VISION TEAM REPORTS

THE ART OF INNOVATION AND MISSION-DRIVEN ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Note: Vision Team report to inform strategic plan
THE ART OF INNOVATION AND MISSION-DRIVEN ENTREPRENEURSHIP

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What We Aspire To Look Like In 2030

Innovation is not just a practice. It's an art. And entrepreneurship should have a purpose beyond commerce. To that end, we’ve refined our vision to not only amplify innovation and entrepreneurship, but master the art of innovation and champion mission-driven entrepreneurship. CU Denver 2030 has emerged as a community of open innovation, embracing new forms of social entrepreneurship, economic development, public-private partnerships, and progressive education.

Classrooms once featuring neat rows of desks give way to high-touch/high-tech ateliers brimming with writable surfaces, construction materials, and mediums that facilitate serious play across the expanse of human understanding. Lectures happen asynchronously online — harnessing the limitless possibilities of living, learning, and teaching in a hybrid world — so that time together can be preserved for experimentation, exploration, and prototyping. And experiential learning is essential, especially when student opportunities to succeed are prized and when student opportunities to fail are present. Syllabi have expiration dates, Pass/Not-Pass grading has been long recognized to incentivize students to explore ideas at the edges of their understanding, and core courses align with the entrepreneurial process.

In 2030 the world is our classroom. Study abroad is afforded to every student, understanding that learning alongside someone from a different tradition, another culture, changes you. It changes them. And then when we pick up the newspaper and read about lives lost in distant, war-torn countries, or hospital systems at the brink of collapse, or communities embattled over the question about WHOSE LIVES MATTER, our differences no longer feel so different, so distant, so foreign. It is closer to home. Closer to our own understanding. Part of our shared humanity.

In 2030 silos are sidelined and outcomes are human-centered. Departments give way to cohorts of transdisciplinary scholars, creators, and organizers galvanized by the problems they hope to solve rather than the degrees they once pursued. Faculty rank is on a sliding scale that rises and falls in concert with our own curiosities, while percentage allocations of teaching, service, and scholarship ebb and flow as faculty lean into the most pressing work and greatest opportunities for impact.

Seeking inspiration for envisioning our best future, we need not look any further than a portrait of one of our own graduates. Caleb Carr is a member of the CU Denver community already living this vision and blazing a trail for those who come later.

In 2018, Caleb Carr entered THE CLIMB | Jake Jabs Business Competition with an eye toward innovating enhanced air rescue missions that could bring everyone home safely. THE CLIMB validated the vision of this CU Denver alumni and gave Vita its first-of-15 competition wins in the same year. Vita Inclinata is now a startup Unicorn with a global reach. And Caleb — committed to giving back to his alma mater and the next generation of CU Denver entrepreneurs — returns to campus as a frequent lecturer. He, too, has joined forces with Pete Buttigieg by serving on President Biden’s Entrepreneurship and Innovation Initiative.

In 2030, students who wish to follow in his footsteps will do so with support that starts on campus. This document is not simply our vision for the future, but rather a roadmap for delivering on our promises.
What We Aspire To Look Like In 2030

WHERE WE EXCEL

The maverick spirit of Colorado itself lives within the dream-makers, innovators, and entrepreneurs among us who help define where we excel.

Architect, inventor, entrepreneur, and CU Denver Professor Julee Herdt runs her own tech start-up. Committed to “create building products for a healthier planet, a stronger green economy, and U.S. jobs that fulfill lives while restoring the earth and its natural resources,” mission-driven BioSIPs, Inc. emerged as a spin-off corporation from Herdt’s research, teaching, service, and intellectual properties established at CU Denver.

Alumnae, Marina Rosi is a human-centered designer who strives to understand how user experience design can solve human challenges. Marina developed CHATLOG, a multimodal connected experience designed to increase information accessibility for deaf and hearing impaired students in post-secondary classrooms, as well as WHEELS, a mobility app that helps people with limited physical mobility navigate historical cities.

