI Action Plan, and related recruitment, hiring, and retention best practices.

Work will also move forward on the AODA-related review, student service quality assurance metrics, and annual review of student service functions through the budget process. These activities will help identify where services, processes, and supports can be improved for students.

Further discussion is needed to confirm the direction of the First-Year Experience work with the new Provost. Before next steps can be finalized, the University will need to confirm the preferred approach for the mental health framework review, including what consultation, planning, and resources may be required.

Communications and community relations work will be supported by the new Manager of Communications role and ongoing reporting to the Community Relations and Fundraising Committee of the Board of Governors. Human Resources will continue supporting employee wellness through the existing wellness budget as planning for a formal wellness strategy continues.



3.4 Inspiring Innovative Growth and Development

This commitment focuses on academic innovation, responsive teaching and research, and program development that connects student learning with community, employer, and regional needs.

APOP actions under this commitment support academic program renewal, delivery models, research growth, experiential and work-integrated learning (WIL), community partnerships, professional development, and philanthropy. This work supports academic quality while helping Nipissing respond to the needs of students, the community, employers, and the region.

The following APOP action items are aligned with this commitment:

- **Action Item 10:** Review of delivery modalities, andragogical models, outdoor teaching, experiential learning, academic integrity, student supports, graduate student training, and administrative training
- **Action Item 11:** Supports and guidelines for Universal Design for Learning and culturally responsive pedagogy
- **Action Item 12:** Industry and community advisory councils
- **Action Item 13:** Baselines and benchmarks for program sustainability at the faculty level
- **Action Item 14:** Process maps and templates for program innovation and development
- **Action Item 15:** Review of experiential learning policies and procedures
- **Action Item 16:** Innovative program renewal for Nursing
- **Action Item 17:** Strategic priorities for the Schulich School of Education
- **Action Item 18:** School of Business interdisciplinary synergies and program enhancement
- **Action Item 19:** Strategic priorities for the School of Business
- **Action Item 20:** Review of barriers to recruitment in STEM disciplines
- **Action Item 21:** Revised program curriculum and facility plan for Fine Arts
- **Action Item 33:** Consultation to finalize the Strategic Research Plan
- **Action Item 34:** Review and reallocate Research Support Fund resources to support faculty research
- **Action Item 35:** Increase Tri-Agency research funding
- **Action Item 36:** Research dashboard to track research funding metrics
- **Action Item 37:** Review and update of research labs, centres, and institutes policy
- **Action Item 38:** Mapping of research policies and processes for Tri-Agency compliance and grant success
- **Action Item 42:** Research processes to support collaborative research with diverse partners
- **Action Item 56:** Campus-wide Employee Training Plan/Program
- **Action Item 57:** Professional development curriculum through the Teaching Hub
- **Action Item 58:** Training and support for academic administrators
- **Action Item 72:** Five-year approach to philanthropy



Status	Number of Actions	Percentage
Completed	2	8.7%
In Progress	20	87%
Not Started/Planned	1	4.3%
Total	23	100%

Summary of Progress

Progress under this commitment reflects work across academic planning, program renewal, teaching and learning, research, work-integrated learning, and philanthropy. Several actions have strengthened the tools used to support new program development, including process maps, the Sustainable 4-year Degree Business Plan, and the market research template. Work-integrated and experiential learning have also advanced through the WIL report, the hiring of a WIL consultant, and planning for an Experiential Learning Symposium in 2026–2027.

Program-level planning has advanced across several academic areas, including Nursing, Business, Fine Arts, and the Schulich School of Education. This work includes strategic planning, program requirement changes, facility planning, and next steps informed by recent program review and new program development. Other actions are improving the tools and data available for academic decision-making, including program-level enrolment targets and the Program Cost Tracker dashboard.

The University continues to review academic offerings, and since January 2024, seven degree programs and one program stream have been recommended for suspension of admission. Of these, three programs and one stream have had admission suspended, while four programs were consolidated into one degree program. This reflects a continued focus on offering programs that are sustainable, responsive to student interests, and aligned with institutional priorities.

Research-related actions have also moved forward. The draft Strategic Research Plan has been shared with the Senate Research Committee for comment, the research dashboard continues to be used to track research activity, the research labs, centres, and institutes policy was revised in 2025, and Tri-Agency policy and process mapping has been completed.

Teaching and learning work is progressing through revisions to the Universal Design for Learning (UDL) document, culturally responsive pedagogy programming, educational technology workshops, early development of an Inclusive Instruction series, and planning for graduate student teaching assistant training. Work on a campus-wide Employee Training Plan/Program is also beginning with additional Human Resources capacity in place.



Key Accomplishments

Key accomplishments under this commitment include progress in academic planning, program renewal, research supports, teaching and learning, and WIL:

- completion and use of process maps, a Sustainable 4-Year Degree Business Plan, and a market research template to support program innovation and new program development;
- establishment of program-level enrolment targets through Strategic Enrolment Management;
- development of the Program Cost Tracker dashboard;
- hiring of a WIL consultant to support planning for work-integrated learning across programs;
- completion of the AI technologies review in instructional settings;
- development of a draft strategic plan for the School of Nursing;
- development and planned launch of the School of Business Strategic Plan;
- suspension of admission into the Art History stream, increased flexibility in Fine Arts program requirements, and continued Fine Arts facility planning;
- movement of the draft Strategic Research Plan to the Senate Research Committee;
- development and use of a research dashboard to track grant applications, success rates, funding sources, and researcher-level activity;
- January 2025 revision of the research labs, centres, and institutes policy, including an annual reporting and review cycle;
- completion of Tri-Agency policy and process mapping;
- update of the CTL mandate and completion of a faculty professional development needs survey;
- piloting of educational technology workshops and work on an Inclusive Instruction series;

- initial development of a Multi-Year Philanthropy Plan.

Together, these accomplishments show concrete progress on the tools, plans, and supports needed to advance academic renewal, research development, and teaching and learning.

Risks, Dependencies, and Considerations

Key dependencies and considerations that may affect the pace, scope, or feasibility of implementation include:

- program renewal and new program development need to remain aligned with enrolment demand, market research, faculty capacity, available resources, and governance requirements;
- program sustainability work relies on reliable data from the Program Cost Tracker dashboard and consistent cost-allocation methods;
- research growth goals need to reflect current faculty complement, research capacity, infrastructure, data quality, and financial context;
- the Tri-Agency research funding target may need to be reassessed based on current faculty complement and hiring realities;
- WIL, experiential learning, and advisory council models need to be realistic for Nipissing's size, programs, and available capacity.

Overall, progress under this commitment will require continued alignment between academic priorities, available resources, reliable data, and sustainable growth planning.



Ongoing Work and Next Steps

Ongoing work under this commitment will include continued development of the Program Cost Tracker dashboard, program-level benchmarks, and use of the Sustainable 4-Year Degree Business Plan and market research template for new program development.

Academic unit-level planning will also continue, including finalizing the School of Nursing strategic plan, launching the School of Business Strategic Plan, confirming next steps for Schulich School of Education priorities in relation to the recent IQAP and new program context, and continuing Fine Arts facility planning.

Research-related next steps include review of the draft Strategic Research Plan by the Senate Research Committee and senior executive, continued refinement of the research dashboard, and further work on Research Support Fund allocation.

Teaching and learning work will continue through revisions to the UDL document, culturally responsive pedagogy programming, educational technology workshops, early development of an Inclusive Instruction series, graduate student teaching assistant training, and continued work on experiential and work-integrated learning, including the WIL consultant's report and the planned Experiential Learning Symposium in 2026–2027.

Employee and faculty development work will continue through early development of a campus-wide Employee Training Plan/Program, supported by additional Human Resources capacity, and CTL's work to align faculty development goals with term-by-term and annual workshops, events, and resources. Academic administrator training has not yet started and is planned for the next phase of development.

