



ILIA STATE
UNIVERSITY

STRATEGY

2024-2030



Elaborated by Ilia State University
Strategic Development Plan Task Force
2023

3 CORE PRINCIPLES OF UNITY



A MESSAGE FROM RECTOR

LIGAMUS — ISU Unites Us

Ilia State University's Strategic Plan 2024–2030 serves as the comprehensive roadmap for our university community over the next seven years.

This strategic plan emphasizes milestones in research, teaching, and our Third Mission. It is founded on the consensus, unity, and determination of the ISU community to generate and disseminate scientific and technological knowledge, contribute to the public good, and promote democratic values.

The university community rallies around major challenges, recognizing our role and responsibility in Georgia's EU integration – a critical milestone for our nation's future – and the goals of sustainable development and climate change. These challenges necessitate the creation of pertinent research and educational resources to enhance public awareness.

By adhering to this approach, Ilia State University continues to honor the legacy of Ilia Chavchavadze, an advocate for European enlightenment and modernity in Georgia. We remain committed to his agenda: "Education, knowledge, and scholarship are forces that nothing can counter today: neither fist, nor sword, nor the multitude of an army" (Ilia Chavchavadze).



Nino Doborjginidze
Rector
Ilia State University





UNIVERSITY

Ilia State University (ILIAUNI) is a leading research and educational institution in Georgia and the region. Through its innovative approaches and by providing students with diverse individual experiences, it established robust foundations for scientific-technological advancement, high-quality learning and educational processes, and societal well-being.

The university was established in 2006 through the merger of six independent institutions, each with its own unique history and background.

In the 17 years since its inception, the university has undergone remarkable growth and development. Its extensive research citations and references set it apart as unparalleled among all universities in the country. According to global institutional rankings such as THE Times Higher Education, Scimago, and U.S. News & World Report's Best Global Universities, as well as individual scholar rankings including Stanford University and Elsevier's **Annual Ranking of Top 2% of the World's Scientists**, Ilia State University consistently emerges as the best nationwide and in the region.

Presently, the university consists of **four primary educational units, comprising faculties and schools**, along with four schools operating under the faculties' umbrella. Additionally, there is one international doctoral school, 26 institutes, and 50 research centers nationwide. The university also operates six laboratories. It boasts a highly qualified academic staff, including 353 faculty members, 17 Professors Emeriti, 218 researchers, and 869 invited lecturers, alongside 1,289 administrative and support staff members. With a capacity to serve a maximum of 17,770 students, approximately 700 of whom are international or foreign students.

The university operates on unique research and training grounds situated in Tbilisi and various regions of Georgia. Notable facilities include the **Institute of Botany and Herbarium**, renowned as one of the world's oldest and most extensive botanical documentation repositories, and the Bakuriani Alpine Botanical Garden. Moreover, the **Institute of Earth Sciences and National Seismic Monitoring Centre** endeavors to establish a seismic network covering Georgia's entire territory, ensuring continuous earthquake activity monitoring and real-time data transmission from existing stations.

Further, the university possesses diverse marine facilities, such as the Marine Research Center based in the seaside village of Grigoleti, and alpine research facilities like the Stepantsminda Institute of Alpine Ecology. Additionally, the university owns a research vessel named "ST. ILIA," extensively utilized for educational and research purposes.

Importantly, the Dedoplistskaro research base hosts significant archaeological expeditions, exemplified by collaborative initiatives like those between the **Ilia State University Laboratory of Visual Anthropology and Local History** and the **Martin Luther University Institute of Oriental Archaeology and Art History in Halle, Germany**.

Overall, Ilia State University represents a cohesive union of students, faculty, and administration, serving as a multifunctional educational and scientific institution that facilitates successful collaboration among students, professors, teachers, researchers, and administration, fostering a unified space for academic education and research endeavors.

FACULTIES | SCHOOLS





The Faculty of Arts and Sciences stands as one of Ilia State University's largest faculties, distinguished by its extensive academic staff, student body, and a wide array of training programs and courses.

Offering 54 undergraduate, graduate, and doctoral degree programs in Humanities, Social Sciences, and Arts, the faculty provides opportunities for joint degrees. Aligned with the university's mission to prioritize liberal education, the faculty has introduced a mandatory course titled **"Introduction to Modern Thought,"** compulsory for all university students.

The Faculty of Business, Technology, and Education comprises three schools: **the Business School, the School of Technology, and the School of Education.**

These schools offer a diverse array of programs, including bachelor's degrees, integrated undergraduate/graduate programs, master's degrees, 60-credit certificate programs, and doctoral programs.

