Creating Karolinska Institutet’s future together
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The Karolinska Institutet University Board [Koristometru] adopted Strategy 2030 on 15 April 2019. The strategy was developed through broad-based process both within KI and in dialogue with our partners. Strategy 2030 builds upon the university strategy from 2014–2016.

Please note that this is a translation of the Swedish version. In the event of any discrepancies, please refer to the original text.
Strategy is about looking ahead and daring to choose a path. A property-based and firmly anchored strategy leads to changes that reflect our core purpose, values and mission, as well as our evolving demands and requirements. Karolinska Institutet (KI) has been undergoing a process of change for a long time when the primary focus has been on its organisation and infrastructure. A new management organisation was introduced at the beginning of the year, and in recent years some 80 per cent of our experimental research has moved into new premises. With the KI strategy now taking shape, we are now clearly looking ahead for the coming decade. The Strategy 2030 priorities are grouped into three strategic themes: KI will be a groundbreaking, engaged and global university.

To me, it is of critical importance that KI takes responsibility for and drives societal development. Ultimately this is what gives us legitimacy as a university. Curiosity-driven research with the potential to make scientific breakthroughs must therefore be a self-evident and essential part of KI, along with high quality science-based education. In this context, ‘groundbreaking’ is a guiding principle.

The complexity of medical research and the high demands we place on our education require that we, as a single-faculty university, must actively collaborate with other universities and societal actors. Being engaged with the wider community is key to solving both today’s and tomorrow’s problems and challenges. Hence, KI must adopt a clear national role in the development of life science and deepen our working relationship with Region Stockholm in research, education, implementation, and skill provision. Being engaged also means seeking partnerships across sectors, national boundaries, and disciplines.

The quality of our work is enhanced by the wealth of perspectives we gain through international collaboration. The global university also takes into account the United Nations’ Agenda 2030 and its 17 Sustainable Development Goals. These goals concern us all and show that health must be viewed in a broad context, not least within our educational programmes.

When I look ahead towards the implementation of our strategy, I see three main areas that will need our undivided attention for many years to come. The first is to create the best possible working conditions for our students and employees, with predictable career paths. The second is to secure society’s confidence in KI as a leading medical university. For this to be achieved, our work must be continuously characterised by high quality and duly informed by ethical and critical reflection. This is vital if we are to successfully navigate the multiple challenges and dilemmas that confront a medical university at the forefront of research – not least the ethical challenges that arise from developing new and powerful technologies. The third is to take full advantage of the substantial investments that have been made in recent years in modern buildings and infrastructure – investments that give KI the potential to rise to new levels in both education and research.

I am confident that Strategy 2030 will help us strengthen our position as a leading medical university – strong in its purpose, critical in its attitude, and well attuned to society’s evolving needs.

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Ole Peter Ottersten
President

To me, it is of critical importance that KI takes responsibility for and drives societal development.

Developing successfully towards 2030

Ole Peter Ottersten
President
Introduction

The Karolinska Institutet University Board (Konsistoriet) adopted Strategy 2030 on 15 April 2019. The strategy was developed through a broad-based process both within KI and in dialogue with our partners. Strategy 2030 builds upon the university’s strategic plan from 2014-2018.

The necessity of looking ahead to 2030

The time horizon 2019-2030 was chosen with great care. Many of the challenges and opportunities facing our university and society at large become more apparent when considered over a longer time perspective. Research has a long time horizon, and changes we make today in our educational programmes will have their greatest impact on society in a decade or more. The time horizon also coincides with the United Nations’ Agenda 2030. It is incumbent on us as a university to help realise the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), but we should also allow ourselves to be inspired by them. The SDGs view medicine and health in the broadest of contexts. If we are to achieve our vision of better health for all, we must do the same.

Clear priorities set a new path forward

KI’s priorities are described here as strategic themes. They specify the areas on which we have chosen to focus in order to progress towards our vision and realise our overarching objectives. They also signal a reorientation. As we adjust our focus, we will build on the many strengths we have today. The fundamental conditions that need to be in place and our common values complement these thematic choices. We have expressed our ambitions within five objectives, all of which should be achieved by 2030.

The strategic themes and prerequisites for success are in turn broken down into action areas, which provide an overall picture of the steps that must be taken to realise our vision.

Implementation

Strategy 2030 forms the platform for KI’s upcoming Action Plan in which the strategy will be operationalised through resource allocation, planning, and the delegation of responsibility. The President is responsible for ensuring that the strategy is implemented in a resource-efficient way and that it creates a solid foundation for KI’s development through 2030 and beyond.

