

# Strategic Plan Summary 2022-2027

Strengthening Quality and Identity



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## Foreword

Birzeit University constantly strives to keep up with international developments, align them within a local and regional context and expand ongoing development plans underpinned by the principles that guided the university since its establishment as a school in 1924. These plans seek to provide the finest higher education for Palestinians in an atmosphere of academic freedom and liberalism, accomplish academic excellence, serve the Palestinian community and engage in national action. Within this context, Birzeit University's Strategic Plan for 2022-2027 was developed with a slogan of "Strengthening Quality and Identity".

The development of the plan coincided with the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the transformation of Birzeit College into a university that offers Bachelor programs and the construction of a new campus. The plan also coincided with the unusual circumstances that accompanied the COVID-19 pandemic, which affected the plans of all organizations, including higher education institutions regionally and internationally.

The new strategic directions examined the circumstances and transformations that coincided with the development of the plan, the university's development over the past 50 years, insights gained in view of the COVID-19 pandemic and discussions on the future of universities in light of considerable technological advances and digitalization. In this context, this strategic plan stems from a national vision that accommodates the university's identity and global trends and fosters knowledge production initiatives that take local and regional conditions into consideration.

The adapted goals, priorities and interventions are the result of collective work and dialogue amongst all university constituents—academic, administrative staff and students. This strategic plan identified the priorities for new directions and initiatives and maintained established principles based on the analysis of current challenges and prospects and internal and external networking. The plan focuses on the quality of teaching and learning, academic and research excellence, community engagement, enhancing the production of emancipatory knowledge and addressing society's issues within a committed, national and ethical framework.

## Principles of the Strategic Plan

The formulation of the overall strategic framework of the plan, including the vision, mission, values and general objectives, was developed by the collective efforts of the university constituents and stakeholders who share fundamental principles that formed the grounds for revising regulations, promoting governance and developing a spiral strategic plan that functions at all levels. **The principles include:**

- Preserving the university's identity and enhancing its status as a nonprofit, independent, national institution grounded in pluralism, diversity and openness.
- Reinforcing the university's status as an institution that seeks to serve Palestinians everywhere.
- Creating an academically distinguished atmosphere committed to knowledge production serving both society and humanity.
- Refining student leadership skills based on the philosophy of interactive education that integrates theory and practice.
- Maintaining a rich, vibrant campus life, replete with manifestations of the Palestinian society to which we aspire.



## Methodology of the Strategic Plan Development

A detailed action plan was set to regulate mechanisms and methodologies employed in the development of the strategic plan. This includes:

- Literature review of academic development in light of the COVID-19 pandemic, the fourth industrial revolution, existing academic programs in line with local competition.
- External environment analysis, including the assessment of Political, Economic, Sociological, Technological, Legal and Environmental factors (PESTLE analysis).
- Internal environment analysis including Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) at the academic, administrative and financial levels; networking; fundraising; strengthening community engagement; enhancing university image; and branding.
- Evaluation of previous strategic plan; reviewing the reports of internal and external auditors as well as the reports of all units.
- Meetings and focus group discussions with relevant organizations and stakeholders in the fields of teaching, learning and employment.
- Internal meetings and workshops with different university constituents, including the Board of Trustees, and building teams to work on developing strategic plans at the unit level.
- Developing concept notes for the proposed strategic directions; integrating the recommendations of working committees into the development of the key directions.



## Characteristics of the Strategic Plan

This strategic plan is considered a spiral plan, as it functions at all levels and it is possible to build on it in accordance with new insights and periodic evaluations. The plan will address the university's priorities while pursuing work on fundamental values within a changing reality. It will enhance institutionalization, revise regulations and promote governance in line with local, regional and global changes, especially changes introduced by the COVID-19 pandemic. The plan is further distinguished by being formulated in reference to the principles and objectives of previous development plans, including:

- Utilizing the collective efforts of the university constituents as well as the university's units and resources.
- Developing interdisciplinary programs to reflect the reality and needs of academia and society.
- Promoting and encouraging research at all levels.
- Enhancing student involvement in academic activities and relevant committees.
- Networking; building partnerships within the private sector and civil society while bolstering current partnerships.
- Reviewing organizational structures to streamline operations and increase efficiency.
- Developing new policies that operate at all levels and correspond to global, regional and local changes.

