

RIT

Transforming Lives Through Creativity and Innovation

2035 Strategic Framework

Introduction

For nearly two centuries, Rochester Institute of Technology (RIT) has been defined by bold ideas and a spirit of creativity and innovation. What began as a union of a cultural institution and a technical training school in Rochester, N.Y., has grown into a global university with several international locations. Our story is one of purposeful growth and enduring momentum. Building on the foundation laid by previous strategic initiatives, we stand at a pivotal moment: one ripe with challenge and possibility. Now is the time to harness our collective creativity and shape a future that will redefine what is possible for RIT and the world.

RIT's purpose is clear: to educate and empower the next generation of leaders, innovators, creators, and problem-solvers, who will advance society and create new knowledge and innovations that contribute to the greater good. We value curiosity and the joy of discovery as well as the outcomes they inspire.The world needs a university that blends technology, the arts, and design to create solutions and opportunities that make life better for all. It's a responsibility that gives meaning to everything we do and defines the impact we seek—locally, nationally, and globally.

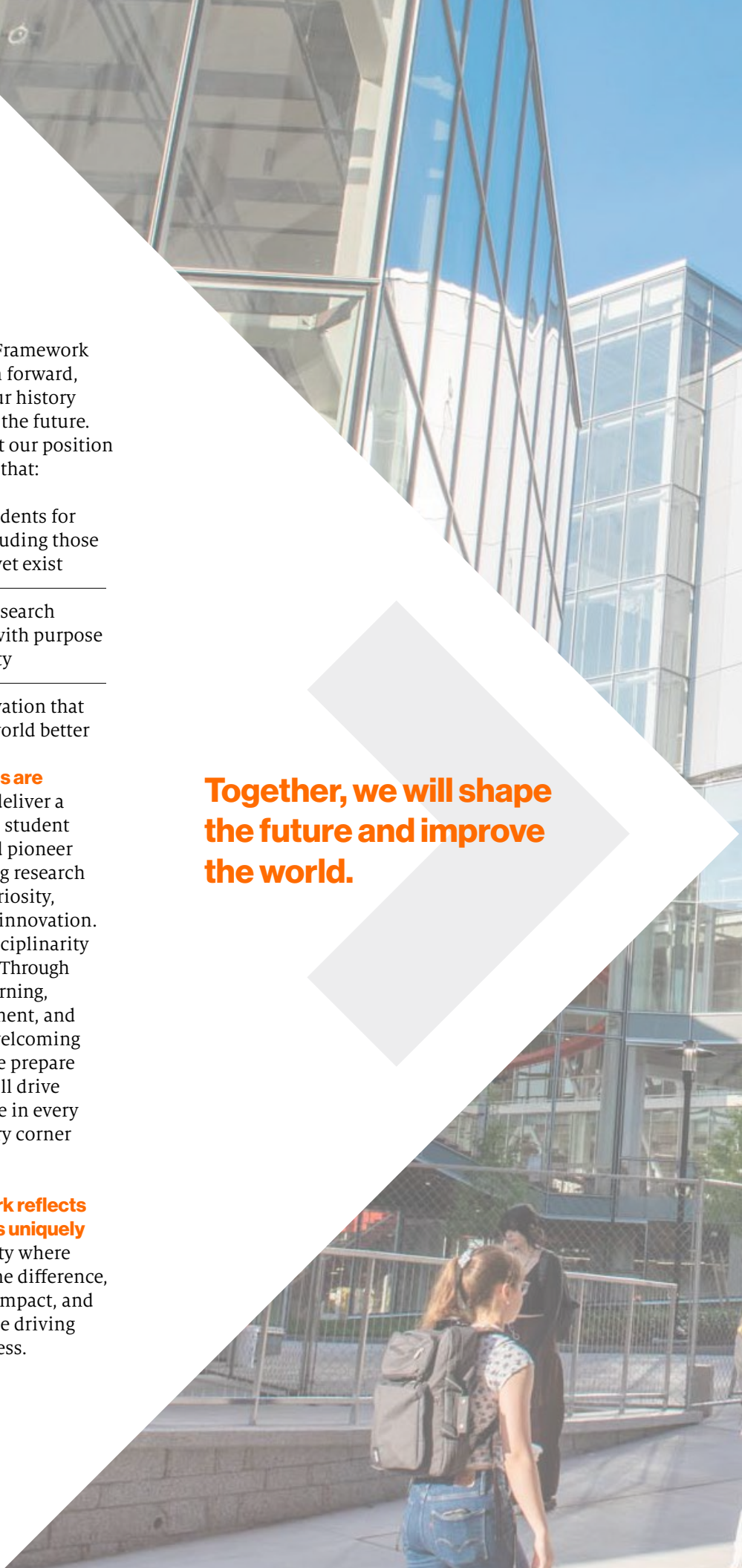
This Strategic Framework charts our path forward, grounded in our history yet focused on the future. We will cement our position as a university that:

- prepares students for careers, including those that do not yet exist
- addresses research challenges with purpose and creativity
- drives innovation that makes the world better

Our aspirations are ambitious: to deliver a transformative student experience and pioneer world-changing research powered by curiosity, creativity, and innovation. At RIT, interdisciplinarity is our identity. Through experiential learning, global engagement, and an inclusive, welcoming community, we prepare leaders who will drive positive change in every sector and every corner of the world.

This framework reflects what makes us uniquely RIT: a university where people make the difference, ideas become impact, and education is the driving force for progress.

Together, we will shape the future and improve the world.






SANDERS

President's Letter



RIT is a special place that takes a distinctive approach on its path to excellence. Our success comes from charting our own way—being strategic in picking the intellectual areas that we focus on and creating an identity that does not seek to replicate what others are doing. RIT stands apart by integrating technological strengths with the arts, business, and humanities, fostering a dynamic environment where creativity and innovation permeate all areas of inquiry.

Today, we are navigating headwinds on many fronts. Changing demographics, technological disruptions, and national and global challenges require us to be nimble and calculated. Yet, RIT is uniquely positioned to lead. We turn disruption into opportunity.

This moment calls for bold thinking and decisive action. The urgency of today's challenges is matched only by the scale of tomorrow's opportunities.

Our history of adapting to technological change for nearly two centuries positions us to lead in this era of convergence—AI, health care science and technology, creative technology and technical creativity, quantum science and computing, and a cyber- and data-driven physical world. This moment also presents an opportunity for us to contemplate profound questions we will seek to answer over the next decade:

- How should universities evolve as higher education is redefined?
- How do we prepare students for today's careers while providing them with the education, skills, and experience for jobs and fields that don't yet exist?

I am proud to share RIT's new Strategic Framework: Transforming Lives Through Creativity and Innovation. This document captures the essence of RIT: A university powered by people, driven by ideas, and committed to turning knowledge into action. It reflects our belief that education is more than learning—it is the catalyst for progress and the foundation for shaping a better future.

The process to develop the Strategic Framework began in spring 2024, with an intensive series of engagements where we listened to our students, faculty, staff, and community members about where they see RIT now and the opportunities that lie ahead for our university. We are proud to say that this process connected us with more than 1,000 people across our community, and their investment in our shared vision for the future will no doubt ensure our success.

Through strong enrollment, funded research, collaborative partnerships, strategic communication, and philanthropic growth, we will steward resources and cultivate an agile organization ready to experiment, learn, and adapt.

