



2023-2027

STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT PLAN

The Strategic Development Plan of Nakhchivan State University was approved by the Scientific Council of the university under Protocol No. 01 dated September 6, 2023.

☎ (+99436) 544-08-61

✉ r.jafarli@ndu.edu.az

🌐 www.ndu.edu.az



INTRODUCTION

The update of the current Strategic Plan was carried out based on a strategic planning methodology with the participation and collaboration of the university's academic and administrative staff, as well as students.

For the preparation of this strategy, a commission was established at the university, and a working group was formed within this commission. In the first stage, the group conducted preparatory activities. The results of the activities implemented by the university, the national science and education strategy, and global developments in the field of education were analyzed. Relevant documents, proposals, and international best practices were also studied by the working group.

To analyze the current situation of the university, identify the needs for further development, and draw conclusions, the working group held meetings with all stakeholders of the university. The plans and expectations of these stakeholders were analyzed and incorporated into the strategy.

ABOUT THE UNIVERSITY

Nakhchivan State University, recognized as one of the leading higher education institutions of the Republic of Azerbaijan and a major center of science, education, public thought, and culture in the Nakhchivan Autonomous Republic, stands out within the national higher education system for its strong reputation, comprehensive development, and contributions to the training of highly qualified specialists.

The first institution of higher education in Nakhchivan was established in 1967 as the Nakhchivan Branch of the Azerbaijan State Pedagogical Institute. In its first academic year, the institution admitted 102 students across three specialties and employed only three full-time lecturers. The growing demand in the region for highly qualified specialists made it necessary for the institution to operate not as a branch, but as an independent higher education institution. As a result, in 1972, on the basis of the branch, the Nakhchivan State Pedagogical Institute was established. Initially, the university focused on training pedagogical staff, but over time, as the social, economic, and cultural needs of the region expanded, the institution aimed to open new specialties and broaden its scope of activity. Therefore, by the Decision No. 584 of the Council of Ministers of the Azerbaijan SSR dated December 29, 1990, the Pedagogical Institute was transformed into Nakhchivan State University.

Throughout its history, Nakhchivan State University has been led by prominent scholars, including:

- Candidate of Historical Sciences, Associate Professor Ali Aliyev (1967–1970);
- Candidate of Geographical Sciences, Associate Professor Səfərli Babayev (1970–1972);
- Doctor of Technical Sciences, Professor Israfil Mammadov (1972–1977);
- Doctor of Historical Sciences, Professor Isak Mammadov (1978–1984);
- Corresponding Member of ANAS Isgandar Jafarov (1985–1989);
- Doctor of Chemical Sciences, Professor Gasim Huseynov (1989–1996);
- Full Member of ANAS Isa Habibbayli (1996–2013);
- Doctor of Biological Sciences, Professor Saleh Maharramov (2013–2019).

Currently, the university is headed by Elbrus Isayev, PhD in History, Associate Professor.

By the Decree of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan, Heydar Aliyev, dated June 12, 2002, Nakhchivan State University was granted the status of high self-governance and the right of autonomy. The National Leader of the Azerbaijani people, Heydar Aliyev, visited Nakhchivan State University four times – in 1974, 1992 (twice), and 1999. The President of the Republic of Azerbaijan, Ilham Aliyev, has also visited the university and participated in the opening ceremonies of its Electronic Library and Conservatory.

Currently, the university comprises 43 departments. Nakhchivan State University employs 528 academic staff members, including 1 Academician, 5 Corresponding Members of the Azerbaijan National Academy of Sciences, 31 Doctors of Science, 24 Professors, and 181 PhD holders, of whom 162 hold the title of Associate Professor. Additionally, there are 139 senior lecturers and lecturers working at the university.

Among the academic staff, there are individuals who have been awarded honorary titles, including a People's Artist, an Honored Scientist, 10 Honored Teachers of the Republic of Azerbaijan, 3 Honored Artists, 4 Honored Cultural Workers, as well as 32 Honored Teachers of the Nakhchivan Autonomous Republic, 5 Honored Artists, 2 Honored Figures of Physical Education and Sports, 2 Honored Doctors, and 5 Honored Cultural Workers, Artists, and Art Figures.