Philanthropy work will continue through consultation and refinement of the Multi-Year Philanthropy Plan.

3.5 Building Sustainable Futures

This commitment focuses on the planning and decision-making needed to support Nipissing’s long-term sustainability. In Pathways, this means strengthening the University’s financial position, improving how decisions are made, and building the flexibility needed to respond to a changing postsecondary environment.

The following APOP action items are aligned with this commitment

- **Action Item 8:** Policy of policies, including templates, review timelines, proliferation protocol, and central repository
- **Action Item 9:** Internal process maps for academic administrative processes
- **Action Item 22:** Increase domestic enrolment year-over-year
- **Action Item 23:** Move Strategic Enrolment Management (SEM) to the Provost’s Office
- **Action Item 24:** Graduate-focused recruitment plan
- **Action Item 25:** Retention and persistence plan
- **Action Item 26:** Student-centred retention working group
- **Action Item 27:** Seamless student service experience
- **Action Item 40:** Diversified research supports through foundations, donors, industry, and other funders/partners
- **Action Item 59:** Internal financial metrics, including annual reserve targets
- **Action Item 60:** Documentation of the budget process
- **Action Item 61:** Financial literacy resource for the University community
- **Action Item 62:** Long-term alternative revenue strategy
- **Action Item 63:** Comprehensive picture of financial contributions by academic and non-academic areas
- **Action Item 64:** Operational review plan
- **Action Item 65:** IT strategic plan and investment plan
- **Action Item 66:** Enterprise Risk Management (ERM) process
- **Action Item 73:** Scalable sponsorship strategy

Status	Number of Actions	Percentage
Completed	4	22.2%
In Progress	14	77.8%
Not Started/Planned	0	0.0%
Total	18	100%

Summary of Progress

Progress under this commitment reflects continued work to strengthen the planning, financial, operational, and revenue tools needed to support long-term sustainability. Across these areas, work completed to date is helping to connect enrolment planning, budget processes, financial analysis, operational review, risk management, IT planning, and revenue development.

Enrolment and student success work has continued through Strategic Enrolment Management, Project Integrate, and wraparound student support structures. The 6% year-over-year domestic enrolment growth target was exceeded in 2024–2025 and, based on finalized 2025–2026 data, was exceeded again. However, this growth was not evenly distributed across all program areas. When Nursing and Education are excluded, the University fell short of its growth targets by approximately 90 FTE. Future targets will need to be reviewed in light of SMA4, the new funding formula, the priority growth envelope, and mandated changes to BEd program delivery.

Financial sustainability work has focused on improving transparency, building shared understanding of the University's financial context, and strengthening the data available for decision-making. This includes work related to internal financial metrics, reserve replenishment planning, Ministry benchmark analysis, and program-level financial analysis.

Operational review, Enterprise Risk Management, alternative revenue, sponsorship, and IT planning are also moving forward as part of the University's broader sustainability work.

Key Accomplishments

Key accomplishments under this commitment include concrete progress in enrolment planning, student retention, financial transparency, operational review, IT planning, and revenue development:

- the 6% year-over-year domestic enrolment growth target was exceeded in 2024–2025 and, based on finalized 2025–2026 data, was exceeded again;

- regular SEM meetings are now organized through the Office of the Provost, supported by weekly SEM updates;
- a comprehensive graduate recruitment plan has been created;
- Project Integrate continues to support retention and persistence work;
- the Wraparound Student Support working group has supported student-centred retention and student service conversations since 2024;
- the University's budget process has been formally documented, including development, review, approval, roles, and governance oversight;
- the financial literacy resource has been completed and is available on the Nipissing University's Finance webpage;
- work is underway on internal financial metrics, including reserve replenishment targets, baseline measures, and Ministry benchmark ratios;
- the Office of Institutional Planning & Analysis is leading the development of an academic Program Cost Tracker dashboard, using four to five years of program-level data, with completion anticipated in the current fiscal year;
- the IT Strategic Plan has been updated to align with APOP, the Efficiency and Accountability Framework, and the Strategic Plan;
- a three-year UTS budget forecast has been completed;
- a process to refresh the University's Enterprise Risk Management (ERM) process has been reviewed by the Audit & Finance Committee of the Board, with work beginning as early as this fall;
- a sponsorship strategy is underway using the Athletics department as the pilot project, including valuation work, a sponsorship deck, a prospecting list, and draft policy/agreement documentation.

Together, these accomplishments reflect progress in building the tools and processes needed to support long-term sustainability.

Risks, Dependencies, and Considerations

Key dependencies and considerations that may affect the pace, scope, or feasibility of implementation include:

- enrolment growth targets may need to be revisited in light of the SMA4, the new funding formula, the priority growth envelope, and mandated changes to BEd program delivery;
- implementation of the graduate recruitment plan requires further direction from the AVP RIGS, PVPA, and Deans regarding which elements of the plan will be advanced;
- policy and academic process work is linked to the policy review and the initiation of academic administrative process mapping;
- financial sustainability analysis relies on reliable data, consistent methodology, and continued development of academic and non-academic contribution dashboards;
- alternative revenue and sponsorship work requires coordination across areas with external relationships, including Advancement, Athletics, Campus Sales and Service, the President's Office, and the Research Office;
- sponsorship policy and agreement documentation requires legal review before implementation;

Overall, progress under this commitment will depend on continued alignment between enrolment planning, financial analysis, operational review, risk management, and revenue development.

Ongoing Work and Next Steps

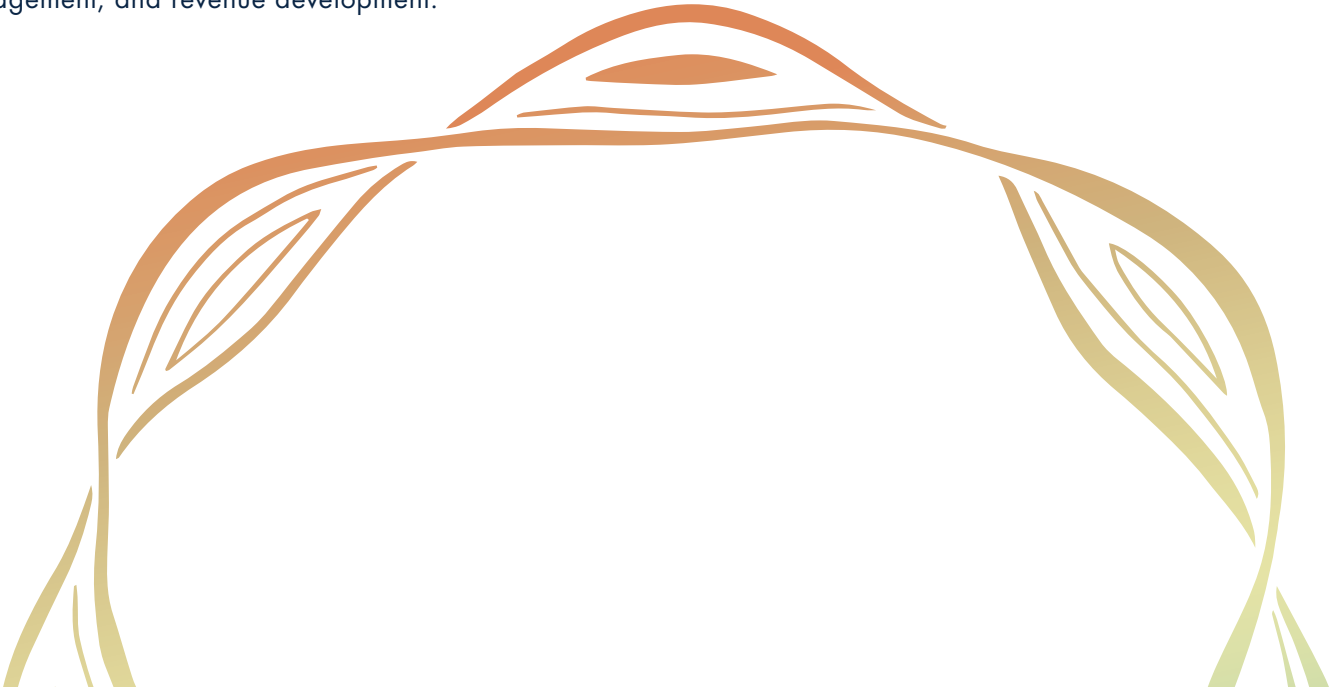
Next steps under this commitment will focus on moving existing planning work into implementation and monitoring progress over time.

