

University of Manitoba Extended Education

# Strategic Plan

2025 - 2029



University  
of Manitoba

Extended Education

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*This strategic plan was developed by the leadership of an Extended Education Strategic Planning Committee comprised of Ute Kothe, Kari Kumar, Karen Woloschuk, Yvonne Kinley, Marcia McKenzie, Adrienne Carriere, and Marion DeJong.*

## MESSAGE FROM THE DEAN


Extended Education is one of the oldest University Continuing Education units in Canada and has existed under various names for more than 75 years. Why do we need yet another strategic plan? I was asked this question often in the first months of my Deanship, and frankly, I have also asked myself this question. You will find many answers in this new strategic plan. Let me share my thoughts as you begin to read it.

Obviously, strategies need to be adjusted or even altered when internal and external circumstances change. Undoubtedly, this is currently the case for Extended Education as outlined in the introduction section that follows. In brief, the world around us is rapidly changing, and therefore Extended Education must adapt to remain relevant and responsive. Most importantly, we must foster lifelong learning even more now as the proactive solution to many challenges and opportunities, both currently and in the future. In a changing world, our role in promoting flexible, relevant, and impactful continuing education is becoming increasingly important.

This view on strategic planning might sound somewhat reactive to external pressures, not the best reason to “do it again”, i.e. to develop a new strategic plan. Nevertheless, I thoroughly enjoyed the process of strategic planning within Extended Education, and I am excited about this new strategic plan. Why? This new strategic plan both defines our purpose and gives us purpose!

First and most importantly, this strategic plan defines Extended Education’s purpose within the University of Manitoba as the leader for flexible, high-quality, and impactful lifelong learning. We are excited to seize the opportunity the new University of Manitoba Strategic Plan “MomentUM: Leading change together” is offering us. By aligning with the UM strategic plan, it becomes evident that Extended Education is central to the University of Manitoba’s goals of “Empowering Learners” and “Reimagining Engagement”. In these rapidly changing times, Extended Education is actively contributing to the University of Manitoba’s vision of “leading change for a better world and Manitoba”. I hope that this strategic plan clearly conveys to everyone in Extended Education, across the University of Manitoba, and within our communities, the importance of fostering continuing and inclusive education at the University of Manitoba.

Secondly, our new strategic plan gives us purpose by setting clear priorities. Extended Education strives to be a catalyst for the cultural, social, and economic transformation of diverse communities in Manitoba and beyond through lifelong learning. In pursuing this vision, we need to focus on what matters most, namely our people - our learners, our communities and partners, and our own employees and instructors. To truly support everybody, we cannot get distracted, and we must use our resources wisely. Setting priorities also means knowing what not to do. Therefore, this strategic plan was developed in parallel with the first iteration of an implementation plan containing initiatives and actions that are SMART, i.e. specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound. These initiatives and actions will tell us how to achieve our plan and how to know if we are on track. The implementation plan is a living document that will be regularly updated based on internal and external feedback such that we can flexibly seize new opportunities.



It was exciting to develop clear ideas for the future of Extended Education. It is now even more exciting to take action to fulfill our mission of advancing personal and professional development and fostering economic growth through transformative education.

Miigwech. Maarsi. Nakurmiik. Thank you. Merci.

**Ute Kothe, Dean**

**Extended Education aligns with the University of Manitoba Vision:**

The University of Manitoba will be a vibrant and thriving community, enriched by Indigenous knowledges and perspectives. We will lead change for a better Manitoba and world.

*(MomentUM: Leading change together, University of Manitoba Strategic Plan 2024-2029)*

## TRADITIONAL TERRITORIES ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

“

The University of Manitoba campuses are located on original lands of Anishinaabeg, Ininiwak, Anisininewuk, Dakota Oyate and Dene, and on the National Homeland of the Red River Métis.

We respect the Treaties that were made on these territories, we acknowledge the harms and mistakes of the past, and we dedicate ourselves to move forward in partnership with Indigenous communities in a spirit of Reconciliation and collaboration.

”

In Extended Education, we understand that the words of the traditional territories acknowledgement only become meaningful when they are visible in our actions and relationships. In the spirit of Reconciliation and Decolonization, we encourage each Extended Education faculty and staff member to reflect on the land acknowledgement based on our learning, understanding, and relationships. Similarly, we in Extended Education, commit to developing a collective reflection on the meaning of the Traditional Territories Acknowledgement for our shared work and our relationships within Extended Education and with our communities. This is merely a first step in our concerted effort to implement specific actions towards Reconciliation that relate to all goals in our strategic plan.



