Components of an Emerging Strategy:
A Report on The Conversation

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Articulate a Global Purpose

"We're building our reputation on our impact rather than our age": this declaration is central to the positioning strategy of an up-and-coming young Australian university that has been rising rapidly in the global rankings. There is nothing surprising about the positioning—after all, on what other grounds could any institution without a long or otherwise significant history claim importance? But in recent years the notion of impact has acquired a heightened valency. In 2020 the COVID-19 crisis has underlined the critical importance of research institutions to human well-being, injecting into the consciousness of the academy a fresh sense of our relationship with, and obligation to, the fortunes of people and the planet.

While the effect of COVID-19 has in that sense been dramatic, it has also reinforced a more gradual shift in the North American academy that has been underway for some time. Two years ago Stephen M. Gavazzi and E. Gordon Gee published a book that both recorded and explored the future ramifications of a renewed focus on "Higher Education for the Public Good."[1] Elsewhere in the world, however, this "rediscovery" of universities' greater mission has been less pronounced, simply because institutions' understanding of that mission was never in the first place attenuated or abrogated to the same degree.

Since the early 1990s, the International Association of Universities (IAU) has been focused on the role higher education can and should play in advancing sustainable development. The organization has embraced the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and two years ago launched the IAU Global Cluster on Higher Education and Research for Sustainable Development (HESD), a network of university consortia focused on advancing the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). In recognition of what was by then a quite longstanding and widespread orientation in the global academy, Times Higher Education launched in 2018 its Impact Rankings with a methodology centred on universities' contribution to the SDGs. Because the methodology also adjusted for discrepancies in the wealth of institutions and national systems, younger and smaller institutions and those in developing regions could compete, and many ranked more highly for their impact than older and more privileged, established universities.

Queen's University has had, as far as I am aware, no formal involvement in HESD, nor did we participate in the Impact Rankings in 2018. I take note of that decision not to be critical of it, but to suggest that like many institutions with a long history and tradition we have tended to take for granted our right to exist and to assume we have impact, even while holding ourselves as an institution at a distance from the immediate realities of human suffering and global degradation, from the world in which our impact might be measured. Our *Strategic Framework 2014-2019* laid an excellent foundation for the years ahead, but it was also symptomatic of what I have just described: a somewhat tautological mindset that has the university itself—the improvement of it and enhanced standing for it—as its principal goal, with at best *pro forma* recognition that a scale of value exists outside the academy, tied to the wellbeing of people and the survival of the planet. This attitude is in line with an

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[1] *Land Grant Universities for the Future: Higher Education for the Public Good* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2018).

assumption of entitlement that took hold of the North American academy in the post-war period and which is now slowly being cast off as impact again becomes the measure of value.

At Queen's we must embrace this trend, putting aside self-regarding attitudes and practices and focusing our efforts squarely on impact in the local, national and global communities of which we are a part. This is necessary and long overdue. A recurring theme heard in my conversations with our community over the last twelve months is that as an institution we lack a sense of purpose, of *meaningful* purpose beyond the rather bloodless goal of being great again. We are undoubtedly still a very proud university, but I heard powerfully the message that we need a cause for pride that *transcends* our history, that has the potential to excite us all—as well as those outside our immediate university family—by the vigour and creativity of its engagement with the present as well as the future. We are in a sense looking for a new place to put our pride, as history is coming to feel not only insufficient for that purpose, but in the sway of changing social and cultural mores in this country and around the globe, actually problematic.

Ironically, the history of Queen's is a history of impact, particularly on the formation and development of Canada. Hilda Neatby tells us that Principal George Grant "wanted to see Queen's men in the new country, nurturing loyalty to the social and political ideals that he did so much to instil and—for he was practical—building up loyalty to Queen's as a permanent national institution." Despite the fact that Grant's students "could appear to be complacent and superior," theirs was to be a culture of service to the nation and the common good—both of the latter in some sense identified with the University itself.[2] Therein lies much of the challenge we face today, because although both Canada and Queen's are for all intents and purposes "permanent," neither is what it was in the last decades of the Nineteenth Century and we need deliberately to reconsider and renegotiate our relationship with the world beyond Queen's. That world includes Canada as constituted in the third decade of the Twenty-First Century, our community locally as well as globally defined, and the environment on which all of those things depend. We are still here to serve, but Principal Grant's identification of the university with the nation no longer obtains: we cannot assume that we serve society when we serve ourselves. And if complacency and superiority were ever justifiable in the culture of Queen's, that is certainly not the case today—especially when as an institution we are unsure of our purpose and impact, and when aspects of our own history are subject to critique.