SEM will remain supported through regular meetings and weekly cross-portfolio updates. For graduate recruitment, the next step is to determine, in consultation with the Provost, which elements of the recruitment plan will be implemented.

Retention and student service work will be advanced through Project Integrate and the Wraparound Student Support working group, with a focus on student-centred retention and a more seamless student service experience.

Financial sustainability work will focus on internal financial metrics, reserve replenishment targets, Ministry benchmark analysis, and academic and non-academic contribution dashboards. The academic dashboard is expected to be completed by this fiscal year, with non-academic dashboard work to follow.

Operational review and ERM refresh will continue through the Efficiency and Accountability implementation framework. Sponsorship work will move into initial outreach to vetted prospects, tracking through internal systems, and final review of sponsorship policy and agreement documents.



3.6 Celebrating Who We Are

This commitment focuses on how Nipissing understands, communicates, and strengthens its identity as a small, student-centred university rooted in relationships with people, place, and community.

APOP actions under this commitment support research communications, employee engagement, onboarding, Indigenous identity affirmation processes, alumni relations, brand work, and communications planning. Together, this work helps Nipissing more clearly communicate its purpose, identity, relationships, and distinct role in postsecondary education.

The following APOP action items are aligned with this commitment:

- **Action Item 39:** Enhanced research communications strategy
- **Action Item 48:** Employee Engagement Plan
- **Action Item 50:** Processes to affirm Indigenous identity
- **Action Item 54:** More vigorous onboarding program
- **Action Item 68:** Approach to moving forward with a brand audit
- **Action Item 69:** Recommendations for reimagining the brand and five-year marketing and communications strategy
- **Action Item 71:** Five-year alumni plan

Status	Number of Actions	Percentage
Completed	0	0.0%
In Progress	7	100%
Not Started/Planned	0	0.0%
Total	7	100%



Summary of Progress

Progress under this commitment reflects work to strengthen how Nipissing communicates its identity, supports employees, engages alumni, and builds relationships with internal and external audiences.

Research communications work is underway, with a draft research communications strategy developed and feedback provided by the AVP RIGS. This work will be aligned with the draft Strategic Research Plan over summer 2026, with the plan expected to be presented to Senate in September 2026.

There has also been progress in areas connected to workplace culture and employee experience. Employee engagement work has been advanced through wellness initiatives and expanded Service and Staff Awards. Onboarding work is also underway and is supported by additional Human Resources capacity.

Several identity, brand, and engagement initiatives are moving forward. A working committee was struck in early 2026 to support development of an Indigenous self-identification affirmation process. Funding for a third-party brand audit was approved through the 2026–2027 budget process, and preparation work is underway to support a request for proposals (RFP). Preliminary work has also begun on a broader marketing strategy, supported by improvements to prospective student communications, website redevelopment, CRM integration, and brand guideline work.

Key Accomplishments

Key accomplishments under this commitment include progress in research communications, Indigenous identity affirmation, employee engagement, onboarding, alumni engagement, and brand/communications work:

- draft research communications strategy developed, with feedback provided by the AVP RIGS;
- working committee struck in early 2026 to support development of an Indigenous self-identification affirmation process;
- expanded Service and Staff Awards as part of broader employee engagement work;
- initial work begun on a multi-year approach to alumni engagement;
- funding approved through the 2026–2027 budget process for a third-party brand audit;
- implementation of a new CRM system and lead capture integration;
- redevelopment of the Nipissing University website, with launch expected in Fall 2026;
- development of a new Future Students website, with launch expected in Summer 2026;
- updated institutional and sub-brand guidelines are nearing completion.

Together, these accomplishments show progress in strengthening the systems, materials, and planning work needed to better communicate Nipissing's identity and relationships.



Risks, Dependencies, and Considerations

Key dependencies and considerations that may affect the pace, scope, or feasibility of implementation include:

- messaging and identity work need to remain coordinated so that research communications, brand, marketing, alumni engagement, and institutional storytelling reinforce the same broader narrative about Nipissing;
- Indigenous identity affirmation work will require continued community consultation and a clear process before implementation;
- employee engagement and onboarding work require clear ownership and sufficient HR capacity so that improvements can be supported consistently across departments;
- brand and communications planning will need to be informed by evidence gathered through the brand audit, rather than moving ahead based only on existing assumptions.

Overall, this work will require clear messaging, appropriate consultation, and coordinated effort across the areas involved in engagement, identity, and communications.

Ongoing Work and Next Steps

Next steps under this commitment will focus on moving current planning work into clearer strategies, processes, and public-facing content.

Research communications work will move forward over summer 2026 alongside final review of the Strategic Research Plan, which is expected to proceed to Senate in September 2026.

For employee engagement, further direction is needed on how departments will be involved in shaping, supporting, and implementing the Employee Engagement Plan across the University. Onboarding improvements will continue to be supported by additional Human Resources capacity.

The Indigenous self-identification affirmation committee will continue consulting with community members to help inform the development of a clear process for Indigenous identity affirmation.

Alumni engagement work will move toward development of the five-year alumni plan, with attention to strengthening alumni connections, increasing participation, and supporting long-term advancement goals.

Brand and communications work will advance through the brand audit RFP process and broader marketing strategy development. Upcoming deliverables include the launch of the Future Students website, the redeveloped Nipissing University website in Fall 2026, and updated institutional and sub-brand guidelines.

4. Emerging Themes

APOP implementation shows progress across individual items while also revealing common patterns across the plan. These themes provide a broader view of how the work is progressing and how it supports institutional priorities across the six commitments of Pathways.

4.1 Strengthening Data Collection for Planning and Decision-Making

Several APOP actions are focused on improving the information available for planning, decision-making, and future reporting. Across the plan, this includes more consistent ways to track activity, understand costs, assess progress, and identify areas that need attention. This work is important because future decisions about programs, services, resources, and operations will depend on reliable and timely data.

4.2 Student-Centred Supports and Services

Several actions are focused on improving how students are supported from first contact through to graduation. Together, this work supports a more coordinated approach to helping students from recruitment through to graduation by improving how the University communicates with prospective students, supports applicants, identifies student needs, and strengthens services throughout the student experience.

4.3 Reconciliation, EDIA-AR, and Belonging

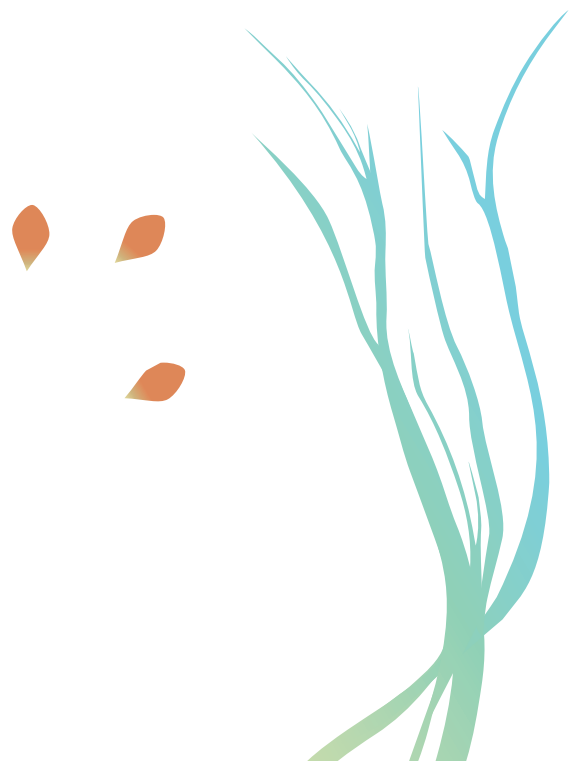
Reconciliation, EDIA-AR, accessibility, and belonging require careful sequencing, consultation, and shared responsibility across the University. APOP implementation is helping put the structures in place to support this work over time, including committees, working groups, training plans, and advisory processes. This reflects the need to approach the work thoughtfully and with an eye to sustainability rather than viewing these items as a set of one-time actions.