## HOW THIS PLAN WAS DEVELOPED

This strategic plan is as much a plan by Extended Education as it is a plan for Extended Education. Engaging and listening to each member of Extended Education was important for us to harness all ideas and to ensure that we actively work together in shaping our future.

Therefore, we would like to first and foremost thank all colleagues in Extended Education who have carefully thought about our future and who have provided critical feedback. Everybody actively contributed during a townhall in May 2024, a survey in late June, and focus group sessions with our consultants in July, followed by another set of group sessions with our own Strategic Planning Committee in August and October 2024. Thereby, all members of Extended Education contributed to the conception, development, and finalization of our strategic plan, ensuring that the plan strongly reflects who we are and who we collectively want to be.

We also gained feedback through surveys for students, alumni, and instructors, as well as a focus group session with instructors. Moreover, we engaged with our community partners and University of Manitoba colleagues through a series of dedicated interviews. Our consultants, Higher Education Strategy Associates (HESA) assisted with facilitating stakeholder engagement, conducting an environmental scan, and developing recommendations based on their insights.


Taking all this comprehensive insight from the various engagements into account, the Strategic Planning Committee synthesized the ideas into a compelling strategic plan clearly identifying our priorities for the next four years. Their frank discussions, clarity of vision, attention to detail, and deep care for our internal and external communities has shaped this plan. The Strategic Planning Committee was responsible for writing the strategic plan that you are now reading.

Importantly, this strategic plan is accompanied by an implementation plan for internal use that is a living document and that will be updated regularly. The many ideas shared by all colleagues in Extended Education throughout the strategic planning process were critical to develop the first iteration of the implementation plan. There, we outline our actions to achieve the higher-level strategic themes and goals outlined in this strategic plan.

## INTRODUCTION

Today, more than ever before, we are acutely aware that the world around us is changing rapidly. This change affects our individual lives, our communities and societies, economies, and governments. Obviously, the many changes in our environment also impact Extended Education significantly, as outlined below. Accordingly, we must all adapt to the rapidly changing world – as individuals, as organizations and businesses, and ultimately as societies.

But change and adaptation are not easy and often catapult us beyond our comfort zones and skills. Therefore, the central strategy to embrace change and to adapt to new circumstances is through continuous learning. Extended Education is deeply committed to fostering lifelong learning which emphasizes the importance of our work for the University and for our communities. At the same time, Extended Education must learn, change, and adapt itself by seizing new opportunities and by proactively addressing the needs of our communities.



In recent years, our institutional, Indigenous, provincial, national, and international communities have experienced significant change. As Extended Education, we are committed to addressing the emerging needs of our diverse communities as we engage with individuals, partners, and organizations to foster lifelong learning.

On a global level, we are witnessing a rise in geopolitical tensions and increasing impacts of climate change. Global challenges have led to increased international migration. At the same time, governments are adapting to migration with new policies that directly affect educational institutions including Extended Education, through new regulations for international students. To serve the needs of our Canadian and Manitoba- labour markets as well as the needs of our international learners, it is therefore imperative that we rethink our approach to international and newcomer education in Extended Education.

At the same time, the national and provincial needs for workforce development through educational upskilling and reskilling are evolving while the landscape of educational providers is also changing. Given the rapid technological and societal changes such as the artificial intelligence revolution, mental health challenges, and economic pressures, education is no longer focused on children, youth, and young adults. Instead, every individual must embrace lifelong learning to acquire the new skills and knowledge necessary to stay current in their respective work environments. Similarly, employers, businesses, not-for-profits, and governments must support their employees in lifelong learning to adapt to new work environments. In other words, labour markets are changing rapidly, and lifelong learning is critical for everybody to fulfill the new demands.

Recognizing the growing need for lifelong learning, many public educational organizations as well as private organizations and not-for-profits are now providing opportunities for continuing education. Learners face a large variety of choices for educational programming using many formats and pedagogical approaches, from asynchronous online, to synchronous in-person, and AI-driven learning. As Extended Education, we must assist our learners, partners, and communities by clearly articulating the value of our educational programming, providing learners with support and rewarding experiences, and offering high-quality, relevant, and impactful learning opportunities in different formats, leading to recognized credentials. Moreover, we must inspire our learners to pursue lifelong learning pathways by providing relevant opportunities in higher education. By strategically investing in our programming and improving our responsiveness, we will quickly and flexibly address the needs of our domestic learners.