Nakhchivan State University currently comprises 10 faculties – History and Philology, International Relations and Law, Economics and Management, Foreign Languages, Physics and Mathematics, Architecture and Engineering, Natural Sciences and Agriculture, Medicine, Pedagogy, and Fine Arts. In addition, the university has a Dean's Office for International Students, a Center for Master's and Doctoral Studies, and three colleges under its supervision: Nakhchivan Music College, Nakhchivan State Technical College, and Nakhchivan Medical College.

In total, nearly 10,000 students study at Nakhchivan State University across 78 bachelor's programs, 75 master's specializations, 52 doctoral programs, and 38 residency programs. Among them are 1,726 international students representing 7 countries.

The Decree of the Chairman of the Supreme Assembly of the Nakhchivan Autonomous Republic dated June 8, 2021, on "Transferring the Nakhchivan Music College under the authority of Nakhchivan State University," marked a logical continuation of the efforts toward integrating the region's education system into the global educational space. The Nakhchivan Music College, now under the university's authority, offers 13 sub-bachelor programs with 516 students enrolled and 178 teachers employed.

The 108-hectare campus of Nakhchivan State University includes 13 academic buildings, an Electronic Library, a Conservatory, a Social Services Center, a University Hospital, an Olympic Sports Center, two stadiums, and a modern Student Dormitory. For the first time in the Azerbaijani higher education system, a three-story Social Services Center and a modern University Guest House were opened for students. Moreover, the University Hospital has expanded its services – since May of the previous year, it has been operating Surgery, Laboratory, Dentistry, Gynecology, and Ophthalmology departments.

The university campus provides high-speed wireless internet coverage. It houses three Internet Centers, a Media Center, University Television (NSU TV), Nuhchixan Radio, a Publishing House, the Scientific Works journal, the Yeni Fikir newspaper, and several museums. The university's Scientific Works journal has been included in the Register of the Supreme Attestation Commission and assigned an international ISSN number.

In collaboration with the KOICA organization of South Korea, Nakhchivan State University implemented the project "Establishment of an Electronic Education Network and Digital Multimedia Infrastructure." The launch of the Electronic University became one of the largest and most significant projects in Azerbaijan's higher education system in terms of both budget and scope.

In various faculties of Nakhchivan State University, several new laboratories and specialized centers have been established to enhance practical learning and innovation. These include the Robotics Laboratory and STEAM Center at the Faculty of Architecture and Engineering; the Pharmacy Simulation Room at the Faculty of Medicine; the Green Pharmacy at the Social Service Center; the Museum Studies Room at the Faculty of History and Philology; and the Land Management and Cadastre and Geography Laboratories at the Faculty of Natural Sciences and Agriculture. Additionally, at the Faculty of Pedagogy, the Technology Center and Shooting Center were established.

In 2022, several new facilities were inaugurated at the Faculty of Natural Sciences and Agriculture, including the Cytology, Histology, Embryology, and Anatomy Rooms, as well as the Faculty Library. Moreover, the Department of Veterinary Medicine opened a Pathology Room and a Microbiology and Virology Laboratory.

During the 2022–2023 academic year, Nakhchivan State University launched a dual-degree program with Çankırı Karatekin University of Türkiye, successfully admitting students under this initiative.

Among the university's notable achievements in 2023, one of the most significant was the signing of a Memorandum of Cooperation with IBM, a global leader in information technology. This partnership aims to strengthen Nakhchivan State University's connections with universities worldwide and align with IBM's Global Ecosystem, which covers 170 countries. Based on the agreement, a Software Engineering Institute will be established at Nakhchivan State University in collaboration with IBM. The institute's academic and research focus will initially include Artificial Intelligence, Cloud Technologies, Cybersecurity, Database Systems, and Design Thinking.

The successful operation of the IELTS Registration and Examination Center has fostered an English-speaking environment within the university and led to the creation of a new SAT Examination Center. This new center not only strengthens the university's position in international academic competitiveness and supports dual-degree programs and international partnerships, but also contributes significantly to the development of an English-speaking environment across Nakhchivan as a whole.

According to the Decree of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan, Mr. Ilham Aliyev, on approving the "State Program for the Socio-Economic Development of the Nakhchivan Autonomous Republic for 2023–2027", important objectives were set regarding the strengthening of cooperation between Nakhchivan State University and foreign higher education institutions, the implementation of joint programs, and the development of innovative educational initiatives such as the SABAH project, English-language Medical Faculty, and Medical Research Clinic.