Our strength lies in our people—our students, faculty, staff, alumni, trustees, and partners. This is our moment to imagine boldly, act with intention, and lead with heart. Let's build the future of RIT—together.



William H. Sanders
President
Rochester Institute of Technology

February 2026

Vision and Mission

RIT is a dynamic, globally connected university committed to cultivating a community that transforms ideas into action. Our vision and mission guide us as we inspire creativity, advance technology, and design solutions to improve the world.

Vision

We shape the future and improve the world through creativity and innovation.

Mission

We leverage the power of technology, the arts, and design for the greater good.

Our Promise and Our Future

At RIT, we promise to prepare learners to anticipate what's next and to define the future—through discovery, creativity, and research that expands the boundaries of possibility.

As emerging technologies redefine the boundaries of what is possible, RIT views these advancements not as replacements for human agency but as catalysts for a flourishing world. In an era of constant flux, the most critical skill is the ability to guide innovation toward the greater good. We are moving beyond the narrative of disruption toward a vision grounded in purpose—one where technology is fused with the arts, science, business, and humanities to strengthen the interconnected health of our communities and our environment. This Strategic Framework is rooted in the conviction that technology, the arts, and design are tools for systemic transformation, propelled by faculty whose world-changing research and creative practice expand the frontier of knowledge and illuminate new pathways for human progress. Their work models the principled leadership we expect of our graduates and fuels the discoveries that shape a more just, sustainable, and imaginative future.

The RIT Edge

Our graduates are uniquely prepared to:

- **Push Technological Boundaries:** Develop next-generation technologies, including the future of AI, that enhance human capability and societal well-being.
- **Enable Interdisciplinary Innovation:** Apply emerging technologies across fields—from the sciences and humanities to business, health, and the arts—enabling innovation to take shape wherever complex challenges exist.
- **Create with Purpose:** Bridge the gap between theory and practice, translating rigorous inquiry, faculty mentorship, and industry partnerships into solutions for real-world challenges.
- **Lead with Principles:** Integrate ethical, legal, cultural, and ecological perspectives to ensure that, as technology shapes society, it does so as a restorative force.

RIT will be known worldwide for integrating technology, the arts, and design as transformative tools across disciplines, empowering students, faculty, and staff—through research, collaboration, and creative exploration—to imagine and build a thriving future.

Guiding Principles

Our guiding principles emerged from in-depth conversations across the RIT community, including students, faculty, staff, alumni, trustees, friends, and partners. They are the foundation of our Strategic Framework and the compass that keeps us moving in the right direction.

These principles define who we are and how we lead. They shape decisions, set priorities, and keep us focused on what matters most. They remind us that our work is about more than plans—it's about people and purpose.

Grounded in these principles, we commit to empowering our community, educating the whole student, advancing research that improves lives, acting with integrity, and being agile and accountable as we move forward. This is how we will turn vision into action, and ambition into advantage while staying accountable to who we are.





Be an Empowering and Inclusive Community

We believe that people come first; their well-being is foundational to our success. We are a welcoming and accessible community with a culture of mutual respect and shared purpose. We work to create an environment where everyone belongs and can thrive.

Educate the Whole Student

We place students at the heart of everything we do and focus on the whole person, fostering an environment where they can achieve their highest potential academically, personally, and professionally.

Improve the World Through Research and Scholarship

Through collaborative, groundbreaking research and scholarship, we create a future where knowledge and discovery drive sustainable progress and improve the world. With passion, curiosity, and creativity, we innovate, advancing solutions that make a difference in and beyond our communities.

Act with Integrity

We are guided by integrity, embracing responsibility for ourselves, each other, our global community, and the natural world. By fostering a culture of honesty, transparency, and humility, we cultivate trust and respect within and beyond our university, continuously striving to do what is right.

Be Agile and Act with Accountability

We hold ourselves individually and collectively accountable for achieving exceptional results in an ever-changing world. Through prudent risk-taking, collaboration, and resource stewardship, we leverage agility, swiftly adapting to ensure lasting success.

How We Got Here

To create this Strategic Framework, RIT launched a series of community-wide conversations designed to explore what lies ahead for our university and the world we serve.

These dialogues engaged students, faculty, staff, alumni, parents, our campus partners, and the Board of Trustees in examining topics critical to RIT's growth and trajectory. From these conversations, four pillars emerged, reflecting the aspirations and priorities of our community:

- Transformative Student Experiences and Success
- World-Changing Research
- Culture of Well-Being and Belonging
- Global Reach and Mindset

To enable these pillars we have identified organizational strategies that will help us deliver on these ambitious goals.

Framework Overview

The overarching goals for each pillar, supporting strategic actions, and organizational strategies will bring the Strategic Framework to life, ensuring RIT is recognized as a global leader in creativity and innovation, experiential learning, and life-changing research, all while strengthening our community as an epicenter of well-being and belonging.

The following sections chart the course for our next 10 years—anchored in our mission, inspired by our vision, and guided by our principles. These pillars are not intended to capture every important initiative we will pursue to achieve our goals; rather, they spotlight bold actions with the greatest potential to create transformative impacts for our university community and the world. Together, they represent a call to lead with purpose, innovate with passion, and shape a future defined by excellence and collaboration.

Pillars


Transformative Student Experiences and Success
Culture of Well-Being and Belonging
Global Reach and Mindset
World-Changing Research
Organizational Strategies


RIT

Pillar 1

Transformative Student Experiences and Success

Empower students to lead and thrive in a rapidly evolving world by expanding our experiential, interdisciplinary, and collective approach to education and fostering their development as well-rounded, future-ready individuals.



RIT's unique educational model is built on the belief that personal growth and professional success are inseparable. We offer the best of both worlds: the proven results of a dynamic, cutting-edge curriculum that evolves alongside global industry and the boundless opportunities of a vibrant, interdisciplinary campus where curiosity and the joy of learning fuel exploration. Our approach has long been anchored by one of the nation's premier co-op programs—a cornerstone that will remain central to many RIT degrees. Yet the future calls for an even broader definition of learning by doing.

We are expanding our experiential learning approach beyond the traditional workplace to create transformative student experiences that foster leadership, creativity, and resilience. At RIT, experiential learning is a vast ecosystem, where students gain real-world experience in their field while simultaneously exploring their curiosity through immersive research, high-tech makerspaces, and engagement in student organizations. This evolution empowers students to pursue passions while preparing for their professions.

By balancing academic rigor with a culture of curiosity, we will prepare our graduates for the opportunities and challenges of tomorrow, including careers and fields yet to be imagined. This work will be powered by the dedication and expertise of our faculty and staff—the mentors, innovators, advisors, and guides who bring learning to life and provide support for students to thrive. Together, we will ensure our graduates are ready to purposefully lead and succeed in a rapidly changing world.

Strategic Actions

- Enhance Our Signature Learning Approach
- Create and Expand Academic Programs with Industry and Community Insight
- Increase Flexibility in Existing Academic Degree Programs
- Build on Our Strength in Cooperative Education, Enhance and Refine Our Approach to Experiential Learning
- Ensure Student Success and Growth



Strategic Action

Enhance Our Signature Learning Approach

Enhance our experiential learning approach, deepening the integration of technology, the arts, and design in our curricula to educate students who will lead with creativity and purpose in a rapidly changing AI-enabled world.