Attend to the Nature and Quality of our University Community

That last point brings me to another recurring theme of the Conversation: the need to address once and for all the intractable problem of racism at Queen's, and to entrench more broadly and deeply the principles of Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Indigeneity (EDII). In the last several months this body of issues has been dramatically amplified through postings on social media, and we are now engaged across the university in multiple actions that will lead to significant change. However, while Black Lives Matter undoubtedly provided welcome impetus to the anti-racism movement at Queen's this year,

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[2] Frederick W. Gibson and Roger Graham, eds., *Queen's University, Volume I, 1841-1917* (McGill-Queen's University Press, 1978), 240.

concern about the University's reputation for whiteness and the lived experience of BIPOC individuals within our community were amongst the earliest issues raised in the Conversation. It was also not lost on me that I was late entering the discussion of this issue at Queen's: in 2018, the Report of the Principal's Implementation Committee on Racism, Diversity and Inclusion (PICRDI) sought to consolidate and follow up on nearly thirty years of studies and initiatives intended to effect change, a mandate that was itself testimony to the refractory persistence of EDII problems in our university.

I think it is important to see the continuing life of this issue as intrinsically connected to the earlier discussion of purpose and service, and to Queen's historical consubstantiality with a vision for Canada that has been left behind by events. Put reductively, this means that the society which Queen's was created and adapted itself to serve no longer exists in quite the same way. Overwhelmingly white, male, Christian and Eurocentric in its cultural configuration and colonial in its political structures, Canadian society demanded social and educational institutions that would mirror and disseminate those values. And it was in that context that Queen's passed its formative years, becoming as Principal Grant hoped, a national institution.

Now, in the wake of the Report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, all Canadian institutions are being called upon to "decolonize" themselves—a challenging process, perhaps, for many people to conceptualize. It is helpful, however, to think of it in terms of our relation to community, and to the question of who we wish to serve and what vision of society we are committed to advance. To be thought of as a "national" institution today we need to reflect and serve equitably the needs and aspirations of a nation dramatically more diverse than we served in the past. But complicating this situation there is also the effect of globalization, which has rendered borders porous and in the academy as well as many other fields of human endeavour, invested the adjective "national" with pejorative overtones, making it in some ways synonymous with "parochial." Cultural globalization has in that sense brought all of the world into the purview of universities, and their obligation to serve has been concomitantly extended outwards and away from a strictly national one. However, to the extent that economic globalization has been perceived to be a neo-colonial enterprise, that obligation has become expiatory in character, an opportunity through which institutions created by colonialism redeem themselves through service in the wider world. Universities today must therefore not only address themselves to the needs of their own immediate and diverse communities, but to be of consequence they must also have impact beyond themselves, addressing the great human challenges that have paradoxically been laid bare or even created by globalization itself.

This is what makes Higher Education and Research for Sustainable Development (HESD)—as well as the Times Higher Impact Rankings, with their focus on the SDGs—entirely understandable as defining activities of the global academy entering the 2020s. So long as Queen's fails to see itself as part of the global academy so defined, the sense of unclear purpose about which I have been repeatedly told, will persist. Moreover, without clarity on the values and global vision we wish to serve, progress on EDII and on the "decolonizing" of our structures, curriculum and systems will simply stall. Our worst mistake in the years ahead would be to persist in seeing our challenges—with racism, rankings, or research productivity, for example—as discrete rather than interconnected, and worse than that, as separable from what we think of as our greatest assets, such as the strength of our community.