Taking into account the increasing demand for medical professionals, the university has already introduced an English-language program in Medicine to train specialists who can meet both local and international standards.

Main Priorities and Areas of Activity

Education

At all levels of education, the teaching process is organized in accordance with the requirements of the Bologna Process, utilizing the credit-based education system. Each faculty of the university is equipped to integrate modern technologies into the learning process, which positively impacts the quality of education and enhances visual and practical learning. The implementation of the Electronic University project has become an effective tool for the development of education, improving the professional competence of students and faculty members, and accelerating integration with leading universities worldwide.

Research

Scientific research at Nakhchivan State University is conducted through departments, research centers, and laboratories. To encourage scientific activity, the university has implemented a differentiated salary system and a reward mechanism for publications in reputable academic journals. To increase the efficiency of research and ensure its application in industry, the university invites researchers from various countries and strengthens its cooperation with industrial partners. The number of publications by university scholars indexed in major scientific databases such as Web of Science and Scopus continues to grow.

To enhance its research capacity and evolve into a research-oriented university, Nakhchivan State University focuses on improving infrastructure, publishing in high-impact journals, implementing grant-funded projects, advancing master's and doctoral education, and protecting intellectual property rights.

Internationalization

To promote exchange of experience and enhance students' competitiveness in the global labor market, the university signs cooperation protocols with prestigious foreign universities, ensures academic mobility, and organizes joint conferences, seminars, symposia, and training sessions with the participation of international scholars.

Efforts are underway to prepare programs for international accreditation, ensuring that academic offerings meet global education standards. Dual-degree programs are implemented at the bachelor's and master's levels in collaboration with partner universities.

To improve accessibility to international examinations, IELTS and SAT registration and testing centers operate within the university.

Resources

The university places special emphasis on improving the professional skills of its staff and regularly organizes seminars and training programs for this purpose. Additionally, academic and administrative personnel participate in exchange programs and training sessions at partner universities abroad.

The university's official website ndu.edu.az with its extensive information resources, plays an important role in ensuring accessibility and transparency of all institutional processes. All university buildings are equipped with high-speed broadband internet.

The implementation of the "E-University" and "LMS" (Learning Management System) platforms has enabled the university to digitize up to 90% of both academic processes and document circulation. Moreover, a modern library system is available for continuous use by students and faculty members.

The university's financial resources are formed through state-funded education expenses for government-sponsored students, tuition fees paid by students enrolled on a paid basis, and other income sources permitted by law.

Our Mission

In a transformative educational environment focused on profound disciplinary knowledge, our mission is to create a flexible and adaptive teaching and research environment that ensures transparency in higher education and responds effectively to emerging challenges through an individualized approach to students and researchers in both academic and research processes.

Our Vision

The vision of Nakhchivan State University is to integrate the university into the world's leading educational systems, making it a leader in Azerbaijan's higher education space; to strengthen its research potential and enhance collaboration with the labor market and industry; and to foster a research-oriented teaching culture that promotes democratic principles and civic responsibility among students and staff.

Our Values

Quality:

The university strives to ensure high standards of quality across all areas of activity.

Sustainability:

The university values environmental balance and actively supports sustainable development.

Academic Freedom:

The university is committed to ensuring the freedom of academic, administrative, and student bodies in teaching, learning, research, and social activities within the framework of legal regulations.

Social Responsibility and Accountability:

The university promotes a strong sense of social responsibility and encourages partnership in community-oriented projects.

Transparency:

The university supports transparency in all operational areas and ensures accessibility for all stakeholders.

Ethical Standards:

The university upholds accepted codes of ethical conduct, prioritizes the protection of intellectual property rights, and promotes respect for diverse viewpoints.

SWOT ANALYSIS

The strengths and weaknesses of the university have been identified, while opportunities and threats have been assessed to define strategic goals that support the achievement of our objectives. The internal analysis of processes, resources, and organizational structures has been conducted collaboratively to determine the university's internal position. The results of the analysis provide a detailed understanding to support institutional development and guide strategic decision-making. It also helps to ensure the optimal use of resources and to identify potential strategic partnerships and cooperation opportunities.