RIT will refine our curricula to more deeply integrate technology, the arts, and design across disciplines, fostering the critical thinking, communication, digital fluency, financial literacy, and creative problem-solving skills demanded by the 21st century global economy. We are reshaping our general education framework, creating an innovative core that is anchored in a shared first-year experience.

This robust, interdisciplinary approach includes collaborative project-based experiences that mirror the complexity and diversity of the professional world. This signature learning approach will ensure that every RIT graduate possesses the technical mastery, creative confidence, and adaptability to lead change and tackle society's most pressing challenges.







Strategic Action

Create and Expand Academic Programs with Industry and Community Insight

Build on RIT's strong reputation for career readiness, expanding academic programs in high-demand fields. We will deepen collaboration with industry and community partners to prepare students for the future of work and to meet evolving workforce needs.

Collaboration with industry and community partners has been a cornerstone of an RIT education since its founding. By deepening our relationship with employers and community organizations, we will design and grow academic offerings that anticipate shifting market trends and meet the demands of a rapidly changing workforce. We will build on our reputation for career readiness by introducing and/or expanding academic programs in high-growth areas such as artificial intelligence, the health and clinical sciences, and film and animation while continuing to strengthen our foundation in engineering, computing, science, and the arts. These offerings will serve both degree-seeking and non-degree students, ensuring lifelong learning opportunities. Ultimately, this approach promotes RIT as a leader in flexible, future-focused education, blending academic rigor with real-world insight to meet workforce needs, offer cutting-edge programs, and empower students and learners of all ages throughout their careers.




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TIGERS
OF TECHNOLOGY
JL Fisher

Strategic Action

Increase Flexibility in Existing Academic Degree Programs

Increase flexibility within existing degree programs and encourage curricular innovation, boundary crossing, and exploration by breaking down barriers and incentivizing collaboration across departments and colleges.

RIT will build on current efforts to make academic pathways more adaptable, empowering students to explore across disciplines and customize their educational experience to meet their professional aspirations. Over the next decade, we will work to reduce barriers that limit curricular innovation and create space for students and faculty to chart individualized paths within and across degree programs.

We will work to expand flexibility within our majors, allowing students to tailor their course work to integrate diverse interests. By breaking down structural barriers and incentivizing collaboration across colleges, RIT will create a more dynamic academic environment where students can combine fields, pursue passions, and graduate with skills that reflect both depth and breadth. This flexibility will position RIT graduates to thrive in a world that values adaptability and interdisciplinary expertise.






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Strategic Action

Build on Our Strength in Cooperative Education, Enhance and Refine Our Approach to Experiential Learning

Elevate RIT's commitment to experiential learning through a broader set of beyond-classroom experiences, embedding research, co-ops, service, and project-based learning within local and global ecosystems.

We recognize that no two students are the same, and their experiences shouldn't be, either. We will elevate RIT's commitment to experiential learning through a broader set of experiences that go beyond the classroom, including research, service, global engagement, entrepreneurship, project-based work, co-curricular activities, and leadership development.

We will also explore platforms that enable students to easily capture, reflect on, and share their accomplishments across both academic and co-curricular settings. All students will have the opportunity to engage in authentic, real-world problem-solving and personal growth during their time at RIT. This ensures experiential learning is not only a hallmark of an RIT education but a powerful differentiator that prepares graduates for success in an interconnected world.




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NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC



Strategic Action
Ensure Student Success and Growth

Ensure high student retention and graduation rates, and equip students with the tools, resilience, and leadership skills needed to thrive in their educational journey and beyond.

The university will advance student success through a coordinated, data-informed approach that emphasizes mentoring, academic support, career readiness, and a strong sense of community. We will expand access to mentorship opportunities, strengthen outreach to students who need additional support, and continuously review academic policies to ensure they promote persistence and timely graduation. Our efforts will include evaluating programs that impact student performance in foundational courses and enhancing career services to prepare students for success beyond graduation. At the same time, we will foster a vibrant campus community where students feel connected, supported, and engaged—creating an environment where every student can thrive academically, professionally, and personally.




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Spotlights

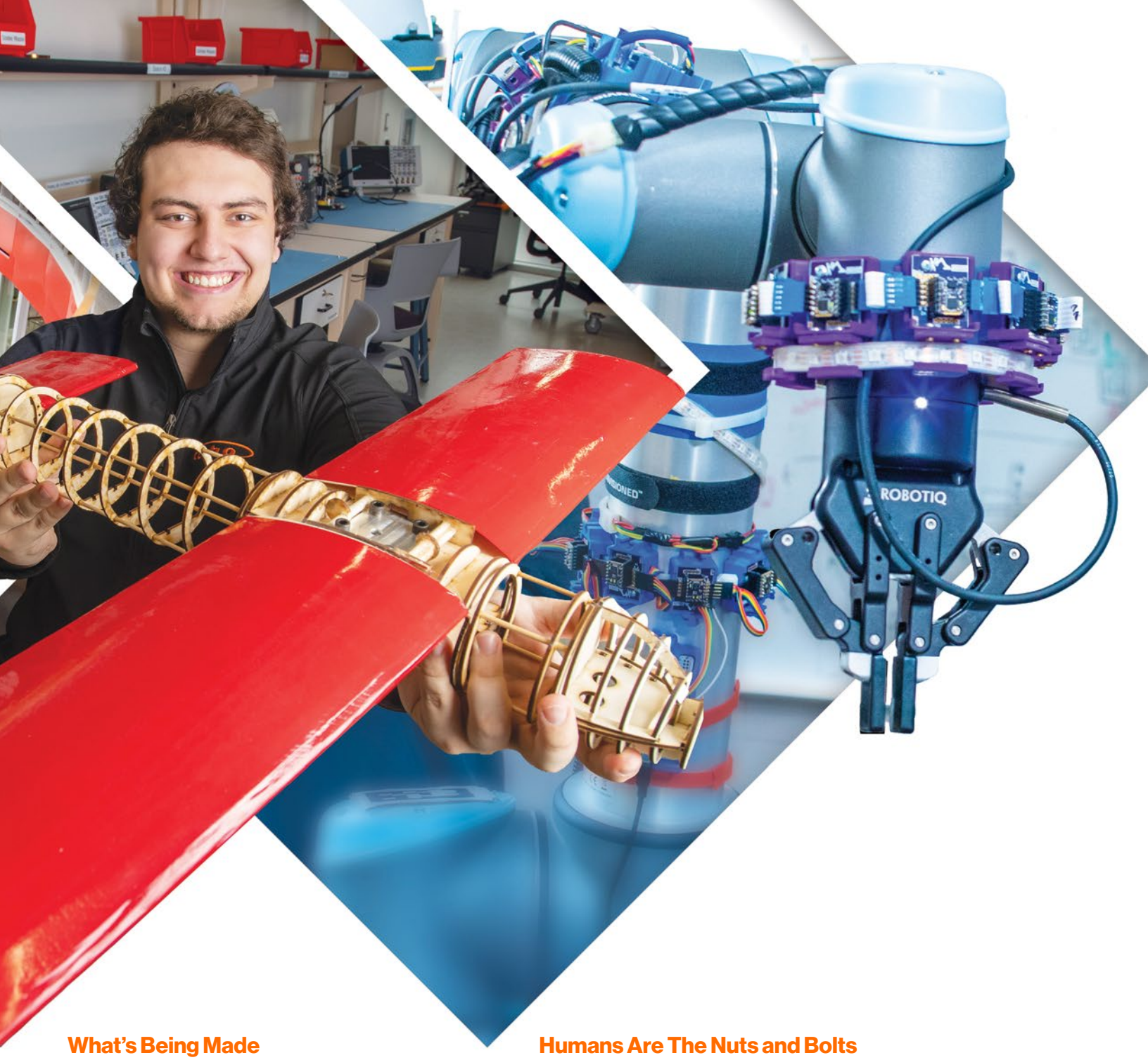


Performing Arts at the Intersection of Talent, Technology, and Deaf Culture

More than 600 first-year students became RIT Performing Arts Scholars in fall 2025. Their work is elevated by the integration of Deaf culture and technology, where the National Technical Institute for the Deaf's (NTID) vibrant community intersects with cutting-edge spaces like the Student Hall for Exploration and Development (SHED) and the new Performing Arts Center. By weaving ASL, digital media, and inclusive design into live performance, RIT shows how innovation and accessibility shape a dynamic creative ecosystem.