Connected by their mission of inspiring innovation, embracing entrepreneurial frameworks, providing resources, and sparking imaginations, we envision the innovation engines already existent on our campus to someday find a home under a shared vision and a single roof:

- Jake Jabs Center for Entrepreneurship
- ThinkqStudio
- InWorks
- Comcast Media Center
- Smart Cities Initiative
- SPARK Program
- Managing for Sustainability Program
- Center for Inclusive Design and Engineering

Each of these centers and entities have developed networks within the business community via advisory councils, donor prospects, and mentor lists. But we wonder: What might be possible if we were to harness the breadth and depth of all of these assets under a single roof? How might an Institute for Innovation create synergy across CU Denver? How might a Center for Creativity become a force for preparing generations for change agents?
What We Aspire To Look Like In 2030

WHERE WE STRUGGLE

As an institution of higher learning, we are privileged to be in the business of fostering curiosity, expanding the imagination, creating knowledge, and growing empathy. These are the ingredients that empower people to shape the human experience. These are the mindsets needed to invent a better future.

It is our belief that CU Denver has the passion, vision, drive, and energy to differentiate itself from all other higher education institutions. Yet, despite the best of intentions, there are three major areas where we struggle, facing active barriers for growth: 1) curating a culture of innovation, 2) moving beyond the knowable, and 3) fostering creative environments.

First: Creating, nurturing, and growing the garden of our community connections and a collective spirit of innovation requires complete buy-in by all layers within the university and support from our campus neighborhood. It requires tending to our culture growth by implementing a fully developed change management program. A program that needs sponsorship, funding, and invested guidance to have a chance to bear fruit. Without an effective change acceptance and adoption, the recommendations will remain static as a historical artifact, becoming just another forgotten plan.

Second: As an institution of higher learning, we struggle with rapid change and growth beyond the knowable. As an institution, we follow processes defined to protect data, to ensure reputation, and increase reliability and stability. Processes serve to reduce chaos, diminish failure, and allow more effective forecasting. Yet, developing “process-for-process-sake” stifles the innovative and entrepreneurial spirit we strive to achieve. Fear of failing prevents the opportunity to grow from failures, to overcome challenges, and to create the space where dreamers can achieve the truly inspiring.

Third: We struggle to recognize the sacrifices that must surely be made if we are to achieve our goals. Faculty must be incentivized to collaborate, even if the metrics are difficult to measure. Administration needs to trust faculty and staff who are working in the space of innovation and entrepreneurship to lead the design of incentive systems that recognize the non-measurable benefits that will accrue over the long term. Innovation requires resources: time, people, training, infrastructure, and spaces to play. With budgets constrained, each effort must produce success and results to stimulate the next phase of investment. Supporting creative environments could result in numerous competing systems and services. Without the available resources to support all of these efforts, long-term viability suffers both in terms of financial realities and drive to innovate within the organization.
Goal 1: CU Denver 2030, Will Be The Most Innovative, Inclusive, Entrepreneurial, And Socially Impactful University In The U.S.

Driven by the belief that the charge of the 21st century university is to equip the next generation to make the world a better place, we imagine CU Denver 2030 as the most innovative, entrepreneurial, inclusive, and socially impactful university in the U.S.

CU Denver is home to students, staff, and faculty who share a belief that career success is defined in three parts: a life of means (the ability to care for those whom you love most), a life of meaning (to do good work that creates lasting impact), and the chance to give back, with special attention to those at the margins.

Citing our diverse community of people and perspectives as the driver of divergent thinking, penchant for big ideas, and bias towards action, we [politely] argue for positive disruption. We are change agents who radically reimagine policies, practices, processes, and priorities to empower collaboration, incentivize innovation, and assess success through real-world impact.

CU Denver takes inspiration from longtime Denver-based serial social entrepreneur, Paul Polak. By helping businesses reimagine how they design, price, market, and distribute their products across the tech, farming, and healthcare sectors and beyond he championed freshwater access, fought for those living on less than two dollars a day, and accelerated start-ups that positively impacted girls experiencing extreme poverty.
STRATEGIES

Strategy 1: Inventing And Incentivizing A Culture Of Innovation

How might we invent equitable, agile systems, ecosystems, and resources that incentivize rethinking routine, taking measured risks, and playing in the messy, fertile space of the inventor, artist, healer, and entrepreneur?

To achieve our vision we must reimagine models that mirror the design process and incentivize faculty, staff, and students to embrace the habits of mind for: empathizing with others by listening, observing, and walking in their shoes as a means for understanding; growing our skills, knowledge, and experiences in service of better defining the problems we hope to address; reserving time and creating spaces for ideating, brainstorming, and highlighting opportunities for innovation; and creating a culture where prototyping, testing, and iterating solutions is safe and celebrated.