In Canada, and particularly Manitoba, decades-long transformative advocacy and purposeful action continues to create positive change in Indigenous communities. According to Statistics Canada, the Indigenous population is younger and growing faster than the non-Indigenous population. Indigenous communities are becoming better represented throughout organizations, businesses and in particular, government, and many respectful and collaborative relationships are being developed. With the influence of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action, we are witnessing an increase in allyship and a growing need for relevant and responsive educational programming addressing both general and specific needs of Indigenous communities. Extended Education is committed to being a respectful, reliable, and engaging partner with Indigenous communities, in developing and offering relevant programming together.

In April 2024, the University of Manitoba launched its new strategic plan called "MomentUM: Leading change together" with the vision that "we will lead change for a better Manitoba and world". Extended Education will contribute to this vision by fostering lifelong learning as the critical approach to embracing and leading change. In its strategic plan, the University of Manitoba outlines values, fundamental commitments, and strategic goals that resonate deeply with the purpose of Extended Education. In our strategic plan, Extended Education is not only aligning closely with the University's priorities, but we are committed to implementing and augmenting the meaningful, impactful, and visionary work taking place within the University of Manitoba community. Throughout our strategic plan, you will find clear references and strategic commitments to "MomentUM: Leading change together", to "Empowering Learners" and to "Reimagining Engagement". Similarly, you will see that Extended Education is making similar commitments as the University of

Manitoba with respect to “Advancing Reconciliation for Transformative Change” and “Fostering a Vibrant Community” as a trailblazer for equity, diversity, inclusivity, and accessibility (EDIA).

By coordinating and integrating our activities within the University of Manitoba, Extended Education will leverage the tremendous knowledge and vast skills of our institution as the largest research University in our province to the benefit of our Indigenous, provincial, national, and international communities.

## VISION

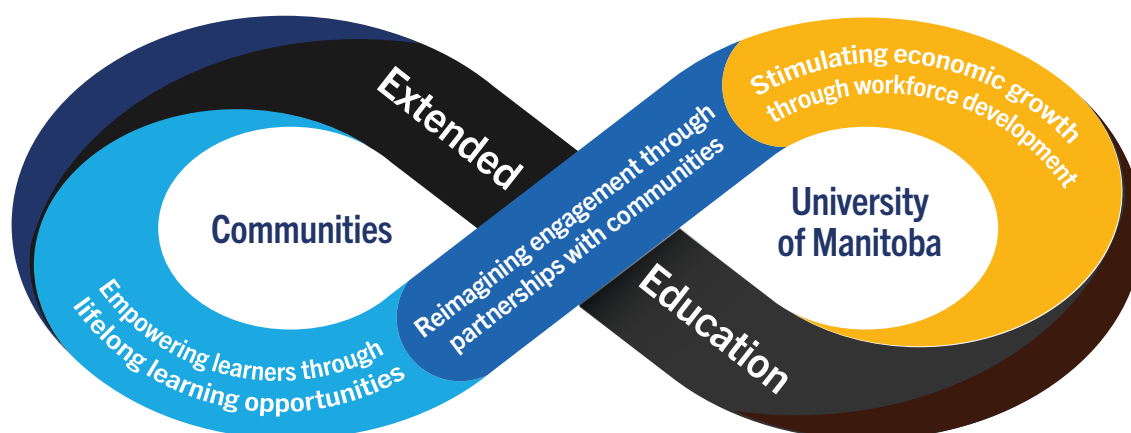
Extended Education at the University of Manitoba will be a catalyst for the cultural, social, and economic transformation of diverse communities in Manitoba and beyond through lifelong learning.

## MISSION

We engage with Indigenous, provincial, national, and international communities, as well as the University of Manitoba, to advance personal and professional development and foster economic growth through transformative education.

## PURPOSE OF EXTENDED EDUCATION WITHIN THE UNIVERSITY OF MANITOBA

**Purpose:** Extended Education enhances the reputation of the University of Manitoba as a leader in flexible, transformative, and innovative lifelong learning by empowering learners. Extended Education takes a leadership role in reimagining engagement with Indigenous, provincial, national, and international communities and partners.



Extended Education engages with Indigenous, provincial, national and international communities and with the wider University of Manitoba community to achieve its mission, vision, and purpose. This infinity symbol illustrates the interconnected relationships Extended Education is forming with the various communities, and the ribbon states the impacts of Extended Education: empowering learners through lifelong learning opportunities, reimagining engagement through partnerships with communities, and stimulating economic growth through workforce development.

