

Drexel 2030 Strategic Plan Initiative Team Guide

Initiative Team: Partnerships

Impact

Since its founding, Drexel's distinctive fusion of experiential learning, research, and scholarship has prepared students of all backgrounds to face the world's challenges with creativity and a spirit of innovation and entrepreneurship. Central to Drexel's history is the University's relationship with industry partners – most notably through its' 100-year-old Co-op Program. These industry partners have not only provided invaluable experiential learning opportunities for Drexel students, but their insight has helped to shape and guide the University's curriculum to best prepare students with the skillsets they will need for success in an ever-changing workforce.

In the coming decade, Drexel will build upon this heritage of collaboration to respond both to profound shifts in higher education and to the broader challenges facing society, which include the fault lines around inequity, systemic racial injustice and economic uncertainty exposed by a global public health crisis.

In addition to these challenges, technological disruption has quickly become a catalyst for industry seeking ways in which they can strengthen and upskill their current workforces. As a result, the opportunities for academic institutions to collaborate through mutually-beneficial partnerships with industry is great. By reimagining partnership, the University will ensure its' students are prepared to enter today's changing workforce. Simultaneously, strengthening partnerships will further assist companies with upskilling their talent pipelines as well provide the lifelong learner with the continuing education opportunities they need to remain competitive throughout their careers.

Furthermore, expanding partnerships and building out more diverse and dynamic relationships with industry provides the University with competitive sustainable advantages.

This plan articulates strategies for more effectively and intentionally uniting our academic and scholarly enterprise to meet the needs of the rapidly changing work environment that our students will encounter, whether for the first time, or as lifelong learners.

Drexel 2030: Designing the Future is the University-wide implementation effort to execute the goals of Drexel's 10-year strategic plan. Comprised of 12 initiative teams, a wide group of faculty, staff, and senior administrators from across the institution will focus on efforts such as retention/student success, pricing and financial aid, program/curricular innovation, online and continuing education/lifelong learning.

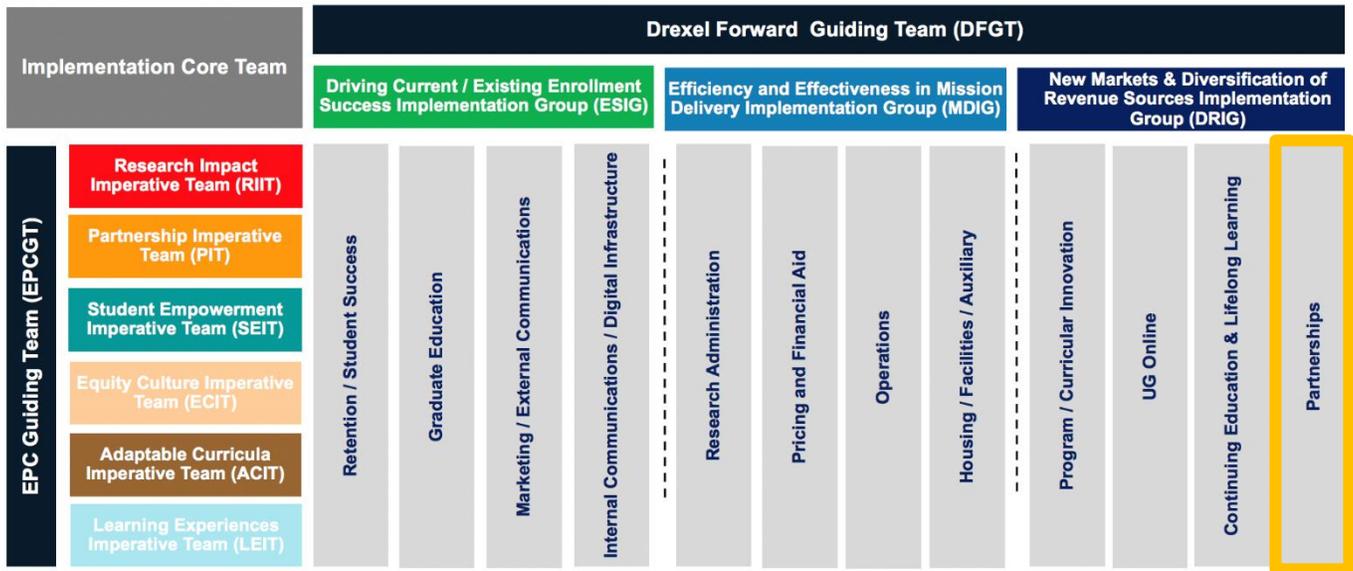
Spanning across these initiatives, collaborative and imperative teams will connect these various efforts and infuse core imperatives such as a commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion into each of the