Indeed, reimagining our relationship with the notion of community will be fundamental to our success in the future, as I hope can be inferred from all I have said so far.

At a recent reception I hosted, faculty members were asked to speak about the aspect of working at Queen's that gave them most pleasure. Almost everyone commented favourably on the quality of the university community—most notably on colleagues' willingness to collaborate and to support each other. At countless events during the Conversation, the tightness of our community was a theme returned to over and over again whether the audience was faculty, staff, students or our exceptionally loyal alumni; and it became obvious that no plan for the future of our institution would be likely to succeed if it did not build squarely on that. At the same time, though, many complaints I heard bespoke the darker side of community. The Chown Hall incident, the ostracism of students from East Asian backgrounds during the early days of the COVID-19 crisis, and the experiences of racism recounted on the StolenbySmith Instagram site: all of this in the past twelve months was evidence that communities like ours define themselves as much by those they prefer to exclude as by those they choose to include. That is why, as I say, we should not assume that our perhaps greatest liability as an institution—our slow progress on EDII and our reputation for whiteness—is unrelated to what many perceive to be our greatest strength: the distinctiveness of our culture and the deep loyalty with which so many members sustain it.

While the Conversation confirmed that *belonging* to Queen's is highly valued almost everywhere on campus and in our alumni networks, what became equally clear is that many members of our community actually do not feel that they belong (or belonged) here, that the university is still too much "owned" by the white, colonial constituency it was founded to serve. That is why I said that we need to reimagine our relationship with the notion of community as it obtains at Queen's, and we must recognize two things. One is that for our community to become more diverse it will of necessity have to shed some of the more prescriptive and homogenizing elements of its culture, even if—perhaps especially when—those are beloved or revered, and understood to define us. The other is that such elements are fortunately not prerequisites for community strength, and it is possible to imagine a Queen's University buoyed up, vibrant and united by its unqualified joy in diversity, rather than hobbled by guilt or defensiveness in service to an inherited cultural paradigm.

Equity, diversity, inclusivity and indigeneity were not the only issues to emerge in the Conversation that have bearing on the nature and quality of our community. Another was the extent to which decentralization has come to define the university. I instinctively want to link the degree of our decentralization to that sense of unclear purpose that I spoke about at the outset, but although there is a real and substantive connection, I must be careful: it is not necessarily true that the more decentralized an institution becomes, the less clear will be its sense of mission and shared purpose. But it is a real risk, especially in a university which is by definition a union of diverse interests. What is required to counteract that centrifugal tendency is a glue made of three key ingredients: communication, trust and generosity.

The glue, in essence, is community, as defined by those three elements. And sadly, another recurring issue raised during the conversation is that these things appear to be in rather short supply in our institution at the moment. Whether people blame the budget model, history, or other people, and

whether they do so explicitly or implicitly, Queen's is struggling to be the community it once was. Just as we acknowledge university structures and processes that amount to systemic racism and therefore are impeding our ability to realize a good and just, diverse community on our campus, we must acknowledge there are other features of our workplace that also challenge the health of our academic community and are not addressed by our excellent new Wellness Framework, or by our having signed the Okanagan Charter for Health Promoting Universities and Colleges. As I mentioned, the budget model is frequently cited as one of these, not because of inherent flaws in the model itself, but because of certain behaviours it encourages. Embracing a fundamentally commercial approach to the distribution of resources (one in which units "earn" their revenues and therefore are assumed in principle to retain the full right to their use), activity-based budgets make the university a marketplace where competition and the accumulation of capital dictate behaviour.

The consequence is that while it is now an academic commonplace that solutions to the great challenges that face humanity will straddle many areas of enquiry, our university like so many others persists in distributing resources in a manner that actively discourages collaboration and sharing across disciplinary boundaries. Even in an institution like ours where individuals may have an admirable propensity to collaborate, aspects of the budget dictate that ultimately self-interest must prevail—and not surprisingly it does. The effect is that we must always be struggling to be more than the sum of our parts. And one other effect—which takes us back to the question of impact and the SDGs—is that we are simply not configured to be a natural and influential player in global networks addressing those grand challenges.