OUR STRENGTHS

- Implementation of education at three levels (bachelor's, basic higher medical education, master's/residency, and doctoral studies) across five specialization areas
- The only university in the country with a classical campus model, comprising 1 international school, 3 colleges, and 12 faculties
- A sufficient ratio of academic staff with scientific degrees to students in accordance with national education standards
- A strong material and technical base and well-equipped classrooms with advanced ICT infrastructure
- A leading position in Azerbaijan by the number of international students (foreign students constitute 25% of total enrollment)
- Organization of regional, national, and international symposia, conferences, and congresses across all fields of science
- Inviting foreign professors and researchers to enhance education and research quality and promote access to international experience
- Strong international cooperation with over 100 higher education institutions from nearly 50 countries worldwide
- Application of a point-based evaluation system for academic staff performance and a differentiated salary system to encourage research
- Use of LMS systems and electronic journals to promote digitalization and transparency in education
- Publication of periodical scientific journals in various academic fields to foster research activity
- Availability of an extensive library with rich information resources

OUR WEAKNESSES

- A low number of publications in high-indexed scientific journals
- A limited number of patents and weak application of research results in industry

- Low participation of students and staff in mobility programs, with ratios below the average level
- Lack of systematic support services for students (such as mentorship, career counseling, and psychological support)
- Weak student engagement and accountability in student services, administration, and the educational process
- Lack of a financial support mechanism for research projects, as well as insufficient number of research centers, and poorly equipped laboratories and libraries, which limit the effectiveness and practical application of research
- Low foreign language proficiency among students and academic staff

OPPORTUNITIES

- Establishment of the only university technopark in the country, fostering university–industry collaboration and supporting startup and spin-off projects
- Research and educational exchange programs with partner universities in different countries
- Availability of sports infrastructure, library facilities, cafés, student clubs, and other social and cultural opportunities
- Development of various student support mechanisms, such as mentorship, career counseling, psychological assistance, and an inclusive education center
- A safe and well-regulated campus environment
- Availability of financial aid and scholarship programs for students

THREATS

- Increasing competition in attracting qualified academic personnel with scientific degrees
- Growing age disparity among academic staff, leading to a potential decline in the number of qualified researchers in the future
- The university budget being primarily dependent on tuition fees
- Weak mechanisms of cooperation with the labor market and the constant evolution of market demands
- Insufficient number of research-oriented academic staff

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

Objective 1. Ensuring a High-Quality Teaching and Learning Process

We aim to enhance the quality of teaching and learning by implementing effective teaching methodologies that foster students' independent thinking and practical skills, promote the use of modern educational technologies, and ensure the regular updating of teaching materials.

Goal 1. Adopting a Student-Centered Learning Approach

To analyze students' learning needs, incorporate new educational trends into teaching practices, and strengthen the capacity of academic staff to apply innovative methods in classrooms.

- 1.1. Organize regular training sessions across all departments to promote the adoption of a student-centered education approach.*
- 1.2. Conduct continuous training sessions over five years to familiarize academic staff with new trends in education and ensure their mobility to partner universities abroad.*
- 1.3. Align the teaching process with ESG (European Standards and Guidelines) requirements.*
- 1.4. Adapt teaching standards and curricula to meet the demands of the labor market.*
- 1.5. Improve the organization of internships and expand opportunities for students to gain international practical experience.*
- 1.6. Ensure students' right to select their instructors in accordance with the credit system principles.*
- 1.7. Strengthen and promote student volunteering activities, encouraging greater participation.*

Goal 2. Attracting Highly Qualified and Internationally Experienced Academic and Administrative Staff

To support the professional development of academic personnel and foster the dissemination of international experience within the university.

- 2.1. Recruit foreign professors and lecturers annually to enhance teaching quality and introduce innovative teaching and research methodologies.*
- 2.2. Establish the Software Engineering Institute under Nakhchivan State University to conduct training and research activities.*
- 2.3. Expand English-medium education and improve the quality of English-taught programs.*
- 2.4. Ensure the organization and accessibility of international examinations such as IELTS and SAT for students.*
- 2.5. Implement international accreditation for at least one academic program per year through recognized accreditation agencies.*
- 2.6. Increase the number of mentorship trainings and provide support for mentorship activities.*

2.7. Establish SABAH groups to develop students' intellectual and creative potential and strengthen competency-based learning in specific fields.