Vertically Integrated Projects Connect Students with Faculty for Real-World Research

RIT's Vertically Integrated Projects Program brings together multidisciplinary student teams and faculty mentors to tackle initiatives in areas like virtual reality, gaming, and accessibility. Students earn academic credit while contributing to faculty-led research, gaining hands-on experience, developing teamwork skills, and advancing their professional development. The program allows students to stay involved for multiple semesters, enabling them to deepen their expertise.

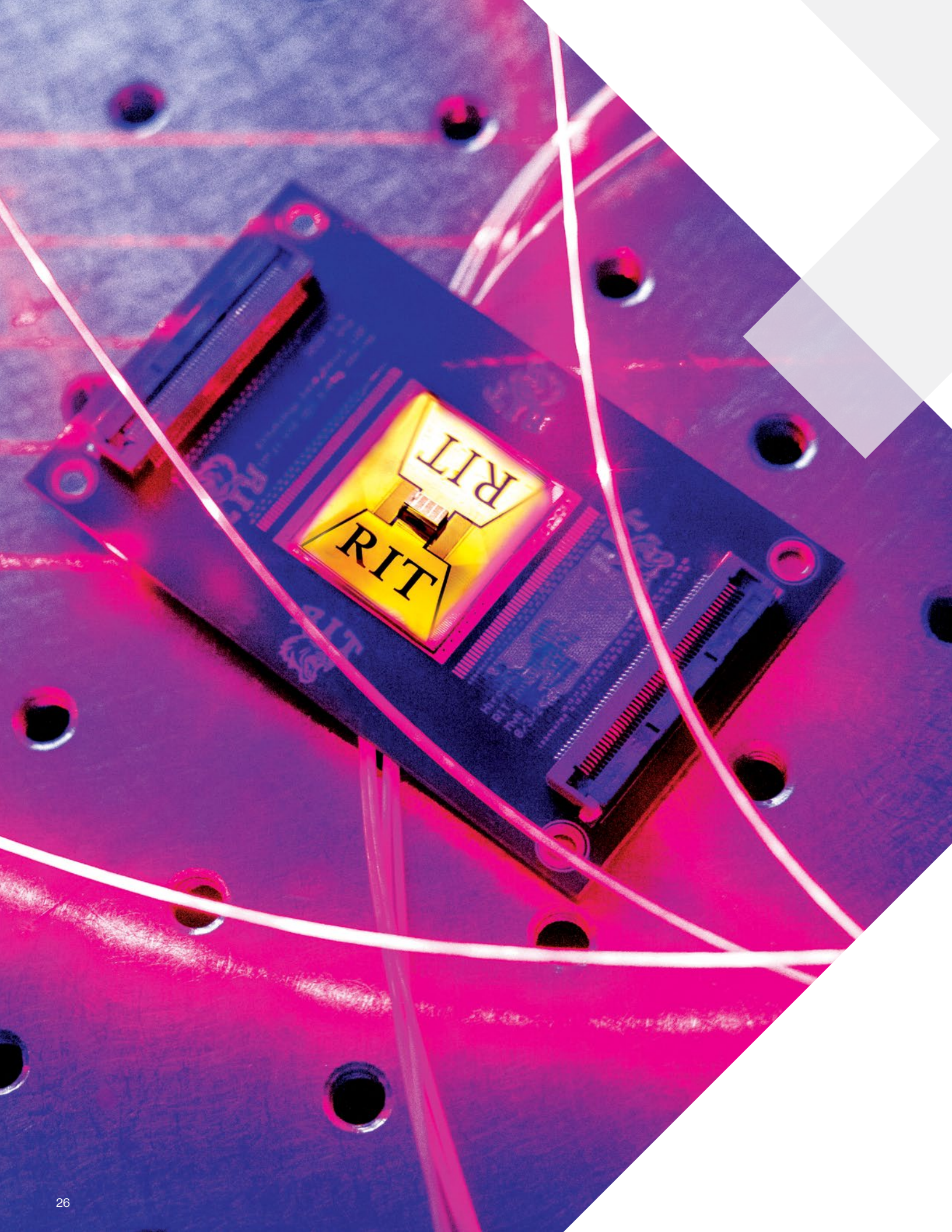


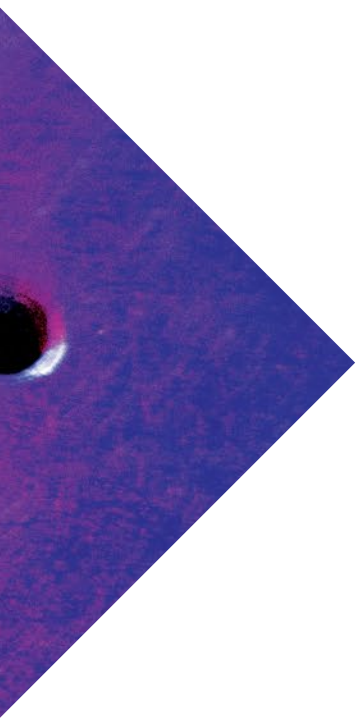
What's Being Made in RIT's SHED?

Star Wars–inspired 3D models, remote-controlled aircraft, smart crutches, and brainwave-controlled wheelchairs are just a few projects taking shape in RIT's SHED. With seven specialized workshops—from laser cutting and 3D printing to metal, wood, textiles, electronics, and performing arts—the SHED fosters hands-on creativity, cross-disciplinary collaboration, and innovation.

Humans Are The Nuts and Bolts of RIT Robotics Research

RIT has been advancing robotics for decades. Today, a human-centered design approach drives research and education, ensuring robots make safe, intelligent decisions that support people and manufacturing processes. Students and researchers integrate vision systems, advanced automation, sensors, and control systems across dozens of under-graduate and graduate programs. Robotics content is also offered through minors, concentrations, and courses available to non-engineering majors campus-wide.


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Pillar 2

World-Changing Research

Advance knowledge, pursue groundbreaking discoveries, and shape the future through research, scholarship, and creative endeavors that amplify our interdisciplinary strengths and address pressing global challenges.

At RIT, we pursue research through purpose- and curiosity-driven discovery, advancing knowledge in pursuit of innovations that improve our world. Through a decade of significant growth, RIT has established a robust foundation for the next wave of groundbreaking research. The interplay of curiosity, creativity, and innovation is the underpinning that nourishes a culture where novel ideas develop into interventions that transform and even create new fields and industries. We will accelerate our research activity by leveraging our current strengths and supporting the exploration and growth of new interdisciplinary areas.