During the Conversation it was often not clear to me whether the budget was being mentioned as the cause or as a symptom of difficulty at Queen's, but I suspect it was both. For many, certainly, the budget is an indication that a sort of Darwinian ethos has come to prevail in the university, and that a community once held together by common purpose, generosity and human consideration is now joined in questionable service to a mechanism for the accounting and distribution of resources. This is a deliberate overstatement on my part—of course the past was never free of vice and the present situation is not without virtue—because I want to make the point that some of the most important messages I heard during the Conversation had to do with the feelings and perceptions with which members of our community come to work every day. I cannot account for the background to this, but people spoke of fear and mistrust as part of their daily experience, of summary dismissals, of the hoarding rather than the sharing of information as well as resources, of obstruction prevailing over collaboration, and of harassment and discrimination as common and commonly countenanced behaviours. While these are challenges faced in all constituencies of the university, it is clear that for staff disproportionately they are a painful part of life at Queen's.

Within as well as outside of the Conversation, we have had considerable evidence this year that the quality of our community is in distress. Persisting problems with racism—individual as well as systemic—are certainly the most obvious evidence of this, but no less distressing for their human cost are such things as incivility, mendacity, self-interest, and harassment in the workplace. Paternalism has on occasions marred our relationship with student groups, as have policy changes driven forward without meaningful consultation. An ironic insight to emerge from the Conversation is that these problems co-exist in the university with a nevertheless persisting belief in the strength of our

community. On the one hand that is encouraging because belief is a great motivator; but on the other it is cause for concern because self-delusion is the enemy of change. Whatever one makes of that evident dislocation in our culture, one inescapable conclusion from the Conversation is that everything we might aspire to for the future of Queen's will depend on our ability to reimagine our community, to acknowledge that the legacy of history may be structures and myths of ourselves unlikely to yield success in the present or future, and to focus on reconstituting ourselves as a just, inclusive, equitable, civil and cooperative community of educators dedicated not to our own prestige and continuance, but to having a positive impact in the world beyond our campus.

Let me indicate some of the practical consequences of dysfunctionality in our community that were pointed out in the Conversation. The most obvious of these has been confirmed in a recent reputational survey conducted by University Relations: Queen's failure to gain traction on EDII is the most significant factor in negative perceptions of the university. Furthermore, we know that those negative perceptions translate into recruiting problems at faculty, staff and student levels, so beyond the obvious worry that diversifying our community could become more difficult rather than easier with time, attracting the talent required to build our educational and research reputation could be in question.

Two other practical issues were raised frequently in the Conversation, and both are rooted in the quality of our community and workplace. One is the fact—abundantly obvious to any newcomer—that ours is an extremely bureaucratic organization. Our tendency is to fetishize process, often mistaking it for strategy, and this is an aspect of the university's culture that reinforces but also perhaps derives from, the weak sense of overall purpose to which I alluded at the start. Also inextricable from that knot of paralyzing tendencies is the second practical issue that was very frequently commented upon: a high degree of risk aversion discernible at all levels of the organization. While at the highest levels of leadership that might partly be explained as a residue of the financial challenges which had to be overcome in our recent history, at the lower levels it is more likely to be accountable for in the way local authority is exercised, especially in the Balkanized arrangement reinforced by the budget model. And here I simply note again the existence of a climate of fear which was commented upon numerous times in the Conversation.

What makes it urgent that we attend to the quality of our community is the most significant practical consequence of all: namely, that the University is only as good as the community that comprises it. I learned from the Conversation that there is a powerful conviction inside Queen's that as an institution we are in decline, and if that is true the causes are no mystery. We know the external factors which have made progress difficult, but equally there is nothing in this report that was not noted or even eloquently articulated by members of the campus community during the Conversation. There is widespread awareness of the need for change in the way we understand the university and its mission, as well as in our organizational structure and processes. We will find renewed purpose and have a significant global impact if, in the first instance, we can simply get out of our own way.