While many academic programs are conducted in Georgian, students have the opportunity to pursue joint degrees, such as the English-language Master's Program in Business Administration, offered in collaboration with the Burgenland University of Applied Sciences. Additionally, the faculty delivers an American **ABET-accredited** (International) English-medium Bachelor program in Computer Engineering.



FACULTIES | SCHOOLS





The Faculty of Natural Sciences and Medicine stands as a premier research and educational entity in Georgia and the region, specializing in natural sciences and medicine. Renowned for its development, management, and implementation of high-caliber bachelor's, master's, and doctoral programs.

Benefiting from an extensive material base utilized for both scientific research and practical skill development, the faculty seamlessly integrates research institutes and laboratories. This collaborative environment brings together university professors, researchers, and students, fostering synergy in scientific inquiry.

The School of Medicine, an integral component of the Faculty of Natural Sciences and Medicine, offers English-medium programs catering to a diverse range of students. These programs include a single-step educational program tailored for certified medical practitioners, a master's program focused on public health and healthcare policy, doctoral programs in both medicine and public health, and a postgraduate residency program.

The primary aim of the **School of Law**, one of the foundational educational units of the university, is to develop, administer, and implement bachelor's, master's, doctoral, and certificate programs/courses rooted in the principles of academic and democratic freedom of choice. Through these programs, the school endeavors to provide a comprehensive level of specialized training across all three academic tiers — Bachelor's, Master's, and Doctorate — in the latest legal education.



EXCEPTIONAL ACHIEVEMENTS HIGHLIGHTED

The university’s **human capital** – ILIAUNI Community stands as its foremost asset and a testament to its success within the contemporary higher education landscape. Ilia State University has assembled a team of qualified academic and administrative professionals who are focused on driving the institution’s development forward. At Iliauni, dedicated professionals collaborate intensively to deliver essential research, teaching, and support services vital to the university’s day-to-day operations.

Ilia State University distinguishes itself through its **rigorous research standards**, evident in its assessment of research effectiveness and rankings. Notably, the university excels in both domestic and international institutional ranking systems, with the **Scimago** database being particularly noteworthy. Drawing from the **Scopus** database, this platform evaluates and ranks academic and research institutions globally, showcasing Ilia State University’s consistent growth trajectory.

According to 2023 data, Ilia State University achieves top rankings across various parameters, including general indicators, positioning it prominently among Georgian and South Caucasus universities under review. The university’s ongoing research endeavors manifest in refereed publications across esteemed international databases, notably **Elsevier Scopus** and **Clarivate Analytics**. These databases encompass bibliographic data, abstracts, and citation indicators, reflecting the university’s scholarly contributions.

Ilia State University has achieved top rankings nationally in the **2024 Times Higher Education (THE) World University Ranking**, marking another significant milestone. Notably, THE’s methodology underwent updates in 2024, with a greater emphasis placed on research components. Specifically, evaluation of the research environment and research quality now constitutes 59% of the overall rating. This updated



Times Higher Education 2022-2024 Graph and Research Quality Indicator

methodology comprises 18 indicators classified into five weighted categories.

Over the past three years, Ilia State University has experienced a significant increase in its research quality index, rising from 34.6 to 47.7 as of 2024, with the international dimension reaching 52. This indicator positions Ilia State University as the top-ranked institution in the South Caucasus region, 39th among universities in Central and Eastern Europe, and 1060th globally.

In the U.S. News & World Report Best Global Universities 2022-2023 ranking, Ilia State University secured the 801st position among the top 1750 educational institutions spanning 90 countries.

Ilia State University's research efforts are bolstered by a robust infrastructure comprising 60 research centers and institutes.

According to the **Scimago Institutions Ranking**, which evaluates all academic and research profile institutions globally using data from the Scopus database, Ilia State University occupies the top position in Georgia across general parameters and various specific indicators.

One of the major instruments for supporting scientific activities is scientific journals founded and administered by the university, which are indexed in Scopus, Erich+ EBSCO databases as open-access journals (Open Source) and are placed on the **OJS Platform**. Among them are: **Ethnobotany Research and Application; Kadmos; Caucasiana; Journal of Biological Physics and Chemistry; Constitutional Law Review**.





DIVERSITY OF EDUCATIONAL ENDEAVORS AND PROGRAMS

As an institution founded on a multidisciplinary, intensive research environment, Ilia State University offers a diverse array of academic programs in areas such as science and art, natural sciences, medicine, business and management, technology, education, and law.