2.8. Form small research groups led by invited foreign professors, involving master's and doctoral students, to conduct collaborative scientific research.

Objective 3. Enhancing the University's Reputation Domestically and Internationally, and Attracting High-Achieving Local and International Students

3.1. Promote the university by participating in educational fairs and exhibitions both domestically and abroad.

3.2. Improve the admission procedures and student support services for international students.

3.3. Increase the annual enrollment of both local and international students.

3.4. Establish an IBM Training Center within the university and ensure the participation of faculty and students in IBM-organized training programs.

Objective 2. Intensifying Scientific Research, Developing Research Tools and Infrastructure, and Increasing International Recognition of Academic Staff and Practical Application of Research Results

This objective focuses on enhancing the university's performance in scientific research and academic production, developing a quality policy in this field, and increasing competitiveness and result-oriented performance. The university aims to strengthen its research capacity and become a center for innovative and independent research projects.

Goal 1. Implementing Activities Toward Becoming a Research-Oriented University

1.1. Develop guidelines that define quality research parameters, improve incentive mechanisms, and organize relevant training sessions.

1.2. Centralize the organization and management of scientific activities and strengthen inter-departmental collaboration to improve efficiency.

1.3. Prepare instructions for the registration and management of research outcomes and ensure that all departments are familiar with these procedures.

1.4. Develop support mechanisms for the commercialization of research results.

1.5. Strengthen the library's capacity, ensure its digital transformation, and provide access to international library networks.

Goal 2. Enhancing Academic Staff's Research Competencies and Supporting Research Activities

2.1. Organize continuous professional training tailored to the needs of academic staff engaged in research.

2.2. Expand access to international electronic databases and resources to improve researchers' access to global academic journals.

- 2.3. Encourage publication in Scopus and Web of Science-indexed journals, accelerate the integration of researchers into the global academic space, and establish a reward system for those who publish in high-impact journals.
- 2.4. Improve the operation of research laboratories, strengthen human resources, and enhance the material and technical base to ensure effective research activities.

Goal 3. Improving the Quality of University's Scientific Publications and Organizing Prestigious International Scientific Events

- 3.1. Enhance the online platforms of the university's scientific journals and ensure that each published article is assigned a Digital Object Identifier (DOI).
- 3.2. Align the operations of university journals with the requirements of reputable international databases and work toward indexing them in such platforms.
- 3.3. Organize international scientific events (conferences, congresses, symposia, forums) by inviting representatives from leading global universities.

Goal 4. Strengthening Research and Innovation through the Development of University-Industry Collaboration

- 4.1. Establish and enhance multifaceted partnerships with relevant enterprises and companies in the priority academic fields identified by the university.
- 4.2. Develop a mechanism and action plan for the effective implementation of University-Industry collaboration.
- 4.3. Support students and faculty in developing startup and spin-off projects.
- 4.4. Create platforms such as festivals and competitions to present projects to the industry and facilitate their commercialization.
- 4.5. Attract industrial enterprises to the newly established Technology Park, supporting the establishment and operation of research laboratories and innovation centers.
- 4.6. Expand cooperation through internship and mentorship programs for students and faculty at partner industrial organizations.

Objective 3. Effective Organization of University Internationalization

In the modern world, internationalization is one of the most critical objectives for universities aiming to enhance the quality of education and strengthen the global competencies of students and faculty. It is also a fundamental response to the rapid globalization of higher education.

Through the internationalization of educational programs and research activities, the university seeks to enhance the international achievements and competitiveness of its students.

Goal 1. Internationalized Academic Programs: Aligning Curricula with Modern Technologies and Global Standards

- 1.1. Ensure that academic programs and disciplines across university faculties meet international standards.
- 1.2. Achieve international accreditation of university programs through recognized global accreditation agencies.
- 1.3. Promote internal internationalization by integrating global best practices into teaching and learning across all faculties.
- 1.4. Develop a credit recognition mechanism to streamline and improve exchange and internship procedures abroad.

