SFU 聖方濟各大學
Saint Francis University

STRATEGIC PLAN 2024-29

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1. VISION AND MISSION

Saint Francis University (SFU) strives to be a well-respected and internationally recognized institution dedicated to applied education, research, and professional development.

1.1 VISION

To nurture graduates who are not only professionally well-trained and academically well-educated, but who can also contribute to the social and moral well-being of society.

1.2 Mission

- **Professional Development**: Readiness for a professional career enhances the students' chances of upward mobility and hope in life. Wherever appropriate, our programmes aim for graduate professional recognition on par with counterparts from publicly funded universities.

- **Sound Education**: Through getting programmes accredited by the Hong Kong Council for Accreditation of Academic and Vocational Qualifications (HKCAAVQ) and other appropriate authorities or self-accredited via its Programme Area Accreditation (PAA) status in approved programme areas, SFU strives to adopt the best practices in organisational quality assurance and enhancement, and thereby to institutionalise continuous self-improvements.

- **Positive Life Values**: The University's motto of "Ad Destinatum Persequor" (自強不息) is to inspire learners from different starting points to stride unceasingly for self-enhancement. Inculcating this spirit of life-time learning will put them in good stead in a future, where knowledge will get superseded quickly by fast-changing technological and social changes.

- **Research and Scholarship**: The University aims to support the pursuit of discovery, integration, application and sharing of knowledge that can generate impact.

1.3 POSITIONING

With the significant holistic continuous improvement achieved in the previous strategic planning period of 2019-2024, Caritas Institute of Higher Education (CIHE) has been determined by HKCAAVQ as meeting the standards expected of a private university, demonstrating institutional effectiveness in achieving its missions and objectives. CIHE has been approved to change its name to Saint Francis University effective from 9 January 2024.

SFU has Programme Area Accreditation (PAA) status in three areas: General Business Administration, Social Work, and Information and Communication Technology.

The portfolio of SFU comprises thirteen accredited Bachelor's Degree programmes and two Masters programmes. There are multiple articulation pathways in collaboration with its sister Caritas Bianchi College of Careers (CBCC) via a two-college combination of thirteen accredited Higher Diploma and Associate Degree programmes.
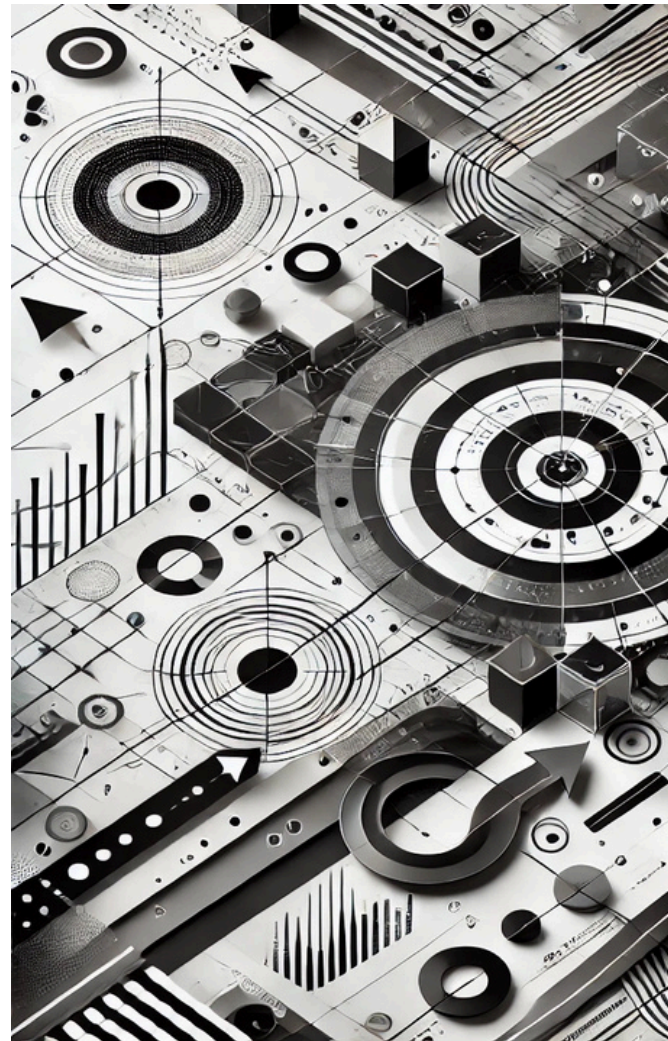

Currently, SFU has five Schools, namely:

- Rita Tong Liu School of Business and Hospitality Management
- Yam Pak Charitable Foundation School of Computing and Information Sciences
- S.K. Yee School of Health Sciences
- Ip Ying To Lee Yu Yee School of Humanities and Languages
- Felizberta Lo Padilla Tong School of Social Sciences

2. Areas for Strategic Development

2.1 Programmes Aligned with Societal and Student Needs

SFU is a pioneer in Applied Degrees and ICT-integrated STEAM education at the secondary level. Many of its vocational and professional education and training (VPET) programmes collaborate with industries, providing internships and practical training. In 2024-2029, SFU aims to align its academic offerings with university of applied sciences (UAS) standards to enhance professional and educational opportunities. SFU's academic programme development focuses on:

- **Health Sciences**: SFU plans to expand Health Sciences with the support from the Health Bureau and Education Bureau, increasing Nursing and Physiotherapy intake, establishing an Integrated Clinical and Practice Centre, and articulating Health Sciences students from Hospital Authority Nursing Schools.