If we are to create a culture of curiosity, creativity, and one-of-a-kind perspectives that invites all of us to show up as our whole selves, we must first acknowledge the crippling impact of enslaving Black people for 250 years, followed by another 150 years of systematic oppression. And acknowledge how we have perpetuated racist systems that privilege white culture. We must acknowledge the violence we’ve leveled on our LGBTQAI+ community. Acknowledge the painful history and forced removal of the Cheyenne, Arapaho, Ute, Apache, Comanche, Kiowa, Lakota, Pueblo and Shoshone Nations from the University of Colorado’s four campuses.

Strategy 1, Initiative 1: Creating Agile, Mission-Driven Ecosystems

In the short- to mid-term, several small steps are needed to ensure the development of agile, mission-driven systems and ecosystems across campus.

- Meeting-Free-Fridays affords time for reflection, incubation, and dreaming.
- Value-based budgeting fast-tracks, fast-funds priorities so that funding matches the mission.
- Human energy is preserved for work that is important, not urgent; human-centered, not routine.
- Mind-space is afforded for playing the believing game of critical optimism rather than the doubting game of critical thinking.
- The culture of busyness falls away in favor of a culture of micro-napping, as a way of institutionalizing the power of tapping into the subconscious as a means for discovery and a celebration of that which is yet unknown.
- The entirety of entrepreneurial entities and centers work together under one “e-roof” and unifying mission (i.e. an institute for mission-driven entrepreneurship where all colleges are represented).
- Individual college priorities do not take precedence over the institution’s priorities.

In 2030, established policies will protect the resources that shape our culture:

- Stackable certificates, degrees, micro-credentials, and D1/D2/D3 courses are offered seamlessly as a part of the open-loop university.
- Innovation and entrepreneurship become the key differentiators for CU Denver, and CU Denver is ranked number one in the country.
- Flexible degree programs are offered in various formats (i.e. online, synchronous, in-person, bootcamps, seminars, degrees, etc.).
STRATEGIES

• CU Denver’s education is famed for being experiential, involving innovators and entrepreneurs from across the world as mentors, donors, advisors, and speakers.

Strategy 1, Initiative 2: Overhauling The Student Registration And Enabling Cross-Disciplinary, Stackable Micro-Credential & Certificate Programs

In the short- to mid-term, initiatives include:

• The student admissions and enrollment and registration process for main campus, extended studies, and non-degree students will be improved. The goal should be developing a uniform, seamless, and pleasant user experience for all students who are enrolling and registering for classes at CU Denver, irrespective of their status. Removing barriers would allow CU Denver to have more robust micro-credential and certificate programs in innovation and entrepreneurship.

• Research should be conducted to examine the desire for certificates comprised of for-credit courses. This research should also examine the barriers and pros and cons of non-degree, postgraduate, and masters certificates, and consider different design structures and delivery models such as courses or mini-courses that are stackable for credits leading to courses and certificates.

In 2030, CU Denver will become a model of academic innovation and entrepreneurship.

• Cross-disciplinary degrees and stackable certificates will become the norm, rather than the exception.

• Education will become much more experiential.

• Education offerings will become synonymous with student needs. Students will be able to access CU Denver’s courses and programs either in pursuit of a four-year degree program or as a resource to upskilling or reskilling.

Strategy 2: Building Bridges to the Entrepreneurial Community and a Global World in Need

What might be possible when building bridges that span departments and colleges, ways of thinking and ways of being, Speer Avenue and Colorado’s entrepreneurial ecosystem?

An incubator for inventing a more promising future, 2030 CU Denver amplifies mission-driven entrepreneurship by placing the following at the center of all its actions:

• Equity and Justice
• Empathy and Observation

• Ideation and Iteration
• Incubation and Acceleration

• Creativity and Collaboration
• Storytelling and Funding Innovation

Connecting and combining knowledge and experience, skillsets and mind-sets, we are known for identifying needs, gaps, and opportunities and creating innovative solutions that lead to social impact and social justice, greater health and greater wealth, and a world filled with artistic moments.

Perhaps our greatest opportunities lie within our capacity for mastering the art of imagination?

What if we were to think of the 2030 CU Denver experience as a work of art? What if internal and external gatekeepers and dream-makers and our community of entrepreneurs and innovators were to think of their work the way composers go about their artistic process?
Composers see the big picture first—the scope of the work, the instrumentation as it impacts orchestration, moments of arrival, and transitions that lead us on a hero’s journey or glide us across a dance floor, four feet scrambling to find three beats.

The thought that a composer begins a masterpiece in measure one and never lifts her pen from the page until the final note of the coda is absurd. Neither art nor life unfolds in linear fashion.