Review and revision

The strategy is in effect for just over a decade, which means that periodic reviews and revisions will be essential. The board will therefore formally review the strategy every three-to-four years based on input from a group of international experts.

Our vision.

We are advancing knowledge about life and strive towards better health for all.
Our overarching objectives

1. An ethical approach, academic freedom, critical reflection, high quality, and high ambitions shall pervade and support everything we do.

2. A deep global, national, and local commitment to human health shall characterise our education and research.

3. A richness of perspectives shall define our education and research. Education and research shall be tightly coupled and synergies explored.

4. Interprofessional learning, lifelong learning, and internationalisation shall characterise our educational activities.

5. Curiosity-driven knowledge acquisition about life processes and disease mechanisms, reproducibility, state-of-the-art methodology, and scientific breakthroughs of the highest international standards shall characterise our research.

By 2030 we will be a university with a proactive approach to ethics, a clear and well-communicated set of core values, and a strong brand. We will prioritise students and staff and ensure predictability, transparency, and participation. It is distinguished by cohesive operational support and quality assurance systems.

By 2030 we will be a university that champions the freedom of teachers and researchers to formulate and pursue their own lines of scientific inquiry. We will further explore the meaning of excellence and quality within our university and work to give our researchers the best possible conditions to achieve new breakthroughs.

By 2030 we will be a university that draws inspiration from and takes responsibility for the UN’s Sustainable Development Goals and that has a symbiotic, collaborative relationship with the healthcare sector.

By 2030 we will be a university that strengthens the quality of its education and research through global, national, and local collaboration and engagement. We will interlink excellent education with excellent research.

By 2030 we will be a university characterised by pedagogical creativity and innovation. We will offer education that reflects the needs and challenges of society and that explores new learning processes.

A richness of perspectives shall define our education and research. Education and research shall be tightly coupled and synergies explored.

Interprofessional learning, lifelong learning, and internationalisation shall characterise our educational activities.

Curiosity-driven knowledge acquisition about life processes and disease mechanisms, reproducibility, state-of-the-art methodology, and scientific breakthroughs of the highest international standards shall characterise our research.
Broad international cooperation is required to address critical questions concerning the future of the health-care sector. Our world is changing. Globalisation, rapid technological and medical developments, digitalisation, and significant reforms within the healthcare sector present both new opportunities and challenges. Broad international cooperation is required to address critical questions concerning the future of the healthcare sector. We must take advantage of the opportunities that arise while proactively and effectively managing the ethical challenges they bring about.

KI is a global, national, and local actor. We must respond to fierce global competition and to opportunities for deeper collaboration—not only with other universities, but with a wide variety of organisations that contribute to knowledge development and to the growth of the healthcare sector. In our local environment, we must take into account the rapid changes within the organisation of the healthcare sector. These changes impact our own education, research, and engagement with society. KI remains highly attractive among potential students and has a healthy throughput in all first- and second-cycle programmes. Inadequate teacher capacity is a potential risk, along with limited capacity for clinical training (known as VIL or VFU). Our doctoral education has a strong international reputation, and we are working to further assure that the standards we provide meet the highest possible quality standards within third-cycle education. Our research enjoys a high international status; it is constantly advancing the frontiers of science and will continue to receive the best conditions for success. The ever-increasing costs of curiosity-driven, experimental basic research need our attention. Our research has led to improvements in clinical practice, but more remains to be done. Through effective implementation, our groundbreaking research has the potential to contribute even more extensively to world-class healthcare. Many of our findings have commercial value and have led to the establishment of new enterprises and to a large number of patents around the world.

Internationally, KI has unique potential for world-leading experimental basic research and translational research thanks to the enormous investments that have recently been made in new buildings and infrastructure. Our close proximity to new infrastructure established by Region Stockholm adds to our competitiveness. Few other regions in Europe hold the same promise as ours when it comes to the development of life science.

Driven by successful competition for external funding, KI has experienced rapid growth in recent decades. This has weakened our internal culture and led to a lack of common purpose. Strategy 2030 addresses these issues and takes them as its points of departure.

Our points of departure

I enjoy an excellent international reputation and conducts research and education of very high quality. However, past performance is no guarantee of continuing success. Our world is changing. Globalisation, rapid technological and medical developments, digitalisation, and significant reforms within the healthcare sector present both new opportunities and challenges. Broad international cooperation is required to address critical questions concerning the future of the healthcare sector. We must take advantage of the opportunities that arise while proactively and effectively managing the ethical challenges they bring about.