To fuel this momentum, we will expand our Ph.D. programs to attract and develop the next generation of scholars and innovators; attract and retain top faculty whose research and creativity drive innovation and shape a better future; strengthen the infrastructure that empowers faculty and students to pursue ambitious projects; and harness the transformative power of AI to catalyze discovery across disciplines. These efforts will remove barriers to high-level achievement and position RIT as a hub for bold, collaborative world-changing research.

We are committed to amplifying the impact of our research by accelerating the translation of knowledge into real-world solutions. RIT's discoveries will transform existing disciplines and forge new frontiers that drive economic growth, inform public policy, and inspire a better future. Through these efforts, RIT will be recognized as a premier leader in research that changes the world, positioning our scholars as the primary architects of a more equitable and prosperous tomorrow.

Strategic Actions

- Advance Creative and Technological Frontiers
- Attract and Retain Exceptional Research-Active Faculty
- Strengthen the Research Ecosystem
- Cultivate the Next Generation of Scholars
- Increase Translational and Entrepreneurial Activities

Strategic Action

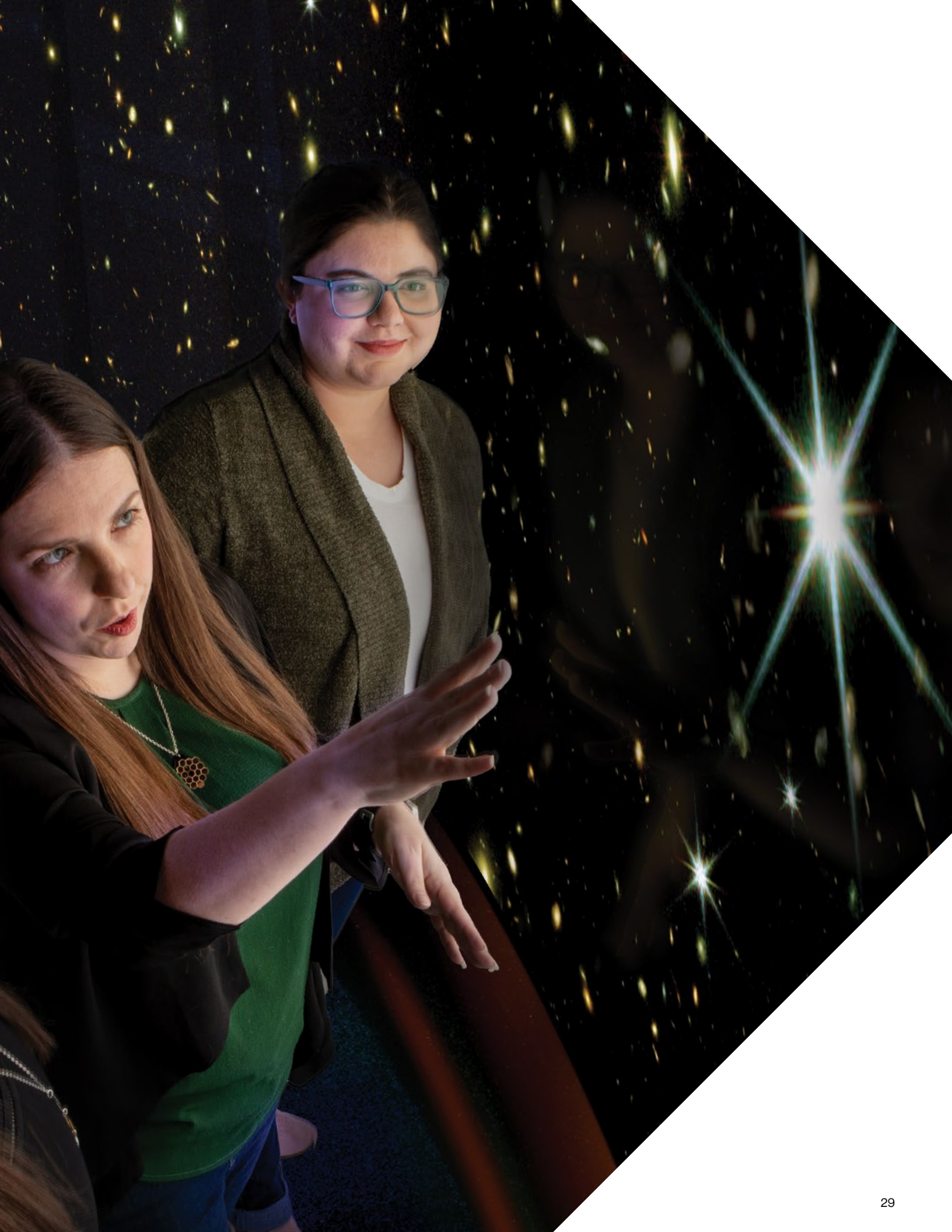
Advance Creative and Technological Frontiers

Conduct world-changing research by strategically investing in interdisciplinary research and creative endeavors that harness RIT's unique strengths in technology, the arts, and design—transforming existing fields, pioneering new ones, and shaping the frontiers of AI and beyond.

RIT will empower faculty and researchers to push the boundaries of knowledge and creativity by strategically investing in interdisciplinary research and scholarship. Building on the success of existing interdisciplinary centers, we will establish new strategic research centers and institutes that position RIT as a leader in emerging fields.

To do this, we recognize that support—from resources and mentorship to increased incentives and the removal of barriers—is needed for our faculty and research scholars to succeed. Through these efforts and leveraging AI, RIT will nourish a research culture that drives innovation, transforms existing fields, and shapes entirely new ones—advancing creative and technological frontiers that have a lasting impact on society.







Strategic Action

Attract and Retain Exceptional Research-Active Faculty

Attract and retain exceptional faculty whose research excellence, scholarly impact, and creative inquiry advance breakthrough discoveries that not only fuel innovation but serve as a catalyst for a better future.

RIT will elevate our global impact by investing in the complete lifecycle of faculty excellence—from empowering our established scholars and recruiting new visionaries to creating support systems that develop and nurture their success across all aspects of the research ecosystem. We will attract renowned talent through competitive recruitment and reinvest in our current faculty by providing the robust infrastructure, early-career flexibility, and advanced mentorship necessary for long-term success. By bridging the gap between discovery and application, we will enable researchers to scale their innovations and transform ambitious ideas into tangible global solutions.


Blue team Cards
Supplementary Results
Metadata
Content Credentials
Detected Manipulation Type
Lip-Sync

Strategic Action

Strengthen the Research Ecosystem

Build a world-class research and scholarship support infrastructure that spans the spectrum—from funding to impact.

RIT will build a world-class research infrastructure that empowers faculty and students to focus on discovery and innovation. To achieve this, we will invest in the systems, resources, and staff needed to streamline the research process, from identifying funding opportunities and managing compliance and reporting to oversight of large-scale research centers so that researchers can devote their energy to advancing knowledge. By strengthening the research ecosystem, RIT will enable faculty and students to pursue bold ideas with confidence, accelerate groundbreaking discoveries, and amplify the impact of research across disciplines.




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Strategic Action

Cultivate the Next Generation of Scholars

Expand and sustain a strong pipeline of student scholars who actively contribute to discovery, creative inquiry, and the growth of the university's research enterprise.