4.4 Connecting Academic Planning to Enrolment and Sustainability

A clear theme across APOP is that academic planning is being connected more directly to broader institutional planning. Program decisions are increasingly being considered in relation to enrolment patterns, available resources, and long-term sustainability.

4.5 Identity, Relationships, and External Engagement

APOP also points to the importance of being clearer and more coordinated in how Nipissing presents itself and builds relationships. This includes the way the University communicates its strengths, connects with alumni and community partners, and develops external opportunities. The broader theme is strengthening Nipissing's visibility, reputation, and relationships in ways that support recruitment, partnerships, philanthropy, and community connection.





5. Challenges & Mitigations

Across the APOP action items, several common challenges are emerging. These challenges reflect the complexity of implementing a large, multi-year institutional plan that involves academic, operational, financial, student-facing, and community-facing work.

5.1 Resource Capacity and Sequencing

Resource capacity and sequencing are important considerations for APOP actions that will take more than one year to fully implement. In these cases, progress often depends on completing earlier steps first, such as confirming scope, establishing a process, developing needed data, or aligning the work with available resources.

The University is managing this by phasing work over time and prioritizing actions that are ready to move forward. Existing planning, budget, committee, and governance processes are also being used to support implementation and help ensure that larger or more complex actions move forward in a realistic sequence.

5.2 Cross-Unit Coordination

Many actions depend on coordination across more than one area of the University. This is particularly true for work that affects the student experience, academic planning, EDIA-AR, Reconciliation, research, communications, sustainability, and external relationships.

The University is managing this through cross-unit structures and shared planning processes. Regular SEM meetings, Project Integrate, the Wraparound Student Support working group, the Equity Action Steering Committee, and the Indigenous Reconciliation Targeted Action Plan Working Group are examples of structures being used to support coordination and shared responsibility.

5.3 Reporting Tools

Further data development, clearer measures of progress, and more consistent reporting are needed before the impact can be fully understood. This is especially important for actions where the University is trying to better understand costs, outcomes, service quality, enrolment trends, risk, or long-term impact.

The University is responding by developing dashboards, metrics, and reporting tools that can support more evidence-informed decision-making. This work will also support future annual reporting by making it easier to track progress, identify gaps, and measure change over time.

5.4 Financial and Resource Constraints

Financial and resource constraints may affect the timing and scope of APOP implementation. This includes staff time, funding, external expertise, or long-term operating capacity. These constraints need to be considered carefully in the current postsecondary environment, where enrolment, funding, and operational efficiency continue to shape institutional planning.

The University is managing these constraints by aligning APOP implementation with budget planning, operational reviews, Enterprise Risk Management, alternative revenue development, sponsorship planning, and financial sustainability analysis. This helps ensure that implementation decisions are considered in relation to available resources and long-term institutional sustainability.

5.5 Approval Timelines

Consultation, governance review, and formal approval processes can affect the pace of some APOP actions. These steps are particularly important for work that requires shared input, community engagement, policy review, legal review, or formal decision-making.

The University is addressing this by moving the work through the appropriate consultation, governance, and approval pathways. While this may affect timing, it supports better decision-making, clearer accountability, and more careful implementation.

5.6 External Influences

Some actions are shaped by external policy and sector changes outside the University's direct control. This includes provincial funding and accountability changes, federal study permit requirements, broader enrolment and funding pressures.

The University is responding by reviewing targets and approaches as the external context changes. This includes reassessing enrolment targets, considering the feasibility of research funding targets, and adjusting recruitment and partnership planning where needed.

Overall, these challenges reflect the normal complexity of implementing a large institutional plan. The University is managing this complexity by phasing work, strengthening coordination, improving data and planning tools, aligning implementation with budget and governance processes, and adjusting targets where needed. These approaches will be important as APOP moves into its next phase of implementation.



6. Next Steps

The next phase of APOP implementation will focus on advancing more actions from planning into implementation and moving ongoing work toward completion. Many actions now have foundational structures in place, including working groups, draft plans, dashboards, templates, and early implementation processes. The next phase will focus on using these tools and structures to guide further implementation, monitor progress, support decision-making, and maintain alignment with institutional priorities.

Key next steps include:

- reviewing and confirming the status, timelines, and priority level of actions that remain in progress, planned, under review, or not proceeding;
- moving foundational work into implementation, including approved plans, working group recommendations, dashboards, templates, policies, and frameworks;
- improving how progress is measured and reported through clearer metrics and tracking tools;
- continuing to align APOP implementation with budget planning, SEM, academic planning, operational review, ERM, and the Efficiency and Accountability implementation framework;
- maintaining cross-unit coordination and shared responsibility for actions that span multiple portfolios, departments, committees, or external partners;
- preparing for future annual reporting through consistent status categories, action-item tracking, and improved year-over-year reporting.

Together, these next steps will support continued APOP implementation and help keep progress aligned with Pathways, institutional sustainability, and the University's academic and operational priorities.



7. Appendix A: APOP Action Item Progress Update

This appendix provides a progress-to-date summary of Academic and Operational Plan action items. Updates are organized by the six commitments of Pathways: Our Commitments to Water, Land, and People for the Next Seven Generations. The appendix is intended to provide a concise overview of status, completed work, and areas where further action is planned or underway.

Where an action item is connected to Project Integrate, this appendix provides a brief update and directs readers to Appendix B for additional detail.

A. Fulfilling our Responsibility to Truth and Reconciliation

Indigenous Knowledge and Reconciliation

Action 2 – Complete

Convene a Provostial working group of internal and external members committed to the development of an Indigenous Reconciliation Targeted Action Plan.

Progress: The Provost's Indigenous Reconciliation Targeted Action Plan Working Group was confirmed in June 2026. Membership includes individuals whose roles connect directly to APOP items related to Indigenousization. The group will hold its first meeting in July 2026.

Action 3 – In Progress

Provide faculty and staff ongoing training on evolving best practices in support of the ongoing work of the Provost's Indigenous Reconciliation Targeted Action Plan Working Group.

Progress: The Indigenous Reconciliation Targeted Action Plan will be established by consensus. The working group,

in consultation with the Director of OII, will identify training needs and recommend an ongoing schedule connected to the goals of the plan.

Action 4 – Complete

Support the work of the EDIA Audit and prepare to address and implement the audit results through the Provost's Indigenous Reconciliation Targeted Action Plan Working Group.

Progress: The EDIA Audit report was completed in November 2025. The recommendations were shared with the Nipissing community in December 2025 and accepted by the President in January 2026. Recommendation 1, focused on revitalizing and formalizing Indigenousization and decolonization, will help guide the Indigenous Reconciliation Targeted Action Plan.

Research

Action 41 – In Progress

Engage with researchers and Indigenous community to develop pathways and supports for research conducted by and with Indigenous communities.

Progress: Work is continuing to strengthen supports for research conducted by and with Indigenous communities. The Indigenous Research Advisor position has been created to support this work in collaboration with OII and ORIGS. ORIGS also funded OCAP training in 2025–2026, with participation from various areas of the University. To date, 28 participants have provided certificates of completion.