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Our core values shall pervade our culture and serve as guiding principles for how we profile ourselves and tackle our challenges. These values shall be reflected in the university’s governance and norms and shall guide us as we navigate the changing world around us.

KI stands behind the core values that many European universities have agreed to in the Magna Charta Universitatum. This agreement establishes the importance of autonomy and academic freedom. Universities must resist external pressure and defend the freedom, integrity, and quality of our education and research.

KI’s values are also rooted in those established by the government for all public authorities and employees regarding the development of a sound administrative culture. They comprise six principles describing the professional values that are to characterise all government employees: democracy, rule of law, objectivity, free opinion forming, respect for universal human worth, efficiency, and service.

KI operates in a field where the definition, communication, and adoption of core values is particularly important. KI’s core values shall be ingrained in how we work, how we relate to one another, and how we interact with society. Our core values shall respond to the following questions:

- What do we stand for as students and employees of a medical university?
- What view of science and education should characterise us?
- What should guide our research and education within different medical professions?
- What view of humanity do we want to convey to our students and staff and to society at large?

In all that we do, we must see the whole individual – and all people. This is clearly anchored in our vision.

Our core values:

Passion for sustainable life

Creativity

We create groundbreaking results through creative thinking, perseverance, collaboration, and encouragement of originality.

Passion

We have a passion for science and knowledge transfer and their power to change the world.

Responsibility

Our activities are characterised by high quality and ethical principles as well as by respect, empathy, and critical reflection.

Improving our organisational culture

A characteristic element of a cohesive organisational culture is that core values are shared by students and staff alike. In order to achieve our strategic objectives, we need to live and act in accordance with our values. The actions that strengthen our organisational culture are described below.

- Establish incentive structures, financing, and principles for resource allocation that promote an engaged KI in which education and research reinforce one another.
- Develop and reward leadership and work culture that promotes creativity, diversity, equal opportunity, participation, trust, and sustainable development.
- Establish structures and create space for dialogue and discussion on ethical challenges in medical research.
- Create transparency and clarity in university-wide governance structures.

Many parts of this strategy aim to contribute to the organisational culture: initiatives to promote equal opportunities and a healthy work environment, a university quality system, interaction between culture and science, long-term stable financing, academic independence, and cooperation and dialogue with the unions.

Human-centred core values

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Prerequisites

To achieve our overarching objectives and move closer to realizing our vision, we need a well-defined, efficient, effective, and well-structured organization, efficient use of our resources, a professional, competent, and efficient workforce, and a strong, respected, high profile brand. Our culture and our proud history are cohesive forces for the university. Relevant action areas are listed below.

Equal opportunities for all and a sound work environment
KI’s activities shall be characterized by a good, physical, organizational, and social work environment that is free from discrimination, offensive behavior, and harassment. Students and employees shall be given basic rights, and they shall have the opportunity to contribute to sustainable development in their work. KI shall develop its quality system for the organization as a whole and ensure that there is a balance and a continuous improvement. KI’s working standards shall be certified in environmental management in accordance with relevant standards.

Environment and sustainability
Our collective responsibility
Our campus shall be environmentally and socially sustainable, and KI shall actively pursue travel-free meetings.

Students and employees shall be given basic rights, and they shall have the opportunity to contribute to sustainable development in their work. KI shall develop its quality system for the organization as a whole and ensure that there is a balance and a continuous improvement. KI’s working standards shall be certified in environmental management in accordance with relevant standards.

Cultural, interprofessional, and transdisciplinary activities bring students and staff together, strengthen our sense of community, and enrich our perspectives.

Operational support and facility management
Strong and active added value
Operational support will be designed to promote the greatest possible value to individual teachers, researchers, and students. It is important that KI’s researchers and teachers receive the support they need to compete successfully on the external market.
KI’s operational staff shall be respected for their professionalism and encouraged to participate in the university’s development. They shall also be given opportunities to develop their work and assume responsibility in new areas.

Cultural, interprofessional, and transdisciplinary activities bring students and staff together, strengthen our sense of community, and enrich our perspectives.

A brand that strengthens KI’s competitive advantage
The KI brand, like the university itself, has a solid reputation. Every effort shall be made to prevent misuse of the KI brand.

Environment and sustainability
Our collective responsibility
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Our strategic choices

KI shall approach 2030 as a groundbreaking, engaged, and global university. Through these strategic choices we will strive to reach our overarching objectives and realise our vision.