Ilia State University has established technology and engineering programs in a new, state-of-the-art, four-story, 5,000-square-meter facility equipped with the latest technology and laboratories that meet international standards. The University's School of Technology offers a bachelor's program in "Computer Engineering (International)," which has received accreditation from **ABET**, the American Board of Engineering and Technology.

In 2010, Ilia State University launched a new

doctoral program in medicine, centred on one of the university's leading scientific and educational fields: Life Sciences. This program now boasts the highest standards for doctoral students in Georgia. In 2020, Ilia State University established the School of Medicine, which currently offers the following English-medium programs: a one-cycle program for licensed medical practitioners, a master's program in public health, and doctoral programs in medicine and public health.

Currently, the university offers **17 English-medium programs across all three levels of education**. This includes **9 programs that are part of joint, double, or exchange partnerships with American and European universities**.



JOINT AND DOUBLE DEGREE PROGRAMS

- A Joint Degree English-medium Master's Program "Central and East European, Russian and Eurasian Studies (CEERES)", is run by the consortium which, together with Ilia State University, comprises the universities of Glasgow (Scotland, United Kingdom) and Tartu (Estonia). European Approach for Quality Assurance of Joint Programs was used as a framework in the re-accreditation procedure of the aforementioned program in 2022. It is noteworthy that Ilia State University was the first in Georgia to start implementing the Erasmus Mundus joint master's program (**Erasmus Mundus International Master in Central and East European, Russian and Eurasian Studies**) as a full partner;
- A Double Degree **English-language Program in Business Administration**, in which Ilia State University cooperates with Burgenland University of Applied Sciences (Fachhochschule Burgenland, Austria) allows students to earn a second degree;
- A Double Degree English-medium Master's Program in **Atmospheric and Near Space Sciences**, which is implemented in cooperation with the University of Clermont Auvergne (Clermont-Ferrand, France) and Johannes Gutenberg University Mainz (Mainz, Germany);
- Bachelor programs "**Computer Engineering** (Major)", "**Computer Engineering** (International)", "**Computer Science** (Major) (English-medium)", "**Electrical and Electronic Engineering** (Major)", "Civil Engineering (Major)", developed in collaboration with San Diego State University and under the Second Compact of the U.S. Millennium Challenge Corporation. It is noteworthy that the program "Computer Engineering (International)" received **ABET** international accreditation in 2023;
- A joint undergraduate program in Civil Engineering, which the university runs together with San Diego State University;
- In 2015-2023, the university implemented undergraduate programs "Computer Engineering" and "Electrical Engineering" together with San Diego State University.

KARL FRIEDRICH LEHMANN-HAUPT INTERNATIONAL DOCTORAL SCHOOL AND PROGRAMS

The International Doctoral School (IDS) is the central (inter-faculty) unit of Ilia State University, which was established in 2017 to develop doctoral programs in collaboration with international partners. The school ensures the implementation of internationally structured doctoral programs of high academic quality by joining individual agreements between partner universities based on the cotutelle principle. The doctoral school aspires to create a modern, effective, and successful structured model of doctoral education in Georgia, that incorporates all the best quality assurance practices available. The school implements 2 comprehensive double-degree cooperation programs based on the cotutelle principle:

1

**Lehmann-Haupt
International Doctoral
Program – in 11
Structural Disciplines
(LHIDP)**

University of Göttingen,
Germany

2

**International
interdisciplinary
structured Ph.D.
program “Democracy,
Human Rights and
Religion (DHR)”**

University of Göttingen,
Germany



INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

Internationalization – Internationalization is a priority for Ilia State University, which maintains a robust global network of cooperation. This is evidenced by the number of students and professors sent to prestigious educational institutions abroad, the university's engagement in global initiatives, participation in international projects, and its ability to attract foreign experts. The university offers numerous opportunities for students, as well as academic and administrative staff, to participate in the European Commission-funded ERASMUS+ international exchange program. This program includes 125 partner universities across 24 European countries, with the number of partners increasing each year.

Third Mission – Ilia State University is distinguished by its social impact through its Third Mission activities. These initiatives and projects enhance the university's visibility, prominence, and reputation, complementing its research profile. The university leverages its human capital to openly share social, cultural, and scientific-educational knowledge, dedicating resources to societal benefit, school development, European integration, and the promotion of sustainable development goals.