Internationalization and Globalization

Action 45 – In Progress

All degree programs will review the opportunity to establish international partnerships and exchanges, with the goal of three MOUs and ten exchanges per year.

Progress: Work continues to identify program areas that may support international recruitment, partnerships, and exchanges. Recent federal policy changes, including the national cap on study permit applications and provincial attestation letter requirements, have affected the international recruitment environment. As a result, the University is taking a more targeted approach to recruitment and future partnership opportunities.

Indigenization and Decolonization

Action 43 – Not Started / Planned

Through the Indigenous Reconciliation Targeted Action Plan and the establishment of an Indigenous Academic Advisory Council, define how the University will achieve the three commitments presented in the Strategic Plan.

Progress: The Indigenous Academic Advisory Council has not yet been established. Further discussion is needed to clarify the council's role, purpose, membership, and proposed goals.

Action 44 – In Progress
Nipissing University will explore various professional development opportunities, including professional development days and workshops committed to Indigenous Reconciliation and EDIA-AR, with a focus on academic programming for faculty and staff.

Progress: This work is connected to Action 3. The Indigenous Reconciliation Targeted Action Plan will be developed by consensus, and the working group will work with the Director of OII to identify programming for faculty and staff related to Reconciliation and relevant EDIA Audit recommendations.

B. Nurturing our Relationship with Water, Land and Place

Climate Citizenship and Environmental Protection

Action 46 – In Progress
Develop an Environmental Sustainability Plan that speaks to academic priorities, energy usage, material consumption, environmental protection, outdoor spaces, and campus master planning.

Progress: Work is underway on an Environmental Sustainability Plan that reflects both academic priorities and operational needs. Early work has focused on better understanding the University's energy use and material consumption, including

a proposed monitoring system that would require budget and procurement review.

Progress has also been made on campus stewardship projects. The new Outdoor Classroom has been completed and will be available for use this summer. Repairs to the campus pond dam are planned, with broader rehabilitation work to follow. Nipissing and Canadore have also started work on an updated shared campus master plan, including early discussions about future growth, infrastructure needs, and sustainability priorities.

Staff and Faculty Recruitment

Action 53 – In Progress
Develop a broad Employee Recruitment Strategy.

Progress: This Human Resources-led initiative is underway. Additional staffing capacity is now in place to support further development of the Employee Recruitment Strategy.



C. Embodying Harmony and Care

Student Recruitment, Enrolment, Retention and Persistence

Action 1 – In Progress

Fully implement Project Integrate.

Progress: Project Integrate is progressing as a cross-unit initiative focused on recruitment, admissions, CRM implementation, marketing and communications, international recruitment, graduate recruitment, and the prospective student experience. A detailed Project Integrate update is provided in Appendix B.

First Year Experience

Action 31 – In Progress

Prepare a comprehensive analysis and proposal for a distinctive First Year Experience, especially for Arts and Science students, if necessary.

Progress: This work has begun, but further discussion is required to determine the most appropriate direction. The item remains under consideration and will require additional review with the incoming Provost.

Record of Student Development

Action 32 – Complete

Provide a report to the Senate Teaching and Learning Committee on how many Records of Student Development are issued annually, how many students receive them, and whether a diversity of students and programs are represented.

Progress: This action is complete. The report was submitted to the Teaching and Learning Committee on October 21, 2024.

Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, Accessibility and Anti-Racism

Action 5 – In Progress

Convene a Provostial working group of internal and external members committed to the development of an EDIA-AR Plan.

Progress: The President is convening an Equity Action Steering Committee to support development of the EDIA-AR Plan.

Action 6 – Not Started

Perform a SWOT analysis of current for-credit systems and practices to determine what is needed for compliance with Provincial AODA legislation.

Progress: This work has not yet formally begun. The Director of Teaching and Learning is supporting next steps.

Action 7 – In Progress

Support the work of the EDIA Audit and prepare to address and implement the audit results through the Provostial working group.

Progress: This work will follow the development of the EDIA-AR Plan and related governance structure.

Student Services: The Way to Yes

Action 28 – In Progress / Continuing

Review current processes, procedures, and policies to determine where more direct support to students in academic processes is possible.

Progress: This work is ongoing and has contributed to some reorganizing of student service functions and areas. Continued review will occur through annual planning and budget processes.



Action 29 – In Progress / Continuing

Evaluate sector-specific standardized frameworks for student mental health and identify a suggested framework that meets the unique needs of the institution, satisfies Ministry expectations, and reflects the values and commitments of the Nipissing University Strategic Plan.

Progress: Nipissing currently uses the National Standard on Post-Secondary Student Mental Health. The committee has reviewed this framework and discussed the possibility of continuing with it while incorporating relevant elements from complementary frameworks. A final recommendation has not yet been accepted.

Action 30 – In Progress **Develop a standard approach to student service evaluation and quality assurance.**

Progress: The Student Development and Services Management Group is working with the Manager of Quality Assurance to develop a standard approach to quality assurance for student services. Metrics are currently being developed, with future work to identify tools for measurement and assessment.

Workplace Culture

Action 47 – Not Started / Planned

Create a Wellness Strategy.

Progress: A formal wellness strategy has not yet been developed. However, an annual

ongoing budget has been secured to support employee wellness initiatives and events focused on physical, emotional, financial, and holistic wellness.

Action 49 – In Progress **Implement the recommendations from the Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Audit.**

Progress: This action is connected to Actions 5 and 7 and will be advanced through the development of the EDIA-AR Plan and related implementation work.

Action 51 – In Progress **Create an Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan as required under the Canada Research Chair Program.**

Progress: The Canada Research Chair EDI stipend will be used to hire a consultant to support the institutional self-assessment process. The resulting report will identify actions to address systemic barriers and provide accountability measures for approval and implementation.

Action 52 – In Progress **Review possible changes to the current University structure that would be beneficial to better promote EDIA-AR initiatives.**

Progress: The University continues to evolve in response to the Strategic Plan, APOP, and Efficiency and Accountability work. Structural changes will continue to be considered with attention to efficiency, inclusion, and institutional priorities.

Staff and Faculty Recruitment

Action 55 – In Progress **Adopt the principles outlined in the Canada Research Chair Program’s Recruitment, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion: Best Practices Guide for Recruitment, Hiring and Retention into all recruitment efforts.**

Progress: This work will be advanced as part of Action 51 and the broader Canada Research Chair EDI Action Plan work.

Communications and Brand Identity

Action 67 – In Progress / Continuing

Develop and implement a Strategic Communications Plan for both internal and external audiences.

Progress: Internal communications have been strengthened through regular newsletters, Community Forums, Senate updates, and Coffee and Conversation sessions with senior administration. A new Manager of Communications role was approved through the 2026–2027 budget process and will support development of a broader strategic communications plan.



Community and Partnership Engagement

Action 70 – In Progress

Develop a comprehensive Community Relations Strategy.

Progress: Work is underway to strengthen the University's approach to community relations. Recent activity includes more strategic sponsorships, increased support for local initiatives, and deeper engagement with youth, alumni, and industry partners. These efforts are reported to the Community Relations and Fundraising Committee of the Board of Governors.

D. Inspiring Innovation, Growth and Development

Curricula and Programs

Action 11 – In Progress

Create supports and guidelines in terms of UDL and CRP that the institution can use as a unifying marker. Faculty will review current program outcomes to ensure assessment and architecture reinforce program design.

Progress: The existing Universal Design for Learning document is being revised to better reflect the needs identified by disability self-advocacy communities. Planning will continue through Fall 2026. A cultural intelligence workshop has been offered, and a workshop series related to Culturally Responsive Pedagogy continues to evolve.

Action 12 – In Progress

Convene industry/community advisory councils and develop terms of reference and membership for each council at the decanal level.