Partnerships for Impact

Local Community Engagement

That last sentence implies a certain linearity, as if greater global relevance and renown begins at home and we must first set our house in order before thinking more ambitiously about the role we want to play in addressing the challenges that face humanity and the planet. To some extent that is true, and we must waste no time in taking the steps—some of them critical, if apparently quite mundane—that will position us organizationally to be a more effective contributor to the common good. At the same time, however, by rethinking our relationship with the idea of community we will of necessity find ourselves in the realm of consequence. The reason for that is simple. Despite our longstanding assumption that Queen's value as an institution is somehow derived from its uniqueness and independence, the contemporary truth about universities is that their impact is directly proportionate to their connectedness: with sister institutions, governments, NGOs, and the urgent questions of the day. The list of UN SDGs culminates in Goal 17, "Partnerships for the Goals," which is explained as follows: "A successful development agenda requires inclusive partnerships—at the global, regional, national and local levels—built upon principles and values, and upon a shared vision and shared goals placing people and the planet at the centre." [un.org]

We must attend to the quality of our own community, then, so that we can contribute more effectively to the quality of the local, national, regional and global communities in which we are embedded. And that insight makes it possible to discern, even before our house is fully in order, priority areas in which we will want to increase our impact. The first of these, obviously, is the City of Kingston and the wider region, where in addition to whatever economic benefit we passively contribute at present, we have an obligation intentionally to bring the scholarly and human resources of the university to bear on issues of cultural, social, and environmental sustainability as they manifest themselves locally. In doing so, furthermore, we must exercise respect and deference to the community, positioning ourselves not as bringers of salvation, but as willing partners in pursuit of a shared goal. That is the founding assumption of community engaged research and teaching, a movement that has gained momentum around the world in the spirit of SDG #17, and which could bring enormous benefit to our city, as well as to the work of faculty, staff and students engaged in it.

During the Conversation I heard from the leaders of numerous community organizations who applauded volunteers from Queen's but were hoping for some sort of formal indication from the university that such work will be regarded as central rather than tangential to its mission. Thinking afresh about community—and in particular about our obligations as part of this one—we will surely be able to do that and more. The work that postsecondary institutions have been doing to contribute to social reform and renewal was documented in a white paper commissioned by the McConnell Foundation and Simon Fraser University in 2017. *Maximizing the Capacity of Advanced Education Institutions to Build Social Infrastructure for Canadian Communities*[3] pointed to ways in which institutions can make use of existing assets to make their communities thrive, and Queen's would do

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[3] Written by Coro Strandberg. Published by the McConnell Family Foundation as part of its RECODE Initiative, and Simon Fraser University.

well to join the small group of far-sighted Canadian institutions who are leading this initiative with the support of the McConnell Foundation.

Global Engagement

In the context of advanced globalization it is perhaps difficult to distinguish between local and broader spheres of impact. After all, community-engaged students and researchers focused on Decent Work and Economic Growth (SDG #8) can do equally significant and influential work whether they are in Kingston, Ontario or Sub-Saharan Africa. That is a welcome development for research-intensive universities like ours where, historically, research on more remote challenges and cultures has carried significantly more prestige, and local issues have tended to be overlooked. In a peculiar cultural chiasmus occurring throughout the global academy, matters that were once at best remotely interesting are now seen to be locally relevant, and local issues are understood to have global resonance. The concept of the "national" university has by that process become insufficient—at least for any academic community that aspires to be compared to the best.

This has made thoughtful, intentional and comprehensive internationalization an urgent imperative for Queen's. While a decade ago we led Canada's universities in the area of cross-cultural education, the Queen's University International Centre was a model for such resources, the Bader International Study Centre attracted significant numbers of students from around the world, and our office in Shanghai was in the first wave of such outposts for North American universities, we today cannot claim to be a significant influence on the theory and practice of international education in this country, and are a much less active player in the $65 billion business of international education worldwide. Our Comprehensive International Plan was drafted, it said, to "support Queen's vision as Canada's quintessential balanced academy," an intention notable for its focus on our national role and at most the ancillary, merely "supporting" function of internationalization. In many ways the Comprehensive International Plan was faithful to our inherited understanding of the Queen's mission—that of an institution that saw the nation as its primary area of impact—and consistent with our long history of disdaining international rankings, including the Times Higher Impact Rankings in 2018. In that context I ought not to have been surprised to find Queen's membership in the International Association of Universities (IAU) had been allowed to lapse, a fact we discovered ironically in the process of trying to contract with the IAU to make use of its Internationalization Strategic Advisory Service (ISAS).