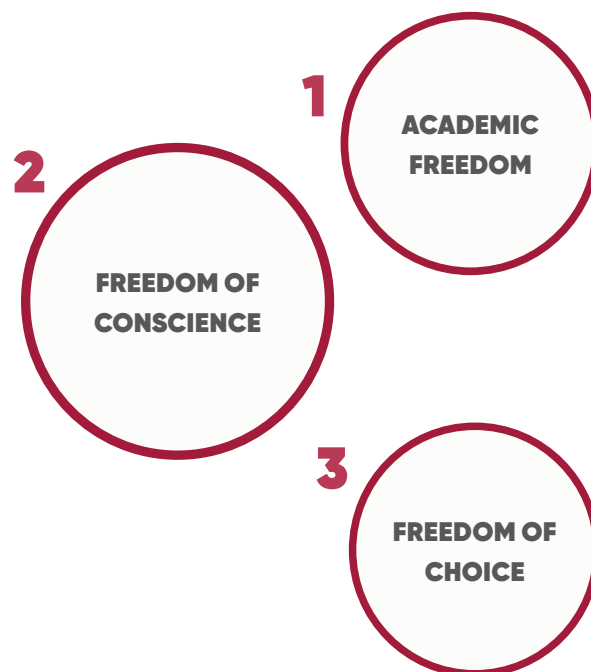
STRATEGIC UMBRELLA

THE ROLE AND IMPORTANCE OF THE UNIVERSITY IN GEORGIA, THE REGION, & THE EUROPEAN SPACE

Ilia State University defines its role in the context of the country, the region, and the global community by embracing the unique mission assigned to higher education during Georgia's pivotal and historic moment of integration into Europe. Within this framework, Ilia State University:

- Engages in cutting-edge research and disseminates research findings with academic and entrepreneurial communities locally and internationally.
- Maintains academic excellence in line with contemporary Western standards through its educational activities.
- Proactively meets the demands of the labor market, recognizing the intense competition within it.
- Addresses local, regional, and global challenges, guided by the university's commitment to societal missions, sustainable development goals, and the enhancement of public well-being.
- Endeavors to institutionalize democratic values both within and beyond the university, promoting openness and inclusivity.

As an institution committed to the principles of the European academic and scientific sphere and the Bologna process, Ilia State University is built upon three fundamental pillars of unity:



These principles are interdependent and mutually reinforcing, derived from and conditioning one another. Students, academics, lecturers, researchers, and professors enjoy the freedom to choose their academic paths, research areas and study, colleagues, and mentors, all while upholding high academic standards. No individual or entity has the authority, based on political or moral grounds, to impede students, professors, teachers, or researchers from pursuing research topics or disseminating scientific findings. Students and professors are empowered to select transparent and accountable forms of self-governance that align with the goals and objectives of their academic community — the university.

MISSION

Our Mission is grounded in its values and vision, defining the University's role in societal development and outlining its functions for the next seven years.

The mission of Ilia State University is to create, disseminate, and apply knowledge to advance scientific progress and societal development, both locally and internationally.

This mission is built upon **THREE CORE PRINCIPLES OF UNITY:**

- **Integration of Research and Teaching (Teaching-Research Nexus):** The University fosters an environment where the same group of individuals is involved in both generating knowledge and imparting it, offering students the opportunity to actively participate in the process of knowledge creation. The educational system and its entire process are based on the Humboldtian model and the ideal of higher education, whose main idea is the holistic combination of research and learning. This model integrates learning with research, as a fundamental approach to acquiring general education and profound knowledge.
- **Unity of General Education Common (Liberal Arts) Curriculum and Specialized Education and Specialization:** Ilia State University is at the forefront of educational

institutions introducing key elements of liberal education and open science into Georgia's higher education landscape. It remains committed to preserving and enhancing these principles while integrating them with rigorous specialization requirements.

- **Unity of the Universal and the Local:** This principle encompasses two vital aspects. Firstly, it involves creating and disseminating science as universally shareable knowledge. Secondly, it entails generating, transferring, and applying new knowledge to address regional, national, and local challenges. Moreover, within the context of European integration and the critical transitional period for the country, this unity underscores the reinforcement of the University's public mission.

VISION

Ilia State University's strategy for 2024–2030 offers a clear vision for the University's future direction. It delineates the primary objective, an optimal target to be attained through the execution of the strategy.

By 2030, Ilia State University aims to establish itself as the premier research institution in Georgia and the wider region, adhering to Western standards. This positioning will serve as the foundation for driving scientific and technological advancements, fostering high-quality educational practices, and promoting societal well-being through innovative approaches. The University is steadfast in its commitment to tackling global, regional, and national challenges. By fostering and implementing a knowledge-based economy, it aims to play a pivotal role in promoting sustainable development and facilitating Georgia's integration into Europe.