Progress: Faculties have considered this action and determined that, outside of professional programs where advisory councils are required for accreditation, a broader model may better fit Nipissing's size and academic structure. Further work is needed to identify a model that meets the University's needs.

Action 13 – In Progress

Establish baseline and benchmarks for program sustainability at the Faculty level.

Progress: Strategic Enrolment Management has established program-level enrolment targets based on budget, historical enrolment, sector-wide trends, and institutional goals. Related work is underway through the Program Cost Tracker dashboard, which will support program- and faculty-level planning, cost analysis, and sustainability discussions.

Action 14 – Complete

Develop process maps for program innovation and new program development that respond to Ministry requirements for market research, business plans, resource commitments from existing programs, and clear templates setting out what is required and which office will provide it.

Progress: A sustainable four-year degree business plan template has been developed and used in the Bachelor of Community Planning proposal. A market research template has also been developed and is in use.

Action 15 – In Progress

Undertake a review of experiential learning opportunities, specifically co-op, practica, internship, and placement, to ensure policies and procedures provide the necessary protections to students and the institution.

Progress: A Work-Integrated Learning (WIL) report has provided an overview of current WIL activity at Nipissing. Following an RFP process, a consultant has been hired to develop a report and plan for establishing WIL across all programs.



Action 16 – In Progress

Undertake innovative program renewal to distinguish Nipissing University’s Nursing programs.

Progress: A draft strategic plan for the School of Nursing has been developed and presented to faculty for feedback. The plan is expected to be finalized during Summer 2026.

Action 17 – In Progress

Schulich School of Education will provide a list of strategic priorities for the School.

Progress: Work has paused following the announcement of the new program. Existing draft work, along with the recently completed IQAP process, will help inform future strategic priorities.

Action 18 – In Progress

The School of Business will identify synergies with other departments and Faculties, with the goal of building and enhancing programs that foster interdisciplinary collaboration, integrate diverse perspectives, and equip students with the critical thinking, ethical reasoning, and adaptive skills necessary to thrive in a rapidly changing global economy.

Progress: The School of Business presented its Strategic Plan to the Dean of Education and Professional Studies and the Provost in May 2026. The plan is expected to launch in June 2026.

Action 19 – In Progress

The School of Business will provide a list of strategic priorities for the School.

Progress: The School of Business has developed its Strategic Plan and presented it to the Dean of Education and Professional Studies and the Provost. The plan is expected to launch in June 2026.

Action 20 – In Progress

Review the barriers to recruitment in STEM disciplines at Nipissing and develop a plan for STEM-specific disciplines.

Progress: The University has received an external consultant report identifying barriers specific to Computer Science. A debrief was also held following the 2025 University Fair. The next step is to establish a working group with key partners from faculty, recruitment, marketing, CTL, and other areas to develop a plan for STEM enrolment growth.

Action 21 – In Progress

Provide the Provost with a revised program curricula and facility plan for the Fine Arts department.

Progress: Admission to the Art History stream has been suspended. Program requirements in the BA and BFA have been revised to provide greater flexibility. Work is also underway on a facility plan related to one of the buildings currently in use.

Pedagogy and Andragogy

Action 10 – In Progress

Review delivery modalities by program, expand andragogical models of delivery, develop outdoor teaching, expand experiential learning, review academic integrity policies, provide wraparound services to students, train graduate students, and support training related to financial management and administrative policy management.

Progress: Work is underway across several parts of this action, including delivery modalities, experiential learning, work-integrated learning, wraparound supports, and graduate student teaching assistant training. The review of AI technologies was completed in April 2026, an Experiential Learning Symposium is planned for 2026–2027, and a WIL consultant has been hired. Some components still require further confirmation, including outdoor teaching and simulation pedagogy committees. The proposed Teaching Hub administrative staffing component is not proceeding as originally described.

Research

Action 33 – In Progress

Lead a consultation to finalize the Strategic Research Plan.

Progress: The draft Strategic Research Plan will be shared with the Senate Research Committee for comment in Summer 2026.



Action 34 – In Progress
Review the historical allocation of the Research Support Fund and reallocate a portion beyond grant management and research office staffing to support faculty research success through grant writing, research data management, research security, and EDI priorities.

Progress: A separate cost centre has been created for the Research Support Fund, and work is underway to allocate resources toward research capacity-building activities. Reducing the proportion of staffing and regular operating costs supported by the fund will be a multi-year process and will depend in part on the University's broader financial situation.

Action 35 – In Progress
Increase tri-agency research funding by 30%.

Progress: This target has been reviewed and may be difficult to achieve under current conditions. Meeting it would likely require a more aggressive faculty hiring strategy, particularly for Canada Research Chairs and other research-intensive hires.

Action 36 – In Progress
Develop a research dashboard to track research funding metrics, make research metrics more visible, inform strategies for increasing the Research Support Fund and overall research revenue, and facilitate communications about the impact of research.

Progress: A research dashboard has been developed to track grant applications, success rates, funding sources, researchers, and institutional commitments. The dashboard has been used internally over the past year while the information continues to be checked and improved. Further work is needed to confirm what information should be included, who should have access, and whether a public-facing version is needed.

Action 37 – In Progress
Review and update the existing research labs, centres and institutes policy and provide a cycle of review.

Progress: The policy was revised in January 2025. The revised policy includes an annual reporting and review cycle.

Action 38 – Complete
Map policies and processes to ensure compliance with tri-agency policies, clarity of forms, and clearly communicated processes that facilitate continued grant success.

Progress: Relevant mapping has been completed and shared for feedback as part of ongoing policy and process work.

Action 42 – In Progress
Establish research processes that support and encourage collaborative research with diverse partners, including inter-university, interdisciplinary, industry, and community partners.

Progress: Work is ongoing to improve processes that support collaborative research with universities, community partners, industry partners, and Indigenous communities. ORIGS continues to identify process improvements and works with OII on supports for research with Indigenous communities. ORIGS is also working with Marketing and Communications to improve research-related web content for external audiences and potential partners.

Community and Partnership Engagement

Action 72 – In Progress
Develop a five-year approach to philanthropy.

Progress: Initial work has begun on a multi-year philanthropy plan. Year 1 is focused on consultation and engagement with university management to confirm priorities and approaches. Year 2 will focus on refinement and advancement of the plan. This work is aligned with broader advancement, alumni engagement, and alternative revenue initiatives.

Talent Development

Action 56 – In Progress
Develop a campus-wide Employee Training Plan/Program.

Progress: Work is beginning with support from the new Human Resources Generalist.



Action 57 – In Progress
Develop and implement a professional development curriculum through the Teaching Hub.

Progress: The CTL mandate was updated in Winter 2026, and a faculty professional development needs survey has been completed and reviewed. Work is now focused on setting learning goals for faculty workshops, consultations, events, and resources. New educational technology workshops have been piloted, along with early work on an Inclusive Instruction series.

Action 58 – Not Started/Planned

Provide training and support for academic administrators.

Progress: Work on this item has not yet begun.

E. Building Sustainable Futures

Procedural Integrity

Action 8 – In Progress
Develop a policy of policies, including a template, review timelines, proliferation protocol, and a central repository of policies.

Progress: This work is underway through the HESA policy review process.

Action 9 – In Progress
Develop and publish internal process maps for all academic administrative processes to ensure consistency, reproducibility, fairness, and transparency.

Progress: This action is expected to be initiated over the coming year.

Community and Partnership Engagement

Action 73 – In Progress / Ongoing

Launch a scalable sponsorship strategy.

Progress: Work is underway to launch a scalable sponsorship strategy, with Athletics serving as the pilot area. The University has completed sponsorship valuation work, developed a sponsorship deck, created a prospect list, and drafted sponsorship policy and agreement documents. Initial outreach to vetted prospects will begin, with progress tracked through Raiser's Edge. Legal review is still required before the sponsorship policy and agreement documents are finalized.