**Activities:** Extended Education is the leading academic unit at the University of Manitoba responsible for facilitating non-degree programming, General Studies, post-secondary access and support for systemically marginalized students, in particular Indigenous Peoples. Additionally, Extended Education collaborates with and supports other University of Manitoba units in offering programming governed by the University's Certificate & Diploma Framework.

#### Extended Education aligns with the University of Manitoba Mission:

We advance learning by creating, sharing, preserving, and applying knowledge in partnership with diverse communities to promote the cultural, social, and economic well-being and health of Manitoba, Canada, and the world.

*(MomentUM: Leading change together, University of Manitoba Strategic Plan 2024-2029)*

## AFFIRMING UNIVERSITY OF MANITOBA CORE VALUES

Extended Education is an integral unit of the University of Manitoba providing leadership in lifelong learning and engagement with internal and external communities. We share the same core values as outlined in the University of Manitoba strategic plan “MomentUM: Leading change together”, and we commit to following these values in our daily interactions with each other, with our colleagues at the University of Manitoba, with our learners, our partners and our communities. Each of the following values infuses our entire strategic plan and aligns to specific commitments and strategic themes, as indicated through text boxes in the relevant sections of this strategic plan describing the University of Manitoba values:

- Belonging
- Curiosity
- Impact
- Integrity
- Well-being

## FUNDAMENTAL COMMITMENTS

In implementing our vision to be a catalyst for the cultural, social, and economic transformation of diverse communities in Manitoba and beyond through lifelong learning, Extended Education will be guided by three fundamental commitments that underlie all strategic goals and initiatives:

### 1. Advancing Reconciliation for transformative change

Reconciliation requires collective understanding and purposeful action. In all our actions, Extended Education will contribute



to the University of Manitoba's commitment to advancing Reconciliation for transformative change. Recognizing past and current harms, we will actively nurture respectful, reciprocal, and strong relationships between Indigenous and non-Indigenous staff, faculty, instructors, students, and community members.

#### Advancing Reconciliation For Transformative Change

We walk together to advance Reconciliation. The University of Manitoba acknowledges and atones for both past and ongoing harms. We take action to change behaviour and move forward to establish and maintain mutually respectful relationships between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Peoples. By addressing root causes of inequities, we work towards social change and a more just, equitable future.

*(MomentUM: Leading change together, University of Manitoba Strategic Plan 2024-2029)*

## 2. Fostering excellent experiences for all

As an educational organization for lifelong learning, diversity is always at the centre of our activities in Extended Education. We recognize the importance of our learners, partners, community members, faculty, staff, and instructors. In all our interactions, we will strive for excellence. We aim for everybody to value their meaningful and enjoyable experience with us, inspiring them to become ambassadors for Extended Education. In particular, we are committed to creating equitable, inclusive, and accessible environments where we work to remove barriers so everybody can engage, feel respected and welcome, and can contribute and grow their talents.

#### Extended Education aligns with the University of Manitoba Value: Belonging

We foster trust, acceptance, and mutual respect, rooted in human rights and dignity of all. We strive to create the conditions for all to be their authentic selves. We change systems and structures that exclude. We empower success through our dedication to Decolonization and Reconciliation, and to a university community that centers equity, accessibility, diversity, and inclusion.

*(MomentUM: Leading change together, University of Manitoba Strategic Plan 2024-2029)*

## 3. Strengthening relationships through proactive and clear communication

Extended Education strives to be a facilitator who reimagines engagement with both internal and external communities. We are committed to proactively communicating in a clear and consistent manner with many diverse learners, organizations, and partners in Manitoba and beyond as well as with many units/faculties across the University of Manitoba campuses,

and within Extended Education, including faculty, staff, and instructors. We will share information about emerging and ongoing initiatives that explain our actions and why they are important. By actively communicating, we will foster reciprocal and respectful relationships and collaborations that catalyze transformations within Extended Education and the University of Manitoba as well as in Indigenous, provincial, national, and international communities.

#### Extended Education aligns with the University of Manitoba Value: Integrity

We maintain high ethical standards and ensure ethical stewardship. We share a commitment to human dignity, open dialogue, transparency, professionalism, accountability, and collegial governance.