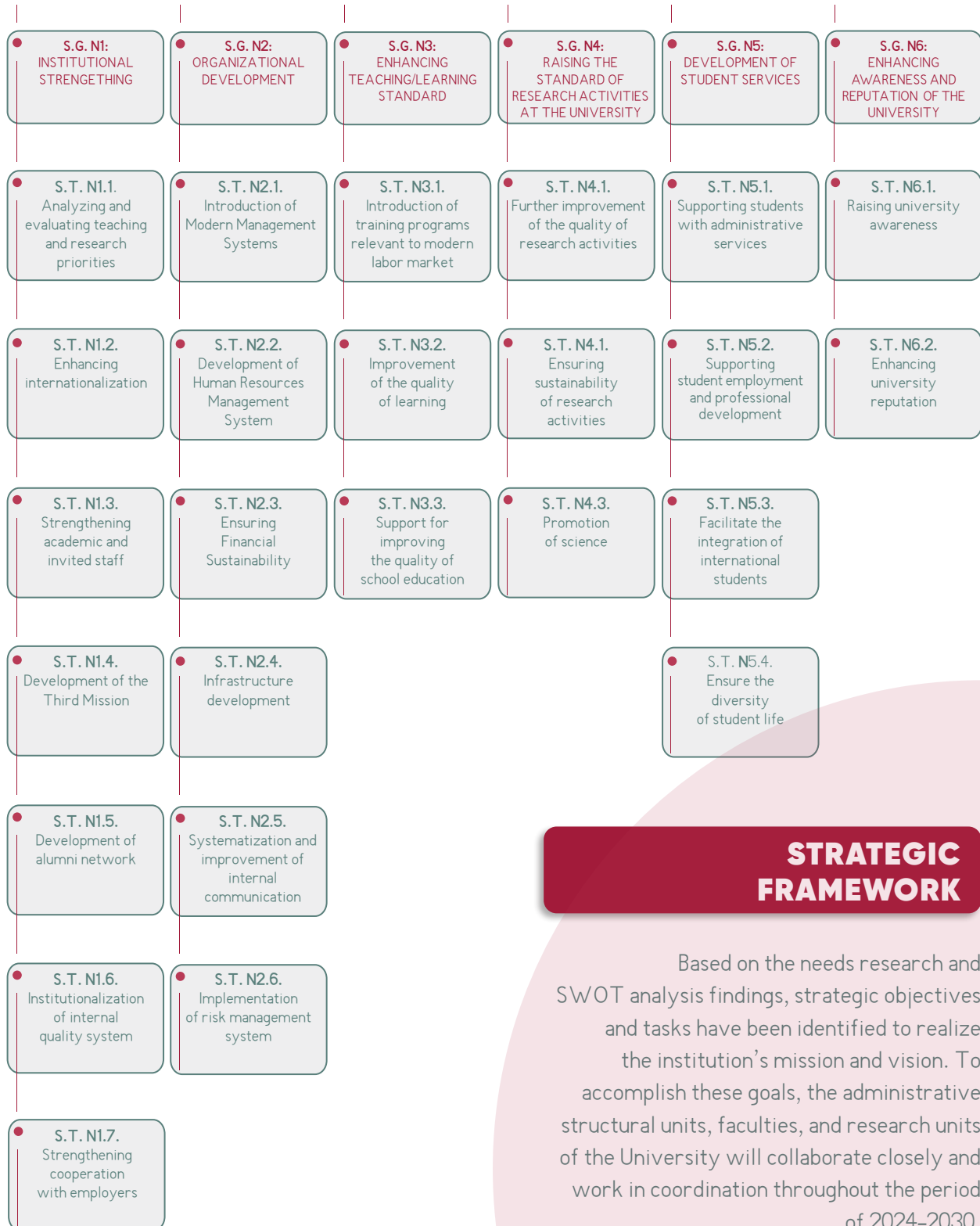


VALUES

Ilia State University recognizes the pivotal role of higher education in shaping the foundations of societal development and well-being. It formulates its 2024–2030 strategy based on the following values and principles:

- **Autonomy:** The University operates as an autonomous educational institution, empowered to make independent decisions within legal frameworks to effectively fulfill its core functions.
- **Equal Opportunities and Inclusive Environment:** The University ensures equal opportunities for students, academic, and administrative staff in learning, teaching, work, and personal development. It fosters freedom of choice and supports appropriate actions while promoting a fair and inclusive environment, irrespective of individuals' origin, citizenship, beliefs, religion, gender, sexual orientation, age, marital status, physical, and/or financial capabilities.
- **Diversity:** The University promotes diversity in cultural, educational, and research activities as the foundation for creating public value.
- **Academic Freedom:** The University upholds the freedom of choice and action for scientific/academic staff and students regarding academic activities.
- **Social Responsibility:** The University undertakes unique projects with a long-term targeted approach, utilizing scientific and human resources for the sustainable development of society and addressing global and national challenges.
- **Integrity:** The University upholds integrity as the primary criterion in its learning/teaching and research processes.
- **Transparency and Openness:** The University is accountable to the public and proactively disseminates information about its activities. It also actively seeks cooperation.
- **Focus on Development:** The University adopts a proactive approach to evaluate its activities, identifying and rectifying weaknesses to ensure continuous development.