Recruitment, Enrolment and Persistence

Action 22 – In Progress
Increase domestic enrolment by 6% year-over-year, largely by increasing conversion led by the Registrar as detailed in Project Integrate.

Progress: The 6% year-over-year domestic enrolment growth target was exceeded in 2024–2025 and again in 2025–2026. Additional context on the distribution of this growth is provided in Section 3.5 and Appendix B.

Action 23 – In Progress
Move the Strategic Enrolment Management group to the Provost's Office so that budget and recruitment targets are communicated, and recruitment and persistence are reported as a shared responsibility across portfolios.

Progress: The Strategic Enrolment Management (SEM) group meets regularly through the Office of the Provost. Weekly SEM meetings also support timely updates on immediate recruitment, budget, and enrolment activities across portfolios.

Action 24 – In Progress
Develop a graduate-focused recruitment plan.

Progress: A comprehensive graduate recruitment plan has been created. Further direction is required to confirm which elements of the plan will be implemented. Additional details are provided in Appendix B.

Action 25 – Complete
Develop a complementary plan on retention and persistence.

Progress: This action is complete. Additional details are provided in Appendix B.



Student Services:

The Way to Yes

Action 26 – In Progress

Convene an ad hoc working group to focus on retention from a student-centred focus.

Progress: A Wraparound Student Support Working Group has been established with members from across the University. The group has been meeting since 2024 and continues to meet through the summer and at least once per term during the academic year.

Action 27 – In Progress

Lead conversations toward a seamless student service experience.

Progress: The Wraparound Student Support Working Group supports this work, along with related conversations through Athletics, OII, Deans, and other campus partners.

Research

Action 40 – In Progress

Diversify supports for research by engaging with foundations, donors, industry, and other potential research funders and partners and develop ongoing annual targets.

Progress: Initial meetings have begun to advance this work.

Financial Stability and Sustainability

Action 59 – In Progress

Develop internal financial metrics, including annual targets on replenishment of spendable reserves.

Progress: Work is underway to develop internal financial metrics, including targets for replenishing spendable reserves. Initial work has focused on baseline measures and Ministry benchmark ratios. Further work is needed as program-level financial analysis continues.

Action 60 – Complete

Document the budget process, including how the budget is developed, reviewed, and approved.

Progress: The University's budget process has been formally documented, including development, review, approval stages, roles, and governance oversight.

Action 61 – Complete

Develop a financial literacy resource to assist the University community in understanding Nipissing University financials.

Progress: A financial literacy resource has been developed and published on the Nipissing University website.

Action 62 – In Progress

Develop a long-term alternative revenue strategy.

Progress: This action is underway and is advancing in alignment with Efficiency and Accountability recommendations. Work has included strategies related to ancillary services, conferencing, corporate partnerships, margin analysis, and forecasting to support sustainable non-tuition revenue.

Action 63 – In Progress

Develop a comprehensive picture of the financial contributions of each academic and non-academic area.

Progress: Work is underway to improve transparency into costs, revenues, and margins at the program, department, and faculty levels. Hanover Research is developing an academic dashboard using four to five years of program-level data, with completion anticipated in July 2026. A similar approach for non-academic areas will be considered after the academic dashboard is complete.

Action 64 – In Progress

Create an operational review plan.

Progress: Development of an operational review approach is underway through alignment with the Efficiency and Accountability implementation plan. Initial work is focused on creating a framework to support systematic reviews of operations.

Action 65 – Complete

Develop an IT strategic plan and investment plan, with the goal of understanding what resources are required and when.

Progress: The IT Strategic Plan has been updated to align with APOP, the Efficiency and Accountability Framework, and the University Strategic Plan. A three-year budget forecast has also been completed for UTS budgets.

Action 66 – In Progress
Conduct an Enterprise Risk Management process.

Progress: Work has begun to develop an enterprise-wide risk management approach aligned with the Efficiency and Accountability implementation framework. This work will support more consistent identification, review, and monitoring of key institutional risks.

F. Celebrating Who We Are

Research

Action 39 – In Progress
Develop an enhanced research communications strategy to celebrate and promote the diversity of faculty and student research and its impacts to both internal and external communities.

Progress: A draft research communications strategy has been developed, and feedback has been provided by AVP RIGS. Work will continue over Summer 2026 to align the strategy with the draft Strategic Research Plan before it proceeds through governance.

Workplace Culture

Action 48 – In Progress
Develop an Employee Engagement Plan.

Progress: Work related to employee engagement has been advanced through wellness initiatives and expansion of the Service and Staff Awards. Further

direction is needed regarding departmental involvement and the broader structure of the plan.

Action 50 – In Progress
Develop processes to affirm Indigenous identity and establish clear processes.

Progress: A working committee was established in early 2026 and continues to meet. The committee is working toward consultation with community and development of a process for Indigenous self-identification affirmation.

Staff and Faculty Recruitment

Action 54 – In Progress
Create a more vigorous onboarding program.

Progress: This work is underway, supported by additional Human Resources capacity.

Community and Partnership Engagement

Action 71 – In Progress
Develop a five-year alumni plan to broaden and deepen alumni engagement.

Progress: Initial work has begun to develop a multi-year approach to alumni engagement. This work is aligned with broader advancement and community engagement objectives and will inform a five-year alumni plan focused on strengthening alumni connections, increasing participation, and supporting long-term advancement goals.

Communications and Brand Identity

Action 68 – In Progress
Identify the best way to move forward with a brand audit.

Progress: Funding for a third-party brand audit was approved through the 2026–2027 budget process. Preparatory work is underway to support the Request for Proposal process and engage a qualified proponent. The audit will help inform future marketing, communications, and institutional identity work.

Action 69 – In Progress
Develop and implement recommendations for reimagining the brand and build a five-year marketing and communications strategy.

Progress: Preliminary work is underway to develop a comprehensive marketing strategy, supported by the upcoming brand audit. Related initiatives include CRM and lead capture integration, redevelopment of the Nipissing University website, development of a new Future Students website, and updated institutional and sub-brand guidelines.



8. Appendix B: Project Integrate Progress Update

Project Integrate is a multi-year initiative to increase enrolment through strategic recruitment, admissions, and a more seamless prospective student experience. The project brings together work across recruitment, admissions, marketing and communications, graduate studies, international recruitment, and other related enrolment activities.

APOP Action Item #1 focuses on the full implementation of Project Integrate. This appendix provides an update on progress to date, including new recruitment tools, improved digital content, more consistent prospective student communication, admissions process improvements, expanded international recruitment activity, and continued work to strengthen graduate-level recruitment and admissions.

8.1 Recruitment, Admissions, CRM, and Systems Alignment

A major focus of Project Integrate has been improving the systems and processes that support prospective students from initial interest through to application and admission.

The Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system is an important part of this work. It provides a shared system for collecting and tracking prospective student information, rather than relying on separate lists, inboxes, or manual follow-up processes. Key CRM-related improvements include digital lead collection, landing pages, social media lead forms, lead source tracking, automated lead distribution, strategic communication from lead to acceptance, shared inbox integration, and branded email templates.

These changes are helping Nipissing communicate with prospective students in a timelier and more consistent way. They also give recruitment, admissions, and communications teams better information about student interest, program demand, and applicant activity.

The next stage of CRM implementation includes adding admissions functionality for domestic, international, undergraduate, and graduate admissions. This will support more coordinated communication with applicants and improve tracking across the admissions process.

8.2 Marketing, Communications, and Prospective Student Engagement

Marketing and Communications has supported Project Integrate by strengthening the information and outreach available to prospective students. This has included targeted recruitment campaigns, program-specific outreach, updated digital content, and more student, faculty, and alumni stories. Recruitment communications have also been adjusted during the year based on current enrolment priorities and applicant interest.