RIT will increase the number of graduate and undergraduate student researchers, offering them engagement opportunities early in their academic journey and support throughout. From undergraduate research experiences to advanced graduate study, we will build upon our campus culture of collaboration, professional development, and mentorship. Through these efforts and more, RIT will prepare the next generation of scholars to lead in research, creative endeavors, and innovation.




Primo Star

Strategic Action

Increase Translational and Entrepreneurial Activities

Support and encourage the translation and dissemination of research into intellectual property, commercialization opportunities, and entrepreneurial ventures to amplify the societal and economic impact of our discoveries.

RIT will amplify the societal and economic impact of our research by fostering interdisciplinary collaboration, building strong partnerships with industry, government, and community stakeholders, and creating clear pathways for commercialization and entrepreneurial ventures. We will advance strategies such as open-access publishing, technology transfer, and policy engagement to ensure discoveries move from labs and studios to real-world solutions and reach audiences where they can make the greatest impact. Through these efforts, RIT will transform groundbreaking ideas into innovations that improve lives.




$10,000 BIOTECH INNOVATION
PITCH EVENT AWARDED TO:
BiRed Imaging

Spotlights



Manifesting Quantum

RIT researchers are pushing the boundaries of quantum technology and navigating the next frontier of physics. By advancing quantum science and partnering with industry, this initiative accelerates the commercialization of innovative technologies and entrepreneurial ventures, delivering solutions that will amplify societal and economic impact while reshaping industries such as communication, computing, and security.

Tackling the Macro Problem of Microplastics

RIT co-leads a $10 million multidisciplinary effort with the University of Rochester to combat microplastic pollution in the Great Lakes. Supported by NOAA, NSF, and other agencies, the initiative unites mathematicians, ecologists, chemists, engineers, and students to track how plastic waste—from wrappers to cigarette butts—breaks down into microplastics and accumulates in lakes and shorelines. Using tools like LittaTraps and Seabins, team members collect and analyze debris to study polymer breakdown and environmental impact. Their work positions RIT at the forefront of protecting ecosystems and public health.



Students and Researchers Collaborate to Improve Deaf Health

RIT's Deaf Health Laboratory, part of the Deaf Health Care and Biomedical Sciences Hub (Deaf Hub) at National Technical Institute for the Deaf, advances research that strengthens health equity for Deaf and hard-of-hearing communities. Established in 2022, the Deaf Hub fosters Deaf representation in biomedical fields, supports a network of Deaf scientists and mentors, and engages students in inquiry that drives improved health outcomes.

Illuminating Lost History

RIT's Cultural Heritage Imaging Lab developed MISHA, a low-cost, open-source multispectral imaging system launched in 2024 with support from the National Endowment for the Humanities. This portable tool captures 16 wavelengths of light in under a minute, revealing hidden features such as faded text and underdrawings on manuscripts, maps, and artifacts. Students and faculty from RIT collaborate across disciplines, training professionals through summer seminars and international conferences. MISHA is driving new historic discoveries and positioning RIT as a global hub for cultural heritage research.


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390'
TIGERS
365'
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Pillar 3

Culture of Well-Being and Belonging

Cultivate a culture where individual growth, holistic well-being, and a deep sense of belonging—within our community and in harmony with the natural world—are integral, making it a defining element of how we learn, teach, work, and thrive together.

At RIT, our greatest strength is, and will always be, our people. Our faculty and staff serve as the backbone of the university, providing knowledge, guidance, and support that sustains our mission. Our students, with their curiosity, creativity, and ambition, inspire and drive us forward every day. Our alumni extend this impact into the world, leading groundbreaking companies, shaping emerging industries, and demonstrating the power of an RIT education in action. We take pride in a culture that celebrates and supports all identities and backgrounds, and we are committed to deepening that foundation as we move forward.

Inclusivity and access have long been cornerstones of our identity, exemplified by our role as home to the National Technical Institute for the Deaf (NTID). This presence is not just an institutional fact; it is a vital, enriching force that shapes our daily experience and makes us more innovative, empathetic, and globally connected.

Looking ahead, we will continue to strengthen our campus culture by expanding opportunities for collaboration, belonging, growth, and fun. Our commitment to one another extends to the world around us—integrating sustainability into operations, academics, and campus life—because the health of our environment and the health of our community are inseparable.

RIT's culture is one of purposeful action, and we will keep building on that spirit to ensure our community remains innovative, inclusive, and prepared to thrive in a rapidly changing world.

Strategic Actions

- Enhance Our Inclusive and Welcoming Campus Culture
- Empower All Community Members to Grow and Thrive
- Attract, Develop, and Retain Exceptional Faculty and Staff
- Strengthen Lifelong Connections
- Accelerate Progress Toward a Sustainable Future

Strategic Action

Enhance Our Inclusive and Welcoming Campus Culture

Continue building a campus culture that is welcoming, inclusive, and respectful of all individuals—strengthening our commitment to access, engagement, and success—fostering a deep sense of belonging and connection to one another.

We take pride in our inclusive and welcoming culture and will continue to prioritize access, engagement, and success so that every member of our community feels valued and supported. Through intentional community-building initiatives, we will create spaces that foster meaningful connection and collaboration. Offering programs that develop intercultural skills and promote cultural awareness will empower students, faculty, and staff to engage respectfully and effectively across diverse perspectives. We will more fully integrate our Deaf and hard-of-hearing community members into the fabric of RIT by advancing collaborative research, accessible technologies, and universal design principles across our physical, digital, and learning environments. Together, these efforts will strengthen inclusion, belonging, and shared responsibility for a campus climate that celebrates the uniqueness of every individual and the caring community we have built.




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Strategic Action

Empower All Community Members to Grow and Thrive

Work together to enhance the access and well-being of all students, faculty, and staff, empowering them to grow, thrive, and achieve their full potential.

RIT will reinforce our culture of well-being by defining what well-being means for our community and embedding it into the fabric of campus life—creating an environment where growth, resilience, and health are prioritized. We will leverage established resources to outline policies, programs, and initiatives that further support the holistic well-being of students, faculty, and staff. A committee with broad stakeholder representation, grounded in our culture of shared governance, will guide this work.



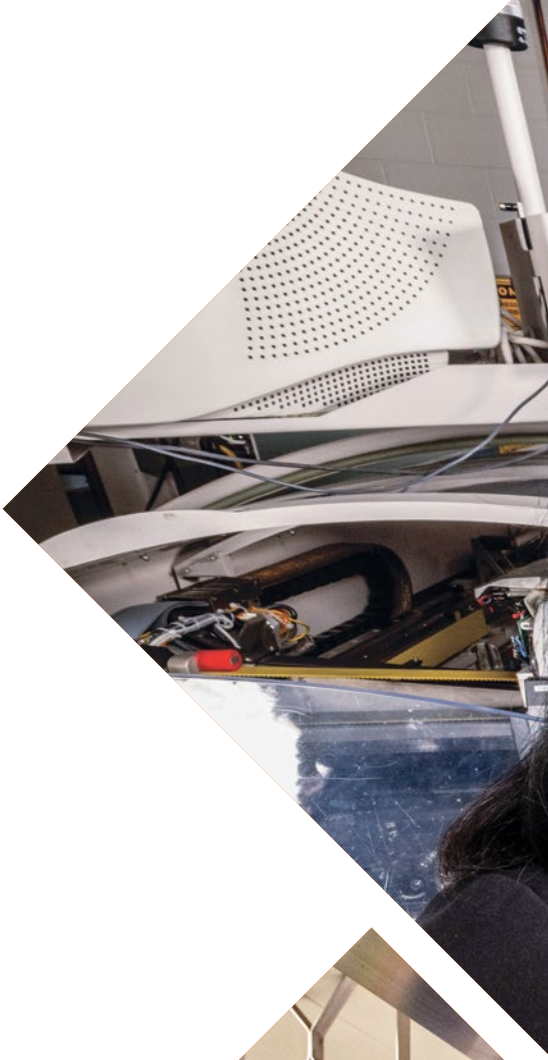


Strategic Action

Attract, Develop, and Retain Exceptional Faculty and Staff

Attract, develop, and retain exceptional faculty and staff whose teaching, research, creativity, and service drive student success and foster innovation at the intersection of technology, the arts, design, and beyond.