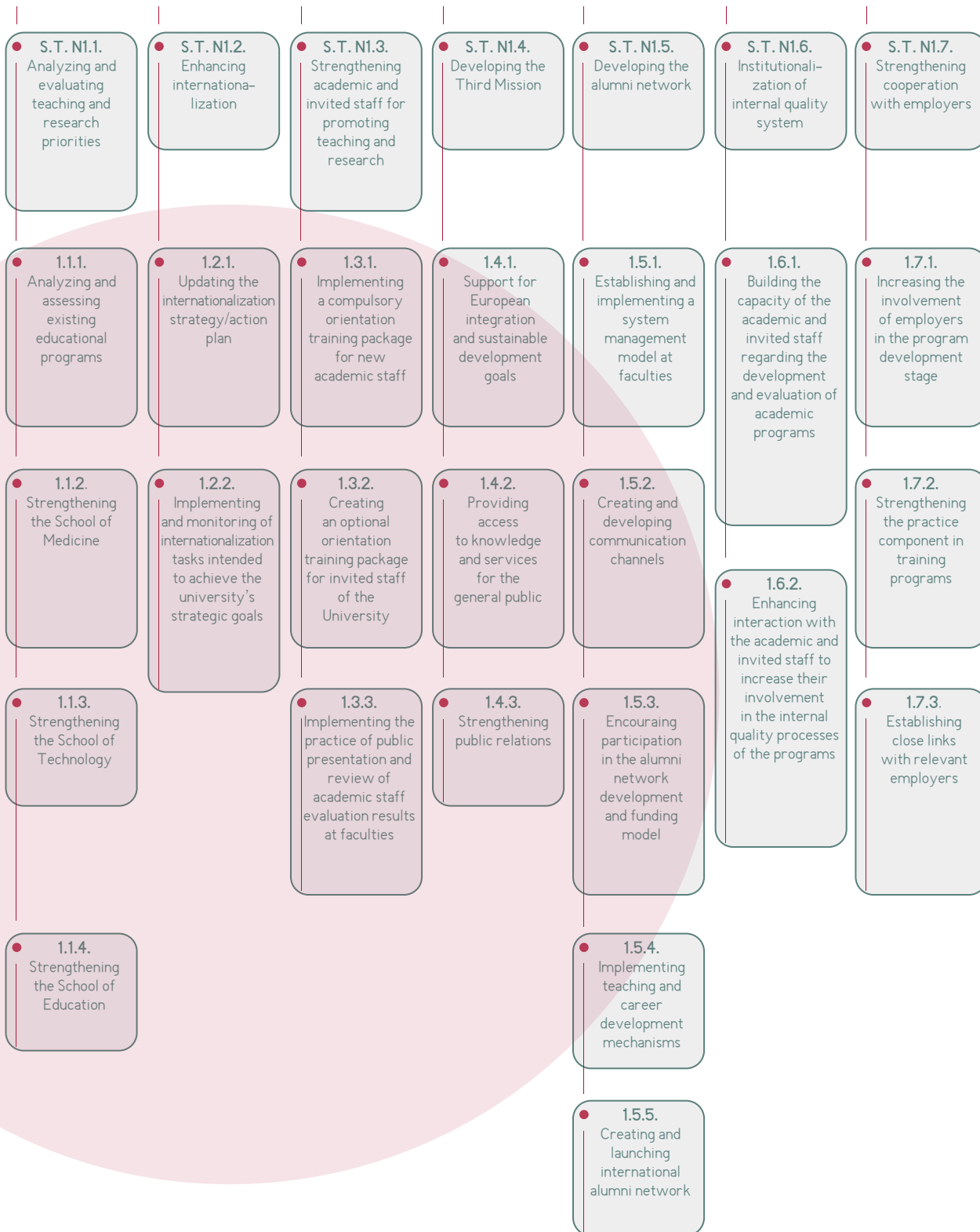
2024-2030 STRATEGIC GOALS AND OBJECTIVES/TASKS