Goal 2. Collaboration with Foreign Universities and Educational Institutions: Enhancing Student and Staff Mobility through International Partnerships

- 2.1. Strengthen the effectiveness of existing partnerships and establish new collaborations with international universities and educational organizations.
- 2.2. Ensure student and staff mobility through various international programs and bilateral agreements.
- 2.3. Submit proposals to international grant programs and secure the university's participation as a partner institution in global projects.
- 2.4. Identify specific fields of cooperation to enhance the effectiveness and strategic alignment of international partnerships.
- 2.5. Facilitate online international training programs for students and academic staff to foster skill development and global competencies.

Goal 3. Expanding International Research Activities and Dual Degree Programs; Securing the University's Position in Global Rankings

- 3.1. Conduct joint international research projects with foreign professors and scholars invited to the university.
- 3.2. Support the development and participation of university staff in international research projects.
- 3.3. Organize internship and practical training programs in cooperation with universities and educational institutions abroad to provide students with international learning experiences.
- 3.4. Establish dual degree programs in undergraduate and graduate levels with universities from different countries, enabling students to earn globally recognized qualifications.
- 3.5. Implement targeted actions to ensure the university's participation and recognition in global university rankings such as QS and THE (Times Higher Education).

Objective 4. Enhancing the Quality Assurance System

The internal quality assurance system establishes standards and guidelines for the educational process, enabling performance assessment and continuous improvement.

The external quality assurance system, implemented through independent evaluation agencies, strengthens the university's international competitiveness.

Together, these systems ensure sustainable institutional development and contribute to the improvement of education quality and the creation of a strong quality culture within the university.

Goal 1. Establishing and Improving Internal and External Quality Assurance Mechanisms

1.1. Develop and implement policies and procedures aimed at strengthening the university's quality assurance framework, conducting regular analyses, and promoting a quality culture across all units.

1.2. Define a comprehensive quality assurance policy, monitor the progress of teaching and research activities, and carry out periodic evaluations.

1.3. Ensure that all academic and administrative units prepare and implement their own strategic action plans, providing support for effective execution.

Goal 5. Developing the Governance Structure, Enhancing Information Exchange, Promoting Social Projects, and Improving Infrastructure

An effective governance structure ensures systematic and efficient management of the educational process.

Enhancing the efficiency of information exchange contributes to better coordination and transparency.

Developing social projects fosters students' social responsibility, leadership skills, and civic engagement.

Improving infrastructure enhances the comfort and effectiveness of academic, administrative, and student activities, thereby strengthening the overall quality of education and institutional performance.

Objective 1. Enhancing Governance, Infrastructure, and Institutional Sustainability

1.1. Apply strategic planning practices to improve the effectiveness of the management structure and define key institutional priorities.

1.2. Ensure efficient information exchange by implementing digital and virtual education management systems, improving e-learning platforms, and strengthening information security.

1.3. Upgrade the university's infrastructure, laboratories, educational facilities, and technological resources to support modern teaching and research.

1.4. Promote institutional sustainability by supporting inclusivity on campus and developing social projects that enhance students' overall educational experience.

1.5. Implement a wide range of social responsibility projects aimed at students' personal development, leadership, and result-oriented engagement.

1.6. Strengthen the role of the Public Council to enhance transparency, accountability, and communication with society.

- 1.7. *Improve the operational efficiency and educational quality of the three colleges and the international school under the university's supervision.*
- 1.8. *Establish and develop a Human Resources Department to design and implement a comprehensive human capital policy for the university.*
- 1.9. *Involve administrative staff in professional development and capacity-building training to enhance managerial competence and adopt best international practices.*

Goal 6. Ensuring Financial Sustainability for the Implementation of the Strategic Development Plan

Objective 1. Enhancing the Efficiency and Sustainability of Financial Resources

- 1.1 *To achieve diversification and increase of financial inflows*
- 1.2 *To ensure financial inflows by providing various additional services in accordance with the procedures established by law*
- 1.3 *To generate additional income from research results, produced prototypes, and patents by concluding contracts with various resident and non-resident companies*
- 1.4 *To increase the regional importance and reputation of the Technology Park and ensure financial inflows from companies located there in the form of rent or other means*
- 1.5 *To ensure the efficient use of financial resources for the implementation of activities arising from the Strategic Development Plan and to monitor this process*



 **(+99436) 544-08-61**

 **r.jafarli@ndu.edu.az**

 **www.ndu.edu.az**