- **Social Sciences**: The Bachelor of Social Sciences will enhance its Social Care and Psychology streams, while new postgraduate programmes, including a Master of Social Work, will be developed to support professional growth and community needs.

- **Techno-Humanities & Business**: SFU is advancing Techno-Humanities and Business to support Hong Kong's growth as an Innovation and Finance Centre. It clusters Computing and Information Sciences, Humanities and Languages, and Business and Hospitality Management. Key programmes include AI, Translation Technology, and Digital Entertainment Technology. Postgraduate offerings like Master of Corporate Governance and new applied degree programmes, such as Crime and Security Science further strengthen industry alignment.

- **Applied Degrees & Articulation Pathways**: Supporting VPET through innovative pathways that facilitate student progression from secondary education to higher education and professional fields.

- **Postgraduate Studies**: SFU plans to expand its postgraduate offerings and explore doctoral degree programmes within the next five years to enhance research capacity and academic growth.

2.2 Planning for An Expanded Student Body and More Non-local Students

The University will expand its student body and recruit more non-local students in academic programme development, by:

- Providing for a reasonably sized student body of about 5,000;

- Making arrangement for additional campus space to support the planned expansion of its student body;

- Enhancing accommodation arrangements and other relevant support for non-local students; and

- Identifying major possible sources of non-local students and implement promotion to attract students from these sources to increase the proportion and diversify the sources of non-local students.

2.3 Key Performance Indicators

- Increasing student enrolment in targeted programmes, especially in applied degrees and international student recruitment.
- Expanding the number of accredited applied degree programmes to enhance institutional UAS reputation.
- Enhancing research output, securing more external research funding, and strengthening industry partnerships.
- Maintaining high student retention and completion rates through academic and student support services.

2.4 Priorities

P1

Integrating into National Strategies and Expanding Global Connectivity

P2

Nurturing Talents for Growth, Transformation, and Future Challenges

P3

Enriching Whole-person Development

P4

Enhancing Quality of Student Experience of Teaching and Learning

P5

Applied and Practice Research with Social Impact

2.5 FACILITIES AND RESOURCES

CAMPUS EXPANSION & DEVELOPMENT

- SFU is planning a new campus in Shatin to accommodate future growth.
- This expansion aligns with increasing student intake and programme development.

Learning and Teaching Facilities
- Enhanced laboratories, simulation centers, and IT infrastructure to support applied education.
- Investment in digital learning technologies to promote hybrid and online learning.

Research and Innovation Spaces
- Strengthening research infrastructure to support interdisciplinary studies in Health Sciences, Social Sciences, and Techno-Humanities and Business.
- Developing facilities for Integrated Clinical and Practice Centres in Physiotherapy and Nursing.

Technology and Digital Transformation
- Implementation of digital learning environments, including AI-driven education tools.
- Strengthening cybersecurity and data management systems.

Student and Staff Facilities
- Expansion of student accommodation and campus services to support a growing non-local student population.
- Enhancing common areas, study spaces, and recreational zones.

Sustainability Initiatives
- Plans to incorporate green building principles in new campus development.
- Improving energy efficiency and environmental sustainability across facilities.

2.6

FINANCIAL PLANNING

SFU is self-financing but not for profit. A five-year Financial Plan 2024-29 is prepared to ensure that the University is financially sound and is able to achieve its committed long-term educational objectives. To be prudent, SFU has also conducted a sensitivity analysis. A new Financial Management Information System (FMIS) is being implemented to enhance the associated financial processes.

2.7 RISK MANAGEMENT

SFU integrates risk management through a Risk Management Framework for proactive decision-making. Regular assessments in financial, operational, academic, and reputational areas help mitigate risks. Contingency plans address enrollment shifts, economic downturns, and regulatory changes, ensuring resilience. This approach safeguards stability, integrity, and reputation in a changing educational landscape.

- **Leadership and Expertise**: SFU strengthens academic leadership by recruiting distinguished faculty and fostering internal talent development.

- **Continuous Professional Development**: SFU is committed to comprehensive professional development to enhance staff skills, knowledge, and capabilities, particularly in digital learning transformation, research, and knowledge transfer. A nurturing approach fosters a culture of continuous learning, encouraging employees to pursue further education, attend conferences, and engage in research collaborations. The University implements robust performance management systems, ensuring regular feedback, goal alignment, and recognition. Additionally, SFU identifies high-potential individuals, providing targeted development opportunities, career advancement pathways, and succession planning. By prioritizing staff growth and engagement, SFU strengthens its academic and administrative excellence, ensuring sustainable institutional success in an evolving educational landscape.