We will enhance recruitment and implement effective onboarding to attract talented candidates and foster connections to the RIT community. Our retention efforts will focus on providing competitive compensation, robust benefits, professional growth, and building a strong culture of connection.
We will embed well-being and community into the employee experience, leveraging surveys to monitor progress and adapt policies. We will equip managers to champion psychological safety and work-life balance, driving a productive workforce. Aligning these initiatives with institutional priorities allows faculty and staff to thrive, supporting excellence in teaching, research, and service.






ASM
Assembly Systems
SIPLACE
RIT | Dining
IMAGINE RIT



Strategic Action
Strengthen Lifelong Connections

Strengthen lifelong connections to RIT by creating opportunities for alumni, retirees, and friends that foster a sense of belonging and a culture of giving back, ensuring they remain integral to the university's vibrant community and future success.

RIT will create meaningful opportunities for alumni, retirees, and friends to remain connected, engaged, and celebrated as members of our community. This effort is about fostering a sense of belonging and shared purpose, where lifelong relationships enrich the university and provide value for everyone involved. We will work to establish new traditions and customs that build pride and recognition of our alumni, retirees, and friends, and seek to find ways to encourage their involvement in RIT in ways where their knowledge and expertise can inform our campus community.




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Strategic Action

Accelerate Progress Toward a Sustainable Future

Advance sustainability as a foundation for well-being—creating healthy, inclusive environments, increasing access to nature, and accelerating progress toward a resilient and decarbonized future.

Sustainability is essential to the well-being of our community and the planet, and it will remain a defining priority for RIT. Leveraging the abundant natural beauty on our campus, RIT will foster a stronger connection to nature among students, faculty, and staff. We will responsibly invest in infrastructure and processes that advance our climate commitment and ensure the long-term health and resilience of our physical and operational environment. Sustainability will be deeply woven into the university's operations, programming, and decision-making processes. Together, we will nurture a campus that reflects our values: a thriving, inclusive community in harmony with the natural world.



Spotlights



Family Recipes and Culinary Traditions Bring Authentic Taste to RIT Meals

Through authentic family recipes and a Visiting Chef Series, RIT Dining is bringing global flavors to campus. Visiting chefs collaborate with RIT's culinary team to prepare signature meals, while family recipes from international students and staff add a personal touch to menus. By blending professional expertise with authentic homestyle cooking, RIT Dining is creating food experiences that celebrate cultural heritage, foster community, and broaden culinary horizons.

A Central Hub for ASL and Deaf Culture at RIT

RIT's ASL and Deaf Studies Community Center (RADSCC), founded in 2010, serves as a vibrant hub for learning, interaction, and cultural exchange. The center features a modern classroom, offices, and a lounge that facilitate open communication between Deaf and hearing students and faculty. The center offers ASL classes, tutoring, and programming by local and international Deaf leaders. It also showcases Deaf cultural art, hosts student and community events, and supports advocacy and education.



Where Wellness Meets Fun: RIT Club Sports Offer a Space for All

RIT Club Sports offer students an opportunity to stay active, build friendships, and foster a sense of belonging outside the classroom. With more than 50 teams ranging from soccer and hockey to ultimate frisbee and martial arts, Club Sports emphasize wellness, teamwork, and personal growth. They also provide a flexible alternative to varsity athletics, allowing students of all skill levels to participate, compete regionally, and develop leadership skills.

RIT's Community Garden: Where Sustainability and Education Take Root

RIT's community garden cultivates hands-on learning, sustainability, and collaborative inquiry. Students, faculty, and staff grow food, support pollinators, and explore ecological stewardship through course work and experiential projects. All of these activities serve to strengthen community connections and environmental awareness across campus.


RIT TIGERS ABROAD
RIT GO TIGERS!
RIT

Pillar 4

Global Reach and Mindset

Leverage and enhance RIT's role as a globally engaged organization, creating a cohesive and interconnected university with a deep commitment to cross-cultural understanding, engagement, and community prosperity.



RIT will increase our presence on the world stage, leveraging our global locations in Dubai, Croatia, and Kosovo as gateways for global engagement and research. We will empower our students to explore their disciplines through a global lens, understanding the worldwide implications of their field and the broader significance of their work. Our commitment extends beyond the classroom—including transformative experiences and collaborative research partnerships that bridge geographic divides, enrich learning, and foster cross-cultural understanding.

Global engagement is most effective when built on a foundation of meaningful local connections. We will emphasize reciprocity and connection with the communities where we operate—locally in Rochester and in each of the communities of our global locations. By deepening these relationships, we will create opportunities for collaboration, shared prosperity, and meaningful engagement that benefit both RIT and the communities we serve.

Through these efforts, RIT will prepare graduates who are not only career-ready but globally minded leaders, and we will position our research enterprise as a force for meaningful change across the globe.

Strategic Actions

- Deliver a Globally Informed and Engaged Education
- Create a Globally Connected Research Ecosystem
- Enhance the Student Experience Through Global Engagements
- Deepen Community Connections

Strategic Action

Deliver a Globally Informed and Engaged Education

Integrate global perspectives and engagement opportunities into curricular and co-curricular experiences, fostering cross-cultural understanding and preparing students to lead, engage, and drive inclusive prosperity in an interconnected world.

RIT will strive to have every student graduate with a globally informed perspective—prepared to lead, collaborate, and innovate in an interconnected world. We will integrate international and intercultural dimensions into curricular and co-curricular experiences, cultivating globally conscious graduates who understand the worldwide implications of their disciplines and the impact of their work on society.





Strategic Action

Create a Globally Connected Research Ecosystem

Develop a globally integrated research ecosystem that leverages the distinct strengths of each RIT campus and community. Promote cross-location collaboration on regionally relevant and globally significant challenges that align with institutional strengths and priorities.

RIT will develop a global research ecosystem that will enable faculty and students to collaborate on pressing global challenges while leveraging local contexts. By building pathways and reducing barriers to engagement, we will make it easier for researchers to pursue projects with global partners. Through these efforts, RIT will elevate its reputation as a globally engaged research institution, producing discoveries that matter locally and resonate worldwide.





Strategic Action

Enhance the Student Experience Through Global Engagements

Provide students with learning and research experiences around the world by strengthening and scaling partnerships with industry and government. Tailor opportunities to the strengths of each location, ensuring relevance to local economies and alignment with RIT's academic and research goals.