The components of internationalization—mobility, internationalization at home, research collaborations and enrolment—were well understood in the Comprehensive International Plan. But so long as "international" was not recognized as a central and inescapable dimension of the university's mission in the Twenty-First century, so long as our obligations as a community were not understood in terms of global impact, those components could neither coalesce nor contribute significantly to our achievement and standing as a university. We should not mistake the recent surge in international enrolments as evidence of our advancing internationalization. That process, utterly central to our future as a university, will require that we pursue a deliberate, fully integrated strategy that like our purposeful approach to the notion of community, will result in the transformation of the institution. We need to go from being an essentially parochial institution with some international students and connections (the norm in Canada with a very few notable exceptions) to being an institution that is

global in its impact, in its network of research connections, and in the nature of the education afforded to its students.

I mentioned that we have already engaged the IAU in developing a fully integrated strategy for internationalization, and that will of necessity involve us in a reorganization of our assets in this area—the BISC, the QUIC—and a heightened coordinating role for the Vice-Provost International. But the prerequisite for that reorganization—as for almost everything identified as problematic during the Conversation—must be clarity of purpose. Merely driving up international student numbers to drive up revenue: that has little to do with the project of internationalizing the university. Indeed, it is of a piece with the self-serving—I called it tautological—ethos which at the start I indicated the university needs to escape. Here again, thinking of Queen's as part of a global community provides the sense of purpose: what is often called the development model of internationalization is what we must pursue, one in which benefits flow both ways. Through its work the university brings benefit to the world, and by virtue of that, the world enlarges and enriches the university, the experience and prospects of its students, and opportunities available to its faculty.

Research and Teaching

That last observation brings me in closing to the activity in which our international partnerships and allegiances are longstanding, most natural and most strong: research. When I began the Conversation—indeed, even before I formally took office—I was led to believe that research at Queen's was afflicted with a dire and mysterious malaise, and our shortcomings in that regard were largely to blame for our declining prestige as a university. While it is undoubtedly true that our overall research metrics—as compared with those of some other U15 institutions—disadvantage Queen's in the international rankings, the causes are no mystery. I did gather from the Conversation that we have to reckon with a malaise of sorts: in some parts of the university, successive failures in grant competitions have led to declining participation and the normalization of low productivity. To the extent that demoralization of that sort feeds into our historic predisposition towards the teaching rather than the research mission, there is clearly a priority need for action to invigorate the research culture on our campus.

At the same time, however, it was pointed out to me that a number of those other more general institutional problems which I have already discussed impede the development of research at Queen's. Specifically, the deep aversion to risk everywhere discernible in the university has left researchers in some instances without support, even when all that was needed was a bridge to fully-confirmed funding. In a less easily quantifiable way it has exerted a stifling influence on our research ambitions, a phenomenon compounded by other pan-university challenges including excessively bureaucratic processes, diffuse decision-making structures, lack of clarity about purpose in the institution, and certain aspects of the budget model. Attention to each of those things as we work to strengthen our academic community overall will inevitably translate into gains for the research enterprise.

That enterprise was set back by the financial challenges of the last decade and the paucity of new hires during that time. The recent faculty renewal initiative has gone some way to repairing the damage, but the gap between early career researchers and the previous tranche of hires is too great, leaving our

overall research capacity uneven. It is also apparent that there is a need for a much higher degree of coordination in hiring, meaning that the Provost, the VP Research and the Deans should aim wherever possible to hire with an eye to building strength strategically in selected areas that cross the university. If, as I have suggested, Queen's should orient itself to the SDGs—or to the number of them that speak to our existing and developing research strengths—more interdisciplinary research partnerships could be developed within the institution and deliberately extended beyond it through national and international networks that would maximize the impact of our work, while at the same time raising our global profile.