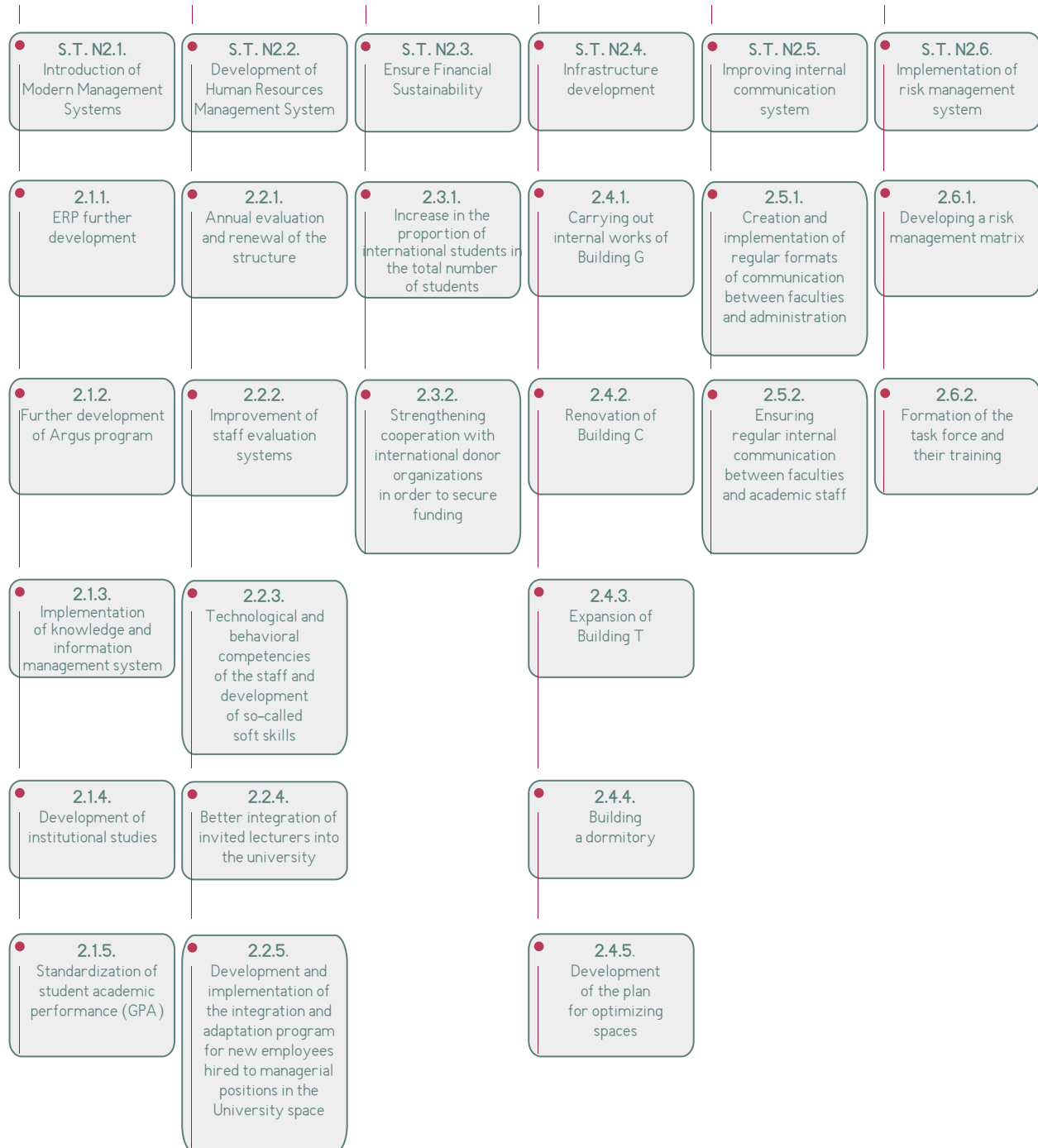
STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK

Based on the needs research and SWOT analysis findings, strategic objectives and tasks have been identified to realize the institution's mission and vision. To accomplish these goals, the administrative structural units, faculties, and research units of the University will collaborate closely and work in coordination throughout the period of 2024-2030.

S. G. N1: INSTITUTIONAL STRENGTHENING



S.G. N2: ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENT



S.G. N3: ENHANCING TEACHING & LEARNING

S.T. N3.1.

Introduction of training programs relevant to modern labor market demands

S.T. N3.2.

Improvement of the quality of learning

S.T. N3.3.

Support for improving the quality of school education

3.1.1.

Updating educational programs according to the schedule

3.2.1.

Development of skills of academic staff

3.3.1.

Promotion of professional development of school personnel

3.1.2.

Development of new certificate programs

3.2.2.