In addition, this Strategic Plan is characterized by:

- Reaching Palestinians through programs, courses, research and activities, regardless of their location.
- Fostering academic excellence through the employment of blended learning.
- Promoting digital transformation and the automation of academic, administrative and supportive processes.

## Strategy Framework

### 1 Vision, Mission, Values

#### Vision

A national, non-profit, pluralistic, independent university, dedicated to producing leaders, and knowledge in service of humanity and of all Palestinians everywhere.

#### Mission

A Palestinian non-profit university, overseen by an independent Board of Trustees, committed to freedom of thought and expression, democratic practices and social diversity. The University offers distinguished and globally engaged teaching, research, and community-based programs designed to cultivate leadership skills, national and humanitarian values, critical thinking, lifelong learning, and a spirit of initiative and responsibility towards society and the environment in the context of an institutional culture of sound governance, openness, pluralism, and autonomy.

#### Values

Patriotism, justice, equality, diversity, freedom of opinion and expression, integrity and professionalism, sustainable development, life-long learning, academic freedom, commitment to the right to education, global engagement, environmental awareness, accountability and shared governance.

### 2 Strategic Goals

1. Preserving the university's autonomy and strengthening its identity.
2. Enhancing and promoting excellence in research and teaching and producing locally and globally engaged academic initiatives.
3. Cultivating initiative and social responsibility among its students and graduates.
4. Increasing diversity in the student body, attracting distinguished students, and granting educational opportunities to the less fortunate.
5. Deepening partnerships with local, regional and international universities and institutions.
6. Community development (developing the university's social role).
7. Achieving financial sustainability, diversifying fund raising, and rationalizing expenditures.
8. Institutionalizing sound practices and shared governance.

## Priorities

Based on the vision, mission and objectives of the strategic plan, a number of primary fundamental priorities and interventions are being realized to enrich and contribute to the strategic objectives. **These include:**

### 1 Preserving the university's autonomy and strengthening its identity

- Identify research and academic priorities in line with the university's identity.
- Embody the university's objectives and values in all activities and events.

### 2 Fostering academic quality and excellence and academic freedom

- Develop interdisciplinary undergraduate and graduate programs to produce local and global knowledge.
- Develop blended learning both technically and pedagogically.
- Enhance scientific research in partnership with local and international institutions.



### 3 Supporting and developing student skills academically, professionally and socially

- Develop academic and skill enrichment programs to enhance student personal, social and professional competencies.
- Engage students in intellectual dialogue, research and activities within a free, national framework locally and internationally.

### 4 Reinforcing the university's community role

- Develop the university's community engagement in light of the university's educational system and community needs and provide training and community service.

### 5 Financial sustainability and fundraising

- Diversify and expand fundraising approaches.
- Promote the university's institutional image, branding and communication mechanisms.
- Activate alumni engagement to support the university.
- Align expenditures with revenues and rationalize expenditure management to achieve efficiency and enhance quality.

### 6 Proficiency of administrative performance

- Develop academic, administrative and technical cadres within the strategic directions of the university in order to build new leaders.
- Develop and define the digital transformation vision and continue the automation of administrative and financial processes to improve efficiency.

### 7 Facilities and public space

- Develop the public space in line with the university's identity.
- Align the university's identity with the investment philosophy to define the priorities of projects.
- Develop a smart and green campus in view of global climate change.

### 8 Institutionalizing the dialogue between university constituents

- Establish principles and mechanisms for regulated dialogue to ensure open discussions and procedures that serve the public interest.