So, what if we were to imagine the 2030 CU Denver experience as our masterpiece? What do the big moments look like? How do the transitions unfold? Who will be in our ensemble? And who will be our audience? How will we orchestrate the composition of a life well lived?

Strategy 2.1, Initiative 1: Connecting with Colorado-based Mission Driven Organizations

Colorado is home to several mission-driven companies who want to be associated with our vision. These include:

- IDE Global [https://www.ideglobal.org]
- Global Seed Savers [https://globalseedsavers.org]
- Tetulia Tea [https://www.teatulia.com]
- Pairin [https://www.pairin.com]
- Vita Inclinata [https://vitatech.co/]
- Nokero Solar [https://www.nokero.com/our-team-a/257.htm]
- FloWater [https://www.drinkflowater.com]
- Wunder Capital [https://www.wundercapital.com/sustainability]
- Engineers Without Borders [https://www.ewb-usa.org]
- EcoEnclose [https://www.ecoenclose.com]
- Global Accelerator Network [https://www.gan.co]

In 2030, CU Denver will form strategic partnerships with leading thinkers and companies in Denver to better outcomes for society and the university.

Our open-loop stackable curriculum design incorporates feedback from academics and the CEOs of these great organizations. We visualize a future where our graduates are mentored and hired by globally experienced entrepreneurs — where agile eco-systems seamlessly involve the campus and relevant businesses. Where funding for exciting future initiatives is shared, and our graduates find their networks and experiences and, ultimately, ready employment in mission-driven organizations.

Incentive systems encourage collaboration within and without the university, particularly with mission-driven organizations. Staff and faculty are delighted and proud of the support they receive from the university, and are no longer punished for being innovative. Old-school incentive systems, such as the 40-40-20 are revised to encourage such collaboration.

Strategy 2, Initiative 2: Empowering the outgrowth of our internal and diverse talents

In the short- to mid-term, initiatives include:

Incentive systems are created at the faculty and the college level to incentivize collaboration. We have developed a mentality that working with other schools and colleges is desirable and rewarded. Reward systems may include summer research grants to foster research collaboration, as well as student scholarships for cross-college work. Furthermore, the 40-40-20 system disincentivizes faculty collaboration with other schools and this needs to be reviewed and reinvented.

Currently, several different entities and centers (e.g., the Jake Jabs Center, ThinqStudio, Inworks, the Comcast Center, etc.) work independently of one another, typically in their own colleges. This leads to redundancies and overlap in their activities and work.
STRATEGIES

We should immediately work towards pooling these resources under one “e-roof,” particularly in areas where short-term synergies may be accrued, perhaps as an "institute of mission-driven entrepreneurship." By 2030, we should be able to pool in all these resources under this institute, thereby working seamlessly across colleges. Imagine how incredibly powerful this entity will be with each of the existing entities working together in synergy as opposed to independently.

To start off, these centers and entities should work together to make 2-3 campus-wide events happen, including perhaps one large campus-wide event, such as a “celebration of success” speaker event which will bring sponsorship, awareness, and media coverage to our joint endeavor.

Strategy 3: Telling Our Origin Story Anew

Leaning into our agile, inclusive, and entrepreneurial youth, CU Denver is poised to author our best future.

Creative with our resources, relevant in our degree programs, and embracing our city center location, our early journey as a CU System Extension maps our arrival as a Research 1 Institution known as Colorado’s premier Public Urban Research University. But our story is just beginning.

Galvanized by the challenges presented by the dual pandemics of COVID-19 and systemic racism, we have learned how to learn in real time. Champions of equity, inclusivity, and social justice, CU Denver 2030 serves the underserved, make dreams a reality for Dreamers, opens-up possibilities for first-generation degree-seekers, welcomes international exchange, beams with PRIDE, and proudly acknowledges that we are Colorado’s Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI).

Keenly aware that the future of education is hybrid and in recognition that accessibility is a prerequisite for inclusivity, CU Denver students’ and employees’ stories are filled with multi-modal, real-world experiences that take them out of the classroom and out of the box. Our career-driven student body are problem-finders and challenge-solvers. And our faculty and staff are networked throughout the entrepreneurial community in Colorado and beyond, co-creating Colorado's best future and doing good down the street and around the world.

Strategy 3, Initiative 1: Rebranding, Communicating, and Marketing CU Denver 2030

The Hispanic Serving Institution designation would provide economic support and help CU Denver build on existing entrepreneurial partnerships and programs that focus on Latinx and Hispanic students’ professional career paths.