*(MomentUM: Leading change together, University of Manitoba Strategic Plan 2024-2029)*

## Strategic Themes



This graphic summarizes the four strategic themes of Extended Education that reinforce each other and that are arranged in a wheel: create exceptional learning experiences, reimagine engagement with communities and UM, empower employees, and strengthen organizational sustainability and efficiency. The circle surrounding the strategic themes summarizes the fundamental commitments by Extended Education: advancing reconciliation for transformative change, strengthening relationships through communication, and fostering excellent experiences for all.

## Strategic Theme 1: Create exceptional experiences for learners

To support lifelong learning and empower learners in advancing their personal and professional development, Extended Education strives to create an exceptional overall learner experience. From discovering our programs to registering, succeeding in courses, interacting with our team, and returning for future opportunities, we aim to make every step of the learner journey seamless and rewarding. We envision our learners enjoying their educational journey with us, benefitting in their daily lives from these meaningful learning experiences, and becoming ambassadors who promote lifelong learning and engagement with the University of Manitoba and Extended Education.

We recognize the diversity of our Indigenous, provincial, national, and international communities, and aim to support all learners with different identities and experiences in meaningful ways. In particular, we are committed to facilitating rewarding experiences for Indigenous learners that enhance their personal and professional lives. We aim to support a growing number of learners from Indigenous, provincial, and national communities, while continuing to also serve international learners.

Building on our long-standing expertise in developing and delivering high-quality programming, we will identify and respond to the emerging and critical educational needs of our communities. To this end, we will continuously ensure that our current programming remains relevant, is responsive to diverse learning modalities, and offers appropriate durations of credentials to better meet the needs of our current and new learners. In addition, we will expand our programming, while prioritizing flexibility and impact, ensuring that our current and new programming is accessible for all learners.

We will apply modern, evidence-based pedagogies to actively engage our learners and to empower them to succeed. All our programming will focus on competency development in addition to the acquisition of current knowledge. By offering educational programs that are recognized by employers and professional organizations, we provide learners with impactful educational experiences that have tangible impacts on their careers.

### Extended Education aligns with the University of Manitoba Value: Curiosity

We value the pursuit of knowledge and uphold academic freedom. We celebrate curiosity and its essential role in learning, research, scholarly work, and creative activity. We empower the creation and sharing of knowledge in all its forms, including Indigenous knowledges and ways of knowing, to foster deeper understanding, create new connections, and address society's most pressing issues.

*(MomentUM: Leading change together, University of Manitoba Strategic Plan 2024-2029)*

#### Strategic Goals for Strategic Theme 1:

- 1.1 Strengthen our understanding of our learners
- 1.2 Enhance the quality of our programming
- 1.3 Enrich educational outcomes for our learners
- 1.4 Cultivate inclusive learning environments



## Strategic Theme 2: Reimagine our engagement with external communities and within the University of Manitoba

Extended Education will collaborate closely with existing partners, and actively engage with Indigenous, provincial, national and international communities as well as other educational institutions to form meaningful partnerships. Thereby, we will learn about the needs of our various communities in lifelong learning and workforce development, and we will respond in a timely manner by creating and offering new, impactful, high-quality training, courses, and programs.

Through current and new programming, Extended Education will ensure that we are addressing the needs of businesses as well as the provincial and national labour market demands. Thus, we can directly contribute to the economic development that depends on an educated workforce. In interacting with existing, new, and potential partners, we will reimagine engagement to form lasting and impactful relationships between the University of Manitoba and Indigenous, provincial, national and international communities and other educational institutions.

In engaging with communities, Extended Education sees itself as an ambassador for the University of Manitoba and a welcoming entry point for meaningful partnerships. Therefore, we will actively strengthen our internal engagement with faculties/units across our campuses. As the leading unit for Micro-certificate and Certificate programming, we are committed to collaborating with and supporting our University of Manitoba colleagues in developing discipline-specific non-degree programming together with external partners.

Where possible, we will integrate the creation of new Micro-certificate and Certificate educational opportunities with larger initiatives including other units at the University of Manitoba. In doing so, Extended Education will actively help address our communities' needs in learning and knowledge transfer.

### Extended Education aligns with the University of Manitoba Value: Impact

We partner to find solutions to societal, cultural, economic, health, and environmental issues. Through collaboration, inclusivity, empathy, and valuing diverse ways of knowing, we create global citizens. We centre community as we participate in the process of Reconciliation, and contribute to positive and meaningful change in Manitoba, Canada, and the world.