- **Workplace Culture:** Promoting inclusivity, work-life balance, and professional growth to attract and retain top talent.
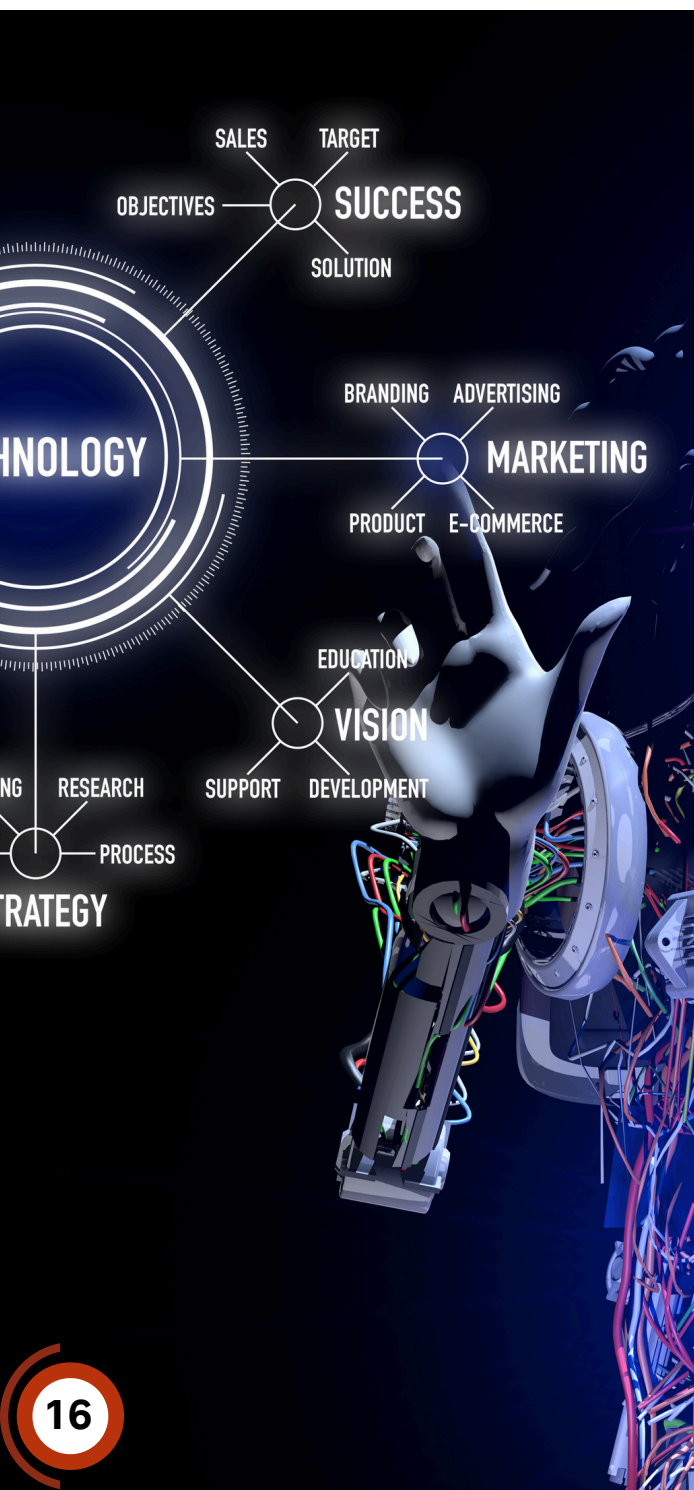
3. RESEARCH AND SCHOLARSHIP

↘ 3.1 RESEARCH AND SCHOLARSHIP STRATEGY

SFU aims to excel in applied and practice research with a strong social impact, balancing basic academic research with practical applications. Faculty engage in the discovery, integration, and sharing of knowledge to address societal needs. Research is embedded in learning, teaching, and professional development, fostering knowledge exchange across disciplines and the community. The University prioritizes research aligned with Hong Kong's social development, focusing on Health, Social Well-being, and Techno-Humanities & Business. By leveraging its strengths in the self-financing sector, SFU promotes impactful research that enhances education, industry collaboration, and the overall well-being of society.

3.2 RESEARCH CENTRES

Healthcare Research Centre

Distributed Artificial Intelligence Laboratory for Interdisciplinary Research

Techno-Humanities Research Centre

Data Science Research Centre for Social Policies and Services

Children and Youth Research Centre

4. CONCLUSION

SFU is committed to enhancing its academic offerings, research impact, and institutional sustainability while staying agile in response to changing societal needs. Through focusing on applied education, professional development, and interdisciplinary collaboration, this Strategic Plan 2024-29 serves as a roadmap to ensure SFU remains a leader in higher education and a key contributor to Hong Kong's knowledge-based economy.