CU Denver is committed to providing access to all qualified students. One critical initiative that would help provide all eligible students access would be to offer scholarships to all first-generation, Latinx and Hispanic, Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA), and DREAMers.
The way forward is to collaborate, engage, and synergize and to do so effectively. Three key stakeholder groups will need to be empathetically engaged.

These are:

**External Dream Makers**

- When we listen to the external dream makers and involve them in our zeal to make CU Denver a truly outstanding university with regard to impactful innovation and entrepreneurship, we realize that their profound experience and insights can help us in a plethora of useful areas such as:
  - Current trends in the Colorado ecosystem, understanding that they possess great insights;
  - Synergies and expertise with regard to curriculum development and sponsored research;
  - Student mentorship;
  - Funding requirements consistent with our desire to be an open-loop university consisting of agile systems, ecosystems, and cultures.

**Internal Gatekeepers and Dreammakers**

- Internal dream makers include chancellors, vice chancellors, deans, associate deans, department chairs, faculty, curricular gatekeepers and co-curricular content creators, formal change engines (Comcast Media and Technology Center, Jake Jabs Center for Entrepreneurship, ThinqStudio etc.) and informal mentors, whose support is critical in breaking down silos and fostering new, collaborative and agile systems.

- They also include staff members whose support and vision is necessary to break down departmental barriers as well as policies that currently exist in colleges and departments inhibiting cross-campus collaboration, such as enrollment sharing, cross-listing of courses, D1/D2/D3 revenue sharing, etc. For an example of some current policies that inhibit cross-campus collaboration, please see the Appendix B.

**Entrepreneurs and Innovators**

- When we listen to entrepreneurs and innovators among us – the curious, creative, collaboratively minded students, alumni, faculty, staff, and community partners who believe that the role of the university is to prepare the next generation with the mindsets, skill sets, knowledge, and experiences to invent the future they will soon inherit, we realize that silos were made to be broken and that the only way forward is to create an environment of positive interaction, where students, experienced entrepreneurs, community leaders, faculty and staff of complementing skills get together to create magic.
ABOUT THE PROCESS
ABOUT THE PROCESS

LETTER FROM THE STRATEGIC PLANNING STEERING COMMITTEE CHAIR

Dear Chancellor Marks,

When you charged our strategic planning steering committee you told us that CU Denver has built incredible momentum in the last 50 years and that there is great pride among our community about our progress. I was also struck by your comment that across your 100 Days of Listening tour nobody told you that we were done, but rather, our community is ready to capitalize on our unique strengths to become the type of university our city, state, and nation need.

During Phase 2 of our strategic plan, we brought together a team of 130+ exceptional students, faculty, staff, and friends that broadly represented the university community. They were organized in eight Vision Teams and a Steering Committee and asked to engage in an inclusive, innovative process to envision our future.

In the following pages you will find their work – the ideas conceptualized, articulated, and conveyed by our own community. These are dreams of what CU Denver can become by 2030 and high-level strategies for how we might get there. The work is phenomenal and I could not be prouder of our team!

I am immensely impressed by, and grateful for, the work of our Vision Teams, Steering Committee, and the Comcast Media Technology Center/Inworks Design Innovation team that facilitated this process with creativity, flexibility, and unmatched professionalism. I am confident that their work delivers on your charge to dream big and determine how we can carve out our unique and impactful future.

I look forward to working with you over the next several weeks to take these ideas and shape our community’s very best thinking into a cohesive strategy for CU Denver that will guide us over the next decade. I could not be more excited for our future, and truly believe we will be the university the world needs in 2030!

Sincerely,

Marty Dunn
Dean, College of Engineering, Design and Computing
Chair, Strategic Planning Steering Committee

Note: Vision Team report to inform strategic plan
ABOUT THE PROCESS

BACKGROUND

CU Denver embarked on an ambitious strategic planning process in January 2021 to create a bold, exciting vision and strategy that will differentiate CU Denver by 2030.

After Chancellor Michelle Marks’ 100 Days of Listening tour, it was clear that our university community has tremendous pride and momentum, as well as a strong desire to launch CU Denver to national recognition as a leading public urban research university.

In January 2021, Chancellor Marks charged a team of faculty, staff, and students with collaborating on the development of a refreshed outlook for CU Denver, one that would capture a vision for 2030, strengthen and differentiate the university. The process was human-centered and inclusive by design and engaged hundreds of participants and generated thousands of ideas.