RIT will expand opportunities for students to learn, work, and conduct research beyond their home campus—whether through study abroad, international co-ops and internships, or immersive experiences in strategic urban hubs. Global engagement extends well beyond international travel, enriching students through exposure to diverse perspectives and industries across the world.




RIT
RIT

Strategic Action
Deepen Community Connections

Advance RIT's role as a collaborative, community-engaged university by fostering reciprocal relationships between campuses and their surrounding communities. Co-create initiatives that promote shared social and economic progress in all places that we operate, with a bold and enduring commitment to Rochester as our founding home.

RIT's history and evolution are deeply connected to the communities we serve, with programs and campuses often emerging in response to community needs. This connection has been central to our growth and success, and we will continue to strengthen it—locally in Rochester and at each of our global campuses—by working with community leaders to advance shared social and economic goals. Using a community-engaged approach to scholarship, we will collaborate with partners to design and implement projects that support their priorities. Additionally, we will enhance physical access and connectivity between our campus and the surrounding communities. Through these efforts, we will build strong, lasting relationships that benefit both RIT and the communities we call home.




DAY OF
CARING
FINGER LAKES
Constellation Brands

Spotlights



RIT Dubai Flourishes as a Hub for Global Collaboration and Thought Leadership

RIT Dubai is a global hub for innovation and education in one of the world's most dynamic cities. The campus is expanding its reach through strategic collaborations and industry partnerships, creating an open ecosystem that connects students, faculty, and global enterprises. RIT Dubai blends academic excellence with real-world impact to prepare students for careers in an interconnected world while fostering cross-cultural exchange and driving cutting-edge research.

Coast-to-Coast and Beyond: RIT's LA Experience Prepares Students for Global Success

From tech labs to studio backlots, RIT in LA transforms the industry into a multidisciplinary classroom, guided by professors who are industry veterans. Animators, engineers, business majors, and more gain real-world insights through networking and internships. This transmedia world ensures all Tigers find their professional spotlight, proving that modern entertainment needs RIT's unique approach.



Connecting Rochester to a Rainforest

RIT researchers and partners at Seneca Park Zoo in Rochester, N.Y., have developed a virtual reality gaming environment that will allow zoogoers to experience a Madagascar rainforest ecosystem. They recently journeyed to the Centre ValBio field station in Ranomafana National Park on a trip that laid the groundwork for creating accurate 3D models of the exotic wildlife and habitats of Madagascar.

Students Use AI to Aid United Nations in Ukrainian Refugee Response

Students in RIT's unique humanities, computing, and design major are developing an AI-driven tool to help the United Nations identify and respond to the urgent needs of Ukrainian refugees in Poland. Their work illustrates the creative ways students are applying emerging tools to real human challenges.

Organizational Strategies

RIT is on an extraordinary trajectory. In just a few decades, we have evolved from a regional technical institution to a nationally recognized research university with several international locations. The goals and strategic actions laid out in this framework are designed to accelerate this ascent and deliver on our vision.

To realize these ambitious goals, three interdependent strategic enablers have been identified:

- Grow and Steward Financial Resources
- Increase Velocity and Resilience
- Enhance Storytelling

These organizational strategies will collectively create the capacity and alignment necessary for RIT to sustain its momentum and lead boldly into the future.





Strategy

Grow and Steward Financial Resources

Grow and steward RIT's financial resources to ensure sustainable support for institutional priorities. Through strong enrollment, funded research, strategic partnerships, philanthropic giving, and effective stewardship of existing assets, we will enhance RIT's ability to shape the world through creativity and innovation.

We will pursue a multi-faceted approach focusing on generating new revenue and maximizing the impact of existing assets. This involves strong enrollment management; increasing funded research; and cultivating strategic partnerships with industry, government, and community organizations. Philanthropic giving, coupled with the efficient stewardship and optimized allocation of existing resources, will significantly enhance RIT's capacity to innovate and lead, delivering transformative opportunities for students and impactful solutions for society.





Strategy
Increase Velocity and Resilience

Cultivate an agile, forward-looking organization that empowers individuals and teams to experiment, learn, and adapt quickly. Foster a culture of continuous improvement and leverage technology to improve systems and structures to adapt quickly in a rapidly changing world.

RIT's operating model will be agile, adaptive, results-oriented, and focused on continuous improvement—building flexibility into our DNA to respond quickly to market shifts, technological advances, and evolving educational demands. We will anticipate emerging trends and proactively seize opportunities to ensure RIT is at the forefront of the educational landscape. We will foster a culture where calculated risk-taking and learning drive progress, supported by a collaborative, repeatable process that ensures academic programs, administrative systems, and campus operations remain responsive and aligned with institutional goals. We will create the ability to readily access operational information used to run the university so that data-driven decisions can be made. Technology will be strategically leveraged to streamline systems, automate routine tasks, and enable data-driven decision-making, freeing capacity for core mission work. Success will depend on clear internal communication and transparency so every member understands, contributes to, and benefits from this transformation.





Strategy

Enhance Storytelling

Leverage the power of storytelling to strengthen connections within and across RIT's communities, and to elevate RIT's reputation among prospective families, peer universities, employers, community leaders, alumni, and donors.

Through the power of storytelling, we will amplify brand impact, strengthen stakeholder connections, and significantly elevate RIT's global position. By showcasing the transformative personal experiences and success journeys of our students; celebrating the achievements of our faculty, staff, and alumni; and translating groundbreaking research and creative works into compelling narratives of societal impact and scalable solutions, we will clearly communicate RIT's distinctiveness and value. These high-impact stories will deepen institutional pride, drive philanthropic investment, build national and global awareness, ensure our brand communication is strategically aligned with RIT's vision for global leadership, and enhance our reputation as an employer of choice.





Acknowledgements

We extend our deepest gratitude to the entire RIT community—our dedicated faculty and staff, talented students, engaged alumni, and committed Board of Trustees—for your invaluable contributions to shaping this Strategic Framework. Your ideas, insights, and unwavering commitment have been instrumental in creating a vision that reflects the strength, creativity, and ambition of RIT.

This framework is the result of collaborative effort and shared purpose. It embodies the passion of those who teach and mentor, the curiosity of those who learn and innovate, and the leadership of those who guide and support our university. Together, we are charting a bold path forward—one that will advance knowledge, foster student success, and amplify RIT's impact on the world. Thank you for your commitment to making RIT a place where creativity and innovation shape the future and where every member of our community can flourish.

Steering Committee Members

- **Mark Barberio,** Trustee
- **Gerard Buckley,** Former President, National Technical Institute for the Deaf; President/VP and Dean, RIT
- **Enid Cardinal,** Senior Advisor to the President for Strategic Planning and Sustainability (co-chair)
- **Ana Paolini Carrano,** Student Government Vice President
- **Phil Castleberry,** Vice President for University Advancement
- **Lisa Chase,** Vice President and Secretary of the University
- **Prabu David,** Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs
- **Hyacinth V. Drummond,** Trustee
- **Jeffrey Harris,** Trustee
- **Keith Jenkins,** Vice President and Associate Provost for Access, Engagement, and Success
- **Sandra Johnson,** Senior Vice President, Student Affairs
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- **Evan Smith,** Support Lead IV, ITS, and Staff Council Representative
- **Caroline Solomon,** President, National Technical Institute for the Deaf; President/VP, RIT
- **James P. Swift,** Trustee
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Follow the meaningful progress RIT is making across this Strategic Framework.
rit.edu/strategicframework

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