*(MomentUM: Leading change together, University of Manitoba Strategic Plan 2024-2029)*

#### Strategic goals for Strategic Theme 2:

- 2.1. Strengthen ongoing engagement with Manitoba communities & external partners
- 2.2. Expand our internal engagement with faculties and units across our campuses
- 2.3. Create partnerships with other post-secondary institutions and education providers
- 2.4. Develop new programming for external and internal markets

## Strategic Theme 3: Empower employees

At the heart of all our activities are our own employees, including our instructors who contribute their skills, passion, creativity, and energy to support our learners, partners, and communities. Recognizing the importance of each employee, we will empower individuals to excel in their roles and be acknowledged for their contributions. The purposeful professional development of employees and instructors will be a priority and will include meaningful learning about Indigenous histories, cultures, and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Calls to Action as well as competencies in equity, diversity, inclusion, and accessibility.

Furthermore, we will foster meaningful, collaborative interactions across Extended Education to build on the strengths of our teams and to seize synergies wherever possible. Extending this approach, we will also actively foster engagement of our employees with the wider University of Manitoba community through collaboration and service to facilitate collectively the formation of impactful internal partnerships that benefit our external communities. We will develop inclusive leadership skills at all levels such that all leaders have the skills to empower our employees.

Together, we will purposefully live the University of Manitoba's values of belonging, curiosity, impact, integrity, and well-being (see boxes throughout this strategic plan citing the UM values). We aim to create a welcoming work environment for employees and instructors with diverse experiences and backgrounds, including Indigenous individuals. By valuing both individuals and teamwork, we will create synergies combining our expertise to become even better at serving the diverse needs of our communities. By empowering employees, we will further strengthen our ability to inspire a growing number of lifelong learners, to form strong partnerships internally and externally, and to develop new courses and programs addressing the needs of a changing world.

### Extended Education aligns with the University of Manitoba Value: Well-being

We advance the personal and professional growth and academic success of our community members. Grounded in respect and compassion for each other and our community, we cultivate a supportive environment that embraces the values of *mino-pimatisiwin* (good life) and *mino-ayawin* (good health).

*(MomentUM: Leading change together, University of Manitoba Strategic Plan 2024-2029)*

### Strategic Goals for Strategic Theme 3:

- 3.1. Encourage collaboration and foster internal engagement
- 3.2. Improve regular communication within Extended Education
- 3.3. Inspire meaningful professional development
- 3.4. Develop leadership at all levels

## Strategic Theme 4: Strengthen organizational sustainability and efficiency

Our rapidly changing world requires timely and high-quality action to address the needs and challenges of our learners, partners, and communities. Therefore, Extended Education is committed to strengthening our internal operation so that we are an agile and responsive educational organization. Based on the knowledge, skills, and experience of each faculty and staff member in Extended Education, we will optimize our decision-making processes and clearly define roles and accountability such that everybody has a strong impact on our operation. This goal will also include integrating state-of-the-art technologies throughout our operations where appropriate. Streamlining and clearly documenting our processes will enable us to be timely in responding to requests from learners, partners, and communities. Through technology and process optimization, we will strategically manage our resources and create efficiencies. We will also closely collaborate with other units at the University of Manitoba to align our processes, to identify synergies, and to share resources.

Throughout this entire theme, we are committing to continuously improving our operation by valuing new ideas and encouraging pilot projects to strengthen our organizational sustainability. By innovating our processes, we will aim to provide excellent and more responsive experiences for our employees, learners, instructors and external communities. Moreover, we will thereby strengthen our capacity to support a growing number of learners and programs with high quality educational opportunities. This strategic goal is also meant to secure the long-term sustainability of Extended Education within the University of Manitoba as a self-sufficient unit. Thereby, we will be able to demonstrate that the University of Manitoba and Extended Education are strong, long-term partners for our communities.

### *Strategic Goals for Strategic Theme 4:*

- 4.1. Increase financial sustainability
- 4.2. Optimize internal processes
- 4.3. Leverage technology

## Looking Ahead Together

Our Strategic Plan for 2025-2029 represents a collective vision and a clear roadmap for advancing lifelong learning at the University of Manitoba and beyond. By working together with focus and determination, we will bring this plan to life, ensuring that our efforts are inclusive and aligned with the needs of our learners, partners, and communities.

Each year, we will iteratively develop and refine the accompanying implementation plan. We will do so collaboratively, ensuring it reflects our shared insights and expertise. This plan will guide our actions, helping us measure progress and adapt to emerging opportunities. Together, we are committed to continuous collaboration and innovation, turning our shared goals into meaningful outcomes.



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