These strategic choices are interdependent: by strengthening our international profile and our collaboration with the healthcare sector, universities, and other societal actors, we will gain the perspectives needed to create new research breakthroughs and maintain high educational standards.

These strategic choices entail a broadening of our ambitions and require that we take greater responsibility for societal development globally, nationally, and locally.
A groundbreaking university

Individuals must be given excellent opportun-
ties to develop their talents and achieve their goals. This is a prerequisite for creative thinking and cutting-edge research. It is through our actions that we make KI an attractive employer and collaboration partner.

Putting students and staff first

KI's students and staff need to be given the best possible opportunities to pursue their own ideals as they develop their potential. This will make KI a productive employer and collaboration partner.

Long-term stable financing for the individual and organisation

KI shall have a stable financial base with effec-
tive long-term resource allocation. This crea-
tes a solid foundation for governance and helps secure predictable career paths. Our resource allocation model shall thereby support our over-
all objectives. We shall therefore strive to en-
courage support for an increase in our basic funding. A broader educational mandate can help improve prestige and continuity of our core operations.

Resource allocation shall make strategic funds available at all levels of the organisation. Heads of department shall have much of their de-
partment's agency capital at their disposal.

KI must be at the inter-
national vanguard when it comes to managing and utilising health data.

KI shall, as a rule, do research as well as teach.

In order to pursue its strategic aims, KI's organisation shall facilitate the continuous development of all our activities. The organisa-
tion and processes must be bolstered for internal collaboration.

Education and research at KI must stimulate one another and a good balance should be established between the two.

When designing new educational programmes, health must be viewed in a broad context with perspectives drawn from the humanities, social sciences, and technology wherever relevant and beneficial to quality. This will be achieved in collaboration with other universities. KI's study programmes must meet increasingly complex demands on the workforce and help students adopt a global perspective.

KI shall have a dynamic organisation with ambitions to strengthen its position as an international player. This is a prerequisite for attracting and retaining top talents and maintaining KI's position as a vanguard when it comes to managing and utilising health data.

KI shall, on the other hand, have a greater educational volume.

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World-class education and research support

Students, teachers, and researchers shall be given access to research infrastructure, support, and educational environments that are on par with the best in the world. This will create the conditions needed for individual, groups, and KI as a whole to excel. Over several years, substantial investments have been made to improve KI’s educational and research environments. Now KI’s students, teachers, and researchers must be given every opportunity to make use of them. Steps also need to be taken to facilitate sharing of resources and avoid duplication of infrastructures in the Stockholm region.

Maximise impact of investments in new buildings and infrastructure

In recent years, KI has made exceptionally large investments in new buildings and infrastructure. By using these investments in the best possible way, KI can strengthen its role as one of the world’s leading medical universities. These investments create unique opportunities for realising our vision: to break new ground in our understanding of life processes and disease mechanisms and make significant contributions to improving health for all. KI must ensure that increased research costs are managed in a way that is consistent with our ambitions regarding continuity, sustainability, and predictability.

Students shall be given access to educational environments that are on par with the best in the world.
Translating research into clinical practice is an obvious part of a medical university’s mandate. This mandate must be fulfilled in partnership with the healthcare sector. 

Thorough collaboration and joint development of clinical research activities shall be developed by exploiting the investments that have been made in new environments. The conditions for education and research should be the same throughout, regardless of principal or location. KI and Region Stockholm should jointly revitalize their respective organizations to ensure that they are well tailored to the needs of the ongoing collaboration. Relevant data access, data management, and information exchange should exist between care providers, including KI and Region Stockholm.

KI’s access to the healthcare sector is essential to our education and research. KI shall work together with the healthcare sector to develop and maintain good working relationships between healthcare professionals. By virtue of having the broadest range of medical education programmes, KI shall lead a leading role in discussions on the competence provision for the healthcare sector. Our educational programmes shall be continually developed in collaboration with the healthcare sector as well as with other life science sectors.

To do so we must collaborate with other healthcare actors. This will ensure that students are prepared for the needs of their future careers. Health informatics, as well as leadership, management, and governance competences, is particularly important. Our educational programmes make extensive use of state-of-the-art teaching methodologies.

KI’s strengths in this regard lie in the understanding of human health and disease processes with a focus on fundamental disease processes and as carriers of new knowledge in the healthcare sector. KI’s research is an integral part of the healthcare context, are particularly important for our education and research. KI shall also actively engage in partnerships across society. 