Engaging international professors and teachers in the educational process, both for long-term partnerships and short-term visits

3.3.2.

Promoting the diversity of the learning process with extracurricular activities and developing new skills among school students

3.1.3.

Promoting the development of new skills

3.2.3.

Development of library resources (enriching printed and electronic book fund)

3.1.4.

Development and implementation of programs delivered in English, including joint programs

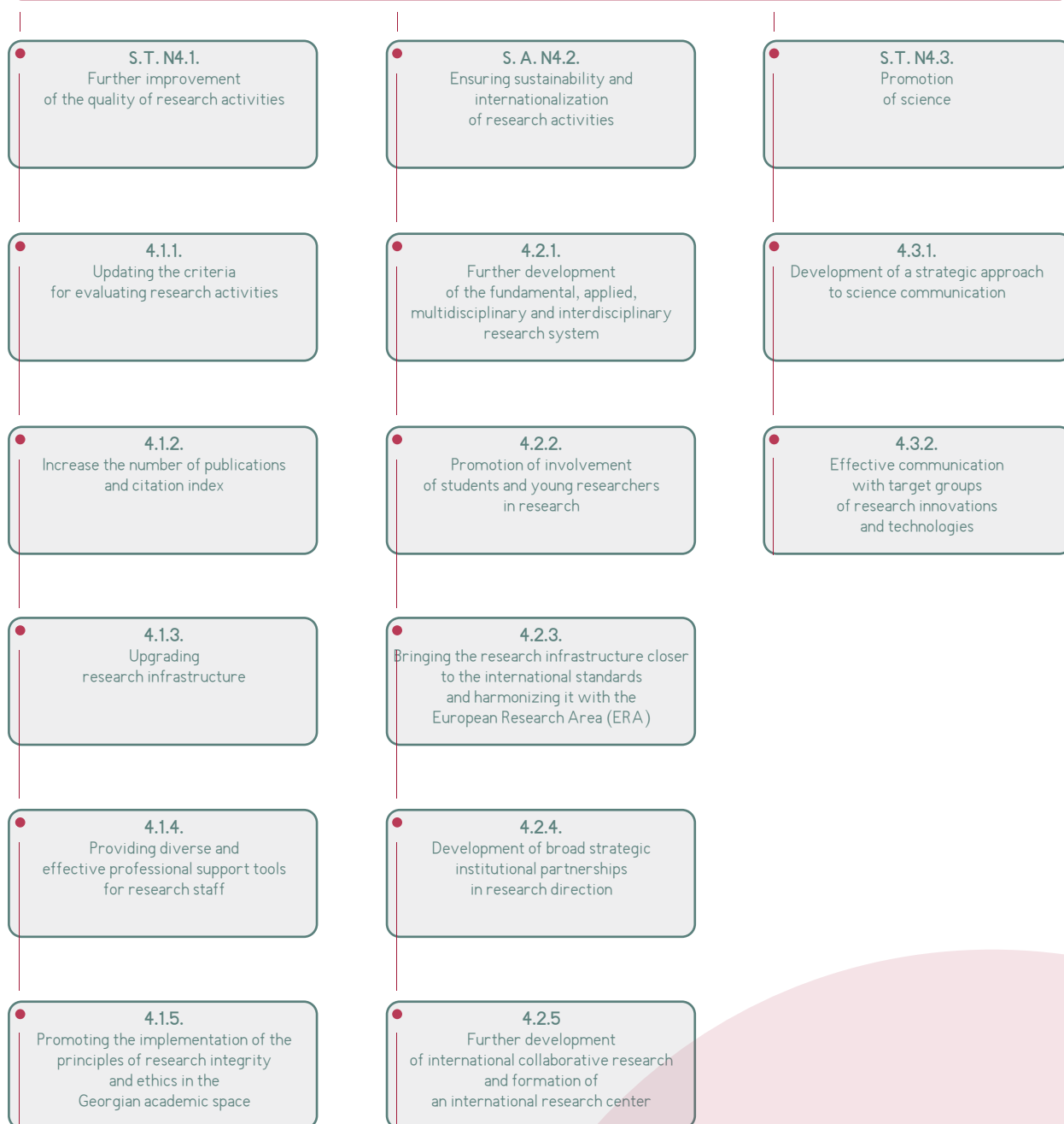
3.2.4.

Translation of foreign language academic literature with the help of donor organizations

3.1.5.

Obtaining international accreditation of training programs

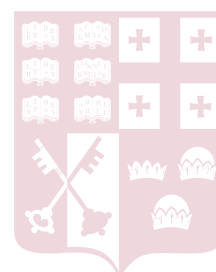