With the right vision, plan, execution, CU Denver can become a model university that truly meets the needs of all.

THE PROCESS

The strategic planning process used a unique method called design innovation (see page 5) that encourages big, bold idea generation, and the participation of the entire campus community. The process was divided into three phases:

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<thead>
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<th>Phase</th>
<th>Timing</th>
<th>Goal of Work</th>
<th>Format</th>
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<tr>
<td>PHASE 1</td>
<td>January 2021</td>
<td>Set the Vision</td>
<td>Broad community input was invited via multiple channels; 3,674+ ideas generated.</td>
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<td>Our Vision for 2030</td>
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<tr>
<td>PHASE 2</td>
<td>February – April 2021</td>
<td>Develop the Themes</td>
<td>Eight multidisciplinary, cross-functional “Vision Teams” were charged to focus on themes informed by the 100 Days of Listening tour; they imagined, distilled, and recommended 4,000+ bold ideas.</td>
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<td>Strengthen and Differentiate</td>
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<td>PHASE 3</td>
<td>April – June 2021</td>
<td>Build the Strategy</td>
<td>Based on Vision Team reports and community input, a cogent and integrated strategic plan will be developed and released.</td>
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<td>Synthesize &amp; Deliver Our Strategic Plan</td>
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ABOUT THE PROCESS

PHASE 1: OUR VISION FOR 2030

Phase 1 consisted of foundational work around CU Denver's purpose, vision, values, and graduate characteristics. This began with gathering input from the CU Denver community through a series of community sessions and an online survey. The information-gathering process was rooted in appreciative inquiry — an inclusive, strengths-based approach to identify the most important attributes of our identity and ambitions — and served as a “north star” for the rest of our strategic planning work.

PHASE 2: STRENGTHEN AND DIFFERENTIATE CU DENVER — CURRENT PHASE

Phase 2 brought our community together to think big, dream, and strategize to determine how we can take CU Denver to the next level by 2030. This phase launched eight Vision Teams, organized around major themes informed by Chancellor Marks’ 100 Days of Listening tour. These multidisciplinary, cross-functional teams were diverse and represented all corners of the university, bringing tremendous institutional knowledge to the table. They were charged with digging deep into our institution in order to develop goals, strategies, and initiatives to strengthen and differentiate CU Denver around their theme. A team of faculty, staff, and students from CU Denver’s Comcast Media Technology Center/InWorks, facilitated their work by co-creating a customized design innovation process with each of the Vision Teams.

The Phase 2 work represents the culmination of significant thought, discussion, data collection, and research that will inform the strategic plan for the future of CU Denver. The Vision Team reports are featured in this document.

PHASE 3: SYNTHESIZE AND DELIVER OUR STRATEGIC PLAN

In Phase 3, the Vision Teams’ work is being reviewed, synthesized, and distilled into a bold, exciting, integrated, cohesive strategic plan for CU Denver in 2030. We will present working drafts of this strategic plan through a series of community feedback sessions in early- to mid-May 2021. Following these sessions, we will begin the process of writing the final report, which will be a top-line synthesis of the community’s work focused on high-level goals and strategies. The report is expected to be delivered to the CU Board of Regents in June 2021 and shared with the community shortly thereafter. Operationalizing the plan will follow in Fall 2021.
ABOUT DESIGN INNOVATION

Design innovation (DI) is a human-centered approach that blends the mindsets, methods, and languages of design thinking, systems thinking, engineering design, and business innovation to discover, define, develop, and deliver innovative solutions to complex problems. The process centers the concepts of creativity, openness, mindfulness, adaptability, empathy, and freedom to explore radical and impactful ideas about our future.

A team of faculty, staff, and students from CU Denver’s Comcast Media Technology Center/InWorks, co-led by Professor Kristin Wood and Lauren Hebert, facilitated the Vision Teams’ work. At a high-level, the teams:

- Kicked off their work by broadly engaging our community to understand individual points of view related to their theme.
- Analyzed what they heard to identify the opportunities where CU Denver could make the greatest impact.
- Generated initial ideas about how we could best make that impact and tested those ideas again with our community.
- Incorporated the community’s feedback and created bold, differentiating ideas to take CU Denver to the next level by 2030.

This process was built around four sessions that intentionally brought together all eight Vision Teams in order to facilitate cross-collaboration and inspire new and bold ideas at the intersection of the distinct teams.