Research can also be put to good use through innovation and commercialization. These large gains may be made via all parties for creating joint innovation processes between KI and the healthcare sector.

Our engagement with other institutions of higher education, particularly Stockholm University, the Royal College of Technology, and Södertörn University, needs to be further developed. Such collaborative efforts and joint initiatives should contribute to implementation of an internationally visible academic node in the health arena as a supplier and user of national innovation and commercialisation. There are obvious parts of our medical university’s mandate. This mandate must be fulfilled in partnership with the healthcare sector. There needs to be a well-developed common governance process for knowledge sharing and implementation of joint development in the healthcare sector. KI’s research should be the same throughout.

KI shall be an active player in the national arena as a supplier and user of the national innovation ecosystem established in Sweden and as a driver of their development. This gives researchers in Sweden access to cutting-edge competences and techniques. The same applies to larger national collaboration initiatives focusing on medical research.

Our collaboration with local higher education institutions must be further developed.

Through a deeper partnership, KI will be a driving force in realising Sweden’s potential in life science and in bringing together our strength of knowledge and experience to help increase knowledge about how implementable solutions can be developed and commercialized. KI shall be an active player on the national and international scene. As the complexity of medical research in the healthcare sector, are particularly important. Our educational programmes make extensive use of state-of-the-art teaching methodologies.

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Our collaboration with local higher education institutions must be further developed.
KI’s partnership with Region Stockholm is of paramount importance. We must work together to optimise our common collaborations with the commercial sector and our presence for innovation, commercialisation, and other means of research implementation.

KI shall offer students and staff commercialisation support so that enterprises can start and grow. The Solna and Flemingsberg campuses shall be developed into attractive venues for life science companies and other actors that strengthen the innovation ecosystem.

New partners broaden perspectives

We shall develop strategic partnerships with important local, national, and international authorities and actors. The process of choosing strategic partnerships shall be proactive and transparent. New categories of partners from civil society and the public sector broaden perspectives and shall therefore be prioritised. Examples are the city of Stockholm and other municipalities in which KI is active. Partnership objectives shall be effectively communicated both internally and externally.

KI shall be a driving force in realising Sweden’s potential in life science and in bringing together relevant actors.

Students as co-creators in the design of educational programmes

KI must provide optimum conditions for student influence throughout the organisation. The students are our partners and thus share responsibility for influencing the design of educational programmes. KI shall facilitate this process.

Open internal dialogue based on trust

Collaboration within KI through the unions shall enable an open internal dialogue about KI’s activities that is based on mutual trust. This will facilitate staff influence and participation in matters relating to their own positions and to KI as a whole. Such interaction shall also benefit the development of employee competence and sound work environment.

The employer and the unions should work together to make KI a sustainable workplace. One challenge is to reconcile the strong dependence on external funding with the need to ensure continuity in research and teaching and predictable career paths.
It is inherent in the very concept of a university to
think and act across regional and genera-
tional boundaries. International collaboration
provides the potential for KI to improve the
high quality in our education and research. It
is also the way forward into a world that needs a
global responsibility and to realise our vision
of working towards better health for all. All
the action areas that strengthen our strategies
as a global university are described below.

International perspectives are imperative.
KI shall be an important actor in the global
development of education and research. We
therefore need to adapt to global change and
internationalization and collaborations.

International engagement helps to enhance KI’s
current mobility (inwards and outwards) for
KI's international activities in Sweden and abroad
are essential.

To achieve our goals, we need to further deve-
opment of partnerships with universities, com-
panies, competitors, and organisations around
european and global boundaries, European,
international and global collaborations.

KI’s alumni shall be attractive to other uni-
versities and shall have lifelong opportunities
to return to KI to teach, conduct research, or
conduct research and obtain financing. In order
to take on leading roles in such collaborations,
KI shall aim to be a leading actor in efforts to
achieve the sustainable development
goal that directly relates to health and wellbeing.

Leading multilateral collaborations
KI shall endeavour to enter into a larger num-
ber of first- and second-cycle
KI's clear international profile.

Leading multilateral collaborations
to influence our vision of
Internationalization shall pervade every-
thing we do and we shall endeavor to
the level of international first-
and second-cycle education, clinical research, and
KI shall endeavour to enter into a larger num-
ber of deep partnerships with leading univer-
"sities. Collaborations are to be regularly followed
and presence in international contexts both in
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Leading multilateral collaborations
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Our vision. We are advancing knowledge about life and strive towards better health for all.