A key area of progress is the development of a new Future Students website, planned for launch in Summer 2026. The site is intended to make it easier for prospective students to find program information, understand admission requirements, and explore potential career pathways. Planned tools include a program filter, an admissions filter, and labour market information connected to program outcomes.

Additional work in this area includes revised program content, student and faculty videos, alumni stories, updated student testimonials, Indigenous-focused campaigns, new webpages for land acknowledgement, accessibility, and Access and Belonging.



8.3 Admissions Processing, Enrolment Activity, and Action Item #22

A key admissions processing goal has been to issue admission decisions within 21 days once an application is complete and ready for review. This target has been met or surpassed in several areas. For Spring/Summer 2026, offers had been made on all complete files, with an average time to offer of 1.7 days. For Winter 2026 intake activity, decisions were made on all complete files, with an average time to offer of 3.8 days. For the Fall/Winter non-Ontario high school applications reported, decisions were made in an average of four days. The Ontario high school admission process was also revised to align with OUAC's grade collection dates, an approach adopted by many Ontario universities to provide students with clearer timelines for expected decisions. Application deadlines for two limited-enrolment programs, Nursing and Physical and Health Education, were moved up, allowing decisions and offers to be issued sooner and supporting enrolment target planning.

The admissions information provides supporting context for the University's broader domestic enrolment and conversion work under APOP Action Item #22, which is reported more fully in Section 3.5. Action Item #22 tracks progress toward a 6% year-over-year enrolment growth target. That target was exceeded in 2024–2025 and again in 2025–2026. As noted in Section 3.5, this growth was concentrated in Nursing and Education.

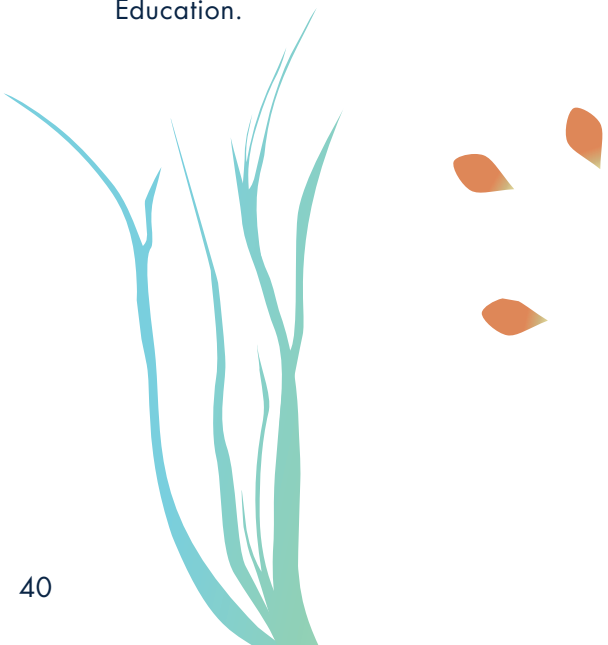
8.4 International Recruitment and Market Development

International recruitment has helped Nipissing build relationships with prospective students, schools, agents, and partners in a wider range of markets. Recent recruitment activity has included markets such as India, Ghana, Nigeria, Uganda, the United Arab Emirates, China, Hong Kong, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Indonesia, and Taiwan.

Since the start of Project Integrate, Nipissing's international recruitment team has participated in 10 standalone international student recruitment fairs. Broader activity has included 52 international high school visits, guidance counsellor engagement, new agent recruitment model, revised agreements, improved agent training, partner development, onshore recruitment activity, and 49 new agent agreements. This work has also included approximately 125-150 agent training, onboarding, or retraining touchpoints.

This work is generating applications and contributing to a more diverse applicant pool across different countries and program interests. At the same time, federal policy changes, study permit timelines, applicant deferrals, and increased global competition can all affect conversion. As a result, recruitment investments and relationship-building efforts may take time to translate into enrolment across future intake cycles. In-person recruitment has resulted in applications, demonstrating the importance of direct market engagement.

Nipissing has partnered with BorderPass to provide international applicants with legal guidance and immigration-related support, including study permit applications, study permit extensions, and post-graduate work permits. To date, students using BorderPass have an 88% study permit approval rate.



8.5 Graduate Studies Recommendations

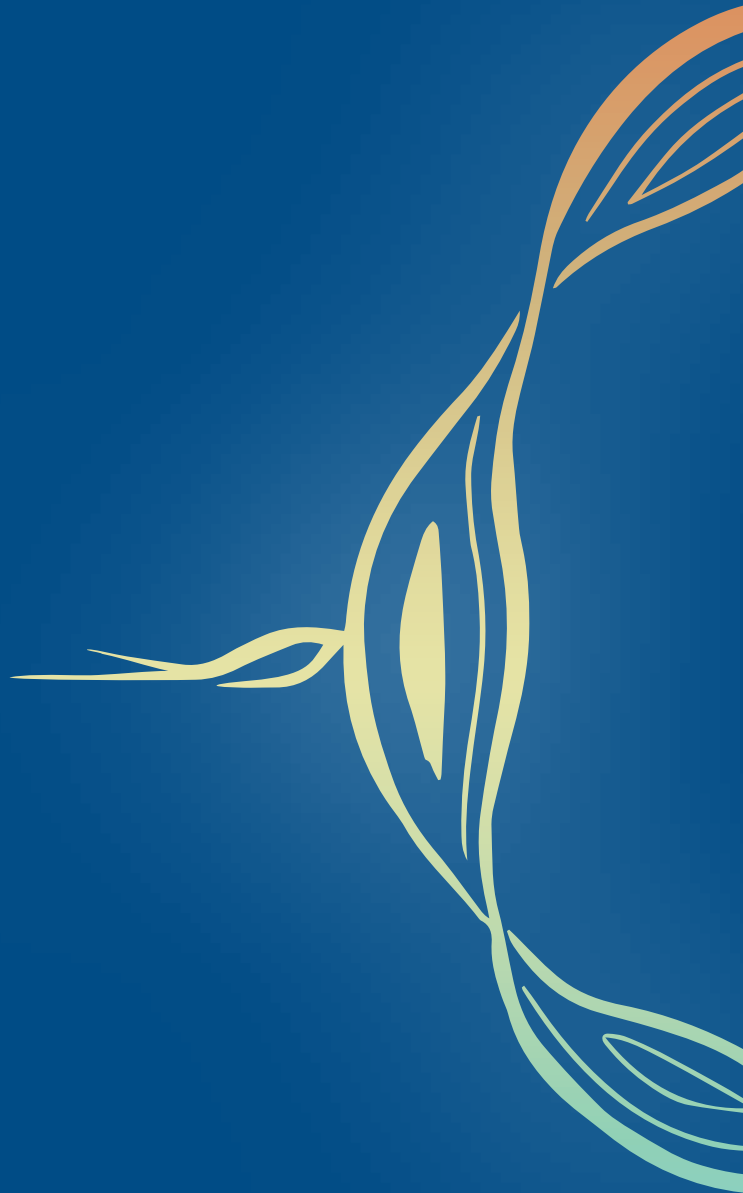
Graduate Studies work connected to Project Integrate has focused on recruitment planning, CRM expansion, admissions processes, policy review, supervision, onboarding, and longer-term recommendations that require additional resources or institutional direction.

Progress includes a completed graduate recruitment plan, decoupling admissions and funding processes, consultation with the AVP RIGS on admissions petitions, and continued policy

and regulation review. Work is also underway on graduate CRM expansion, supervision-related processes, onboarding improvements, and review of collective agreement considerations related to graduate supervision.

Many of the remaining Graduate Studies recommendations identified through the Project Integrate review are resource-dependent, including items related to program costing, graduate program expansion, online delivery and partnerships, additional staffing, and graduate student advising and onboarding supports.





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