initiatives. Each team will drive success through an implementation plan consisting of initiatives, milestones, and financial and non-financial targets that integrate with one another and to the broader strategic plan.

These wide-ranging implementation efforts will be regularly communicated with the Drexel community to engage all stakeholders for broad feedback to facilitate continuous development and improvement.

Taken together, these implementation efforts will transform Drexel through executing the University’s strategic plan and vision into a reality, thereby moving the University forward to 2030.



Partnership Background

Drexel University has a rich history of partnering with industry. Over the course of the University’s 100-year Co-op program, Drexel has created a broad and diverse network of 1,600+ industry partners to provide experiential learning opportunities to its students.

As Drexel looks ahead to the next 100 years, the needs of the University as well as our corporate partners will change, and we must be prepared to meet these new needs through collaboration and a holistic, solutions-based approach.

In 2019, Drexel University launched the Drexel Solutions Institute to operate as a centralized hub for academic-industry collaboration in order to create more strategic and interdisciplinary approaches to corporate partnerships.

A centralized approach to how the University engages with industry and forms partnerships enables Drexel to fully integrate these partnerships throughout the University’s schools, colleges, and innovation units. Opportunities are more streamlined and can more easily be strategically aligned to Drexel’s core objectives. In addition, the interdisciplinary solutions provided through a centralized unit allow for greater impact and effectiveness to both the University and the client while enabling further cultivation for future opportunities to partner together.

Within the new strategic plan, this partnership workstream will aim to identify ways in which Drexel can further expand upon its' current relationships as well as find ways in which we can build and bridge current opportunities to be more impactful and interdisciplinary in nature in order to meet the everchanging needs and interests of our students, faculty, partners, and their employers.

Charge

The Partnership initiative team will strive to:

- Deepen and strengthen more strategic and interdisciplinary partner relations on behalf of Drexel University.
- Strengthen the University's regional engagement.
- Expand opportunities to partner with industry, especially with regards to education and research.
- Identify innovative solutions which mutually benefit the University (via growth in research and revenue streams), our faculty, students, and our industry partners.

Recommendations should:

- ✓ Align with Drexel's mission
- ✓ Connect to the [Drexel 2030 Strategic Plan](#)
- ✓ Create sustained financial impact
- ✓ Drive continued experiential learning opportunities for students
- ✓ Be feasible for near-term implementation

Goals

Recommendations developed by the Partnership workstream should support progress toward the following goals:

- Deepen relationships that currently exist at Drexel University to be more interdisciplinary and strategically aligned.
- Strengthen relationships for stronger regional engagement.
- Expand educational as well as research opportunities.
- Identify solutions that foster innovation.

The Partnership Workstream will have two sub-committees in order to further identify opportunities. The first sub-committee will focus on deepening and strengthening the partnerships, themselves. The second sub-committee will focus on the various initiatives and innovations as a result of these partnerships.

Partnership Workstream



Deepen Interdisciplinary Partnerships

with industry to ensure Drexel's approaches are holistic and foster collaboration across units.



Strengthen Partnerships for Regional Engagement

to ensure that Drexel is meeting the local and regional needs and challenges by providing solutions and opportunities that improve neighboring communities.