## Performance Indicators

### 1 Preservation of the independence of the university, the enhancement of its identity and governance and the institutionalization of the relationship between its constituents

- Number of local, regional and international interventions that promote the identity of the university
- Revised and approved governance manual

### 2 Academic excellence and the production of local and global knowledge

- University ranking
- Number of scientific publications
- Number of new academic programs
- Developing blended learning and modern pedagogical methods
- Student-to-faculty ratio
- Social and geographical diversity of students and the inclusion of students with disabilities
- Graduate employability
- Employer and graduate satisfaction

### 3 Academic, professional and social support for students

- Number of new activities that support students and enhance their engagement
- Proportion of students receiving financial aid and grants
- Amount of financial aid and grants
- Diversity and value of financial aid

### 4 Community service

- Number of community activities
- Nature of community interventions
- Number of community activities at faculties

### 5 Financial sustainability and fundraising

- Volume and diversity of funding
- Development of the university's media presence
- Number of alumni engagement activities

### 6 Administrative development and efficiency

- Number of updated regulations, instructions and policies
- Number of staff-training programs
- Number of staff members who participate in training programs

### 7 Smart and green campus development

- Proportion of new academic and smart facilities
- Green area ratio
- Share of electricity consumption from solar energy
- Percentage of Wi-Fi coverage on campus

### 8 Networking; building local, regional and international partnerships; and fostering global excellence

- Number of affiliations with institutions, organizations and associations
- Number and geographical distribution of partnerships
- Number of awards received by the university, faculty and students



## Monitoring and Evaluation

Based on the priorities, interventions and operational plan for implementing the strategic plan, Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability and Learning (MEAL) mechanisms will be periodically employed for decision-making and scaling up the strategic plan, given that it is a spiral plan that functions across all levels. **The mechanisms will rely on:**

1. Main indicator reports per semester and per year at the university level.
2. Annual technical reports reflecting quantitative and qualitative indicators.
3. University classification and ranking.
4. Analytical reports of student evaluations of faculty.
5. Analytical staff evaluation reports.
6. Financial quarterly reports.
7. Internal and external auditor reports.
8. Satisfaction surveys for staff, students, alumni and employers.





## Facts and Figures for the 2022/2023 Academic Year

### Academic Programs



**127**  
Academic Programs

- 79** Bachelor's programs
- 42** Master's programs
- 3** PhD programs
- 2** Diploma programs in education
- 1** the Palestinian and Arabic Studies program for foreign students.

### Institutes and Centers



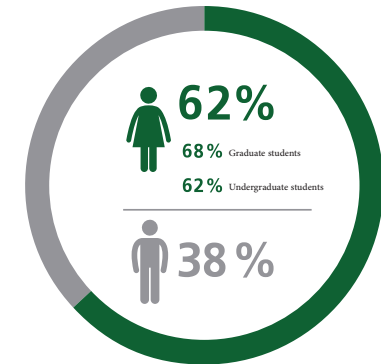
**11**  
Institutes and Centers

- 7** Institutes, some of which offer graduate programs and conduct academic and applied research
- 4** Centers that offer internships and conduct applied research

### Student Body



**14,743**  
Enrolled students



**13,270**

Undergraduate students

**1,323**

Graduate students

**150**

Diploma and non-regular students

### Alumni

From the 1975-1976 to the 2021-2022 academic year



**50.8** | Thousand

**3,103 Alumni** in the 2021-2022 academic year, **68%** of whom are female.

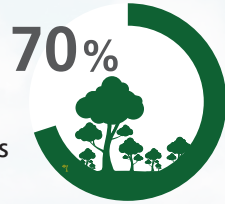
- 2,641** | Bachelor's degree graduates
- 442** | Master's degree graduates
- 20** | Diploma and minor program graduates

## Campus and Facilities

Campus Size

**810**  
dunams

Green gardens  
and open areas



**35** Main buildings, including

- |                      |   |                                     |                      |
|----------------------|---|-------------------------------------|----------------------|
| <b>9</b> Faculties   | <b>4</b> Centers                        | <b>4</b> Libraries                  | <b>7</b> Institutes  |
| <b>1</b> Auditorium  | <b>1</b> Museum                         | <b>1</b> Clinic                     | <b>7</b> Cafeterias  |
| <b>1</b> Observatory | <b>1</b> Sports hall                    | <b>5</b> Athletic fields            | <b>7</b> Power plant |
| <b>1</b> Stadium     | <b>1</b> Dormitory (under construction) | <b>1</b> Wastewater treatment plant |                      |