To achieve this—the goal of advancing research at Queen's by embracing in yet another way the notion of community—we will have to make some changes to the budget model and to our processes that counteract the Balkanizing effect of those things as they are at present. Of course great gains could be realized with massive infusions of funding, but with no prospect of such infusions on the horizon, the task we must embrace is to organize ourselves and all our existing resources so as to maximize the impact of what we have: of our researchers, research platforms, our infrastructure, and the global networks of which almost every active researcher is to some degree a part.

I was going to note, as I should, the need for a specific, targeted investment in the office of the Vice-Principal Research that would, on an ongoing basis, provide seed money for promising new projects and support others that are undergoing strategic transition. But I was reminded of a point made frequently to me during the conversation: namely, that for the most part the flow of resources in the university is derived from, and responsive to, the needs of undergraduate education. Here, as at all other research-intensive universities in this country, we are forced to struggle with the anomalous fact that we are neither resourced nor configured properly for half of the mission we have chosen to pursue. At Queen's, because our history and standing is so closely tied to undergraduate education, we feel the tension especially acutely, and will not achieve our research goals until we successfully negotiate a solution to it.

I would suggest that the answer lies again in the notion of community of purpose. If we have chosen to define ourselves significantly by our commitment to research, we must make such changes to our community as would be logical, working wherever possible to eliminate the bifurcation of the enterprise. A logical first step, which takes us directly to the heart of the problem, would be to pursue two things concurrently: one, a deepened and deliberate integration of research into the undergraduate curriculum, and the other an increase in the ratio of graduate to undergraduate students. The first is entirely achievable, especially given the exceptional academic capacity of our undergraduate students and the need to reconceive and reinvigorate the student experience. The second is essential if the research heft of the institution is to increase significantly. The important contribution that graduate students and postdoctoral fellows make to the vitality and success of the research enterprise at Queen's needs to be reaffirmed and built upon. Furthermore, undergraduate programs in which research skills and enthusiasm for discovery are cultivated will likely feed the growth of graduate programs and enlarge the pool of trained personnel to support research projects across the university.

Here again our goal—whether in our dealings with undergraduates, graduates, or researchers—cannot be "research prominence," as we have rather vacantly articulated it in recent years, but something much greater and more inspiring, something of which research prominence is only a by-product. What should astonish us at Queen's is not the marvellous fact of our own existence, but the opportunity, as an entity which we must ensure is always more than the sum of its parts, to make a positive difference for humanity and the world we inhabit. Which of the Sustainable Development Goals shall we aim to advance, with whom—with what other institutions in what other parts of the world—will we partner to do this, and how will we infuse our students with the determination, the global awareness, and the skills to make a difference?

Beyond the Conversation: Outcomes & Next Steps

As the subtitle of this report suggests, the Conversation uncovered and elucidated the components of a new strategy for Queen's that, taken together and pursued in an integrated and holistic fashion, have the potential to transform the institution. Of these the least glamorous but absolutely most critical is cultural change, not on the margins of our life as a university, but at its heart and in its foundations. From reform at that level will come our only chance of real and substantive progress on issues of racial and social justice at Queen's, but it is also true that improvements more broadly to the quality of our community are the *sine qua non* for success in all our other aspirations: for participating effectively in the global academy, for example, and for bringing maximum benefit to society and to the world.

Despite the interdependence of these aspirations, we are not bound to address them in a strictly linear fashion. As we now begin to develop a strategy for Queen's in the next decade, we can focus simultaneously on cultural reform, community engagement, internationalization, and research, as well as on the cross-cutting question of where we wish to make our impact as an institution. Details of the process and timeline by which these themes will be refined and integrated in a new strategy for the university will be released shortly after the publication of this report.

I am grateful to all members of the Queen's community—and to many individuals beyond it—for their frank and helpful contributions to the Conversation. I hope that in one way or another they see their interventions registered in what is written here, and I look forward to continuing dialogue as well as to the new strategic framework which will be its result.