Expand Opportunities

for the University to partner, especially with regards to education and research



Identify Innovative Solutions

which are mutually-beneficial to the university, our students, and our industry partners.

Sub-Committee #1



Deepen Interdisciplinary Partnerships

with industry to ensure Drexel's approaches are holistic and foster collaboration across units.



Strengthen Partnerships for Regional Engagement

to ensure that Drexel is meeting the local and regional needs and challenges by providing solutions and opportunities that improve neighboring communities.

Sub-Committee #2



Expand Opportunities

for the University to partner, especially with regards to education and research



Identify Innovative Solutions

which are mutually-beneficial to the university, our students, and our industry partners.

Questions for Consideration

The purpose of these workstreams is to create opportunities for collective and innovative thinking across units. To assist, the following initial questions have been drafted to help launch communications and exploration. Questions should not be limited to the below.

Deepening Interdisciplinary Collaboration:

- How do we further expand our relationships to be more interdisciplinary?
- What opportunities might be available in the future to expand our current partnerships?
- What external and internal factors do we need to consider that will enhance our differentiation and value proposition?
- What challenges facing our partners could be addressed through collaborations with multiple Drexel units?
- How do we make our existing partnerships more expansive by using Co-op, research, and training more holistically?
- How do we provide a supportive and collaborative experience for partners that illustrates the benefit of collaboration and that streamlines and deepens the partnership?
- What resources are needed to be successful?

Strengthening Partnerships for Regional Engagement:

- What is Drexel's role in the community (local vs. regional) and how can we better leverage partnerships for impact?
- What impact can Drexel make currently vs. further down the road? What are the short-term (current) and long-term (future) opportunities for Drexel to make an impact?
- What additional information do we need to make regional engagement impactful?
- What internal and external factors do we need to consider to align and strengthen our regional partnerships?
- What are the opportunities to create impact on local partners and on the region? How do these match to the future needs of our community/city?
- What is our value proposition to partners to better our community?
- Which key performance indicators should be used to assess the impact of regional partnerships? (Co-op? Health services? Research?)
- What resources are needed to be successful?

Expand Opportunities

- What are the short-term opportunities available for immediate expansion?
- What are the longer-term opportunities we would hope to expand further down the road? What infrastructure/processes is needed to provide this future expansion?
- What are the University's current strengths, weaknesses, and opportunities?
- What does success look like for Drexel? For our partners?
- What should our value proposition be to our partners to expand collaboration?
- What resources are needed to be successful?

Identify Innovative Solutions

- What does innovation at Drexel look like in the next year? In the next 5 years? In the next 10 years?
- What University strengths and opportunities currently exist which could enable easy, innovative solutions to be identified?
- What combinations of university's assets---students, infrastructure, and/or human research capital---could provide value to our partners?
- How do we position the University as an innovation institution? What messaging might we want to consider?
- What internal and external factors do we need to consider?
- What does success look like for Drexel? For our partners?
- What is our value proposition to partners to work with the University? How can we properly communicate these propositions?
- What resources are needed to be successful?

Ongoing Questions for Consideration

- Does the idea clearly enable Drexel to build a sustainable enterprise of education, scholarship, and collaboration?
- Are there synergies between partnership and Drexel's strategic initiatives to help achieve the 2030 vision?
- Can partnership drive recurring monetary improvements that outweigh the necessary investments?
- How does partnership enable the delivery of memorable and meaningful experiences that enhances student retention and graduation?
- How can implementation be accelerated to shorten the time to impact?

Values

Values will be identified by the Workstream. Some initial values have been listed below.



Collaboration



Trust



Commitment/dedication



Problem-solving



Engagement/enthusiasm



Innovation

Timeline

- March 2021: Launch of Partnership Workstreams; Bi- Monthly meetings to occur to properly outline initiatives and develop systems for next steps
- September 2021: Mid-year follow-up meetings with leadership to share an update report
- March 2022: Year 1 Check-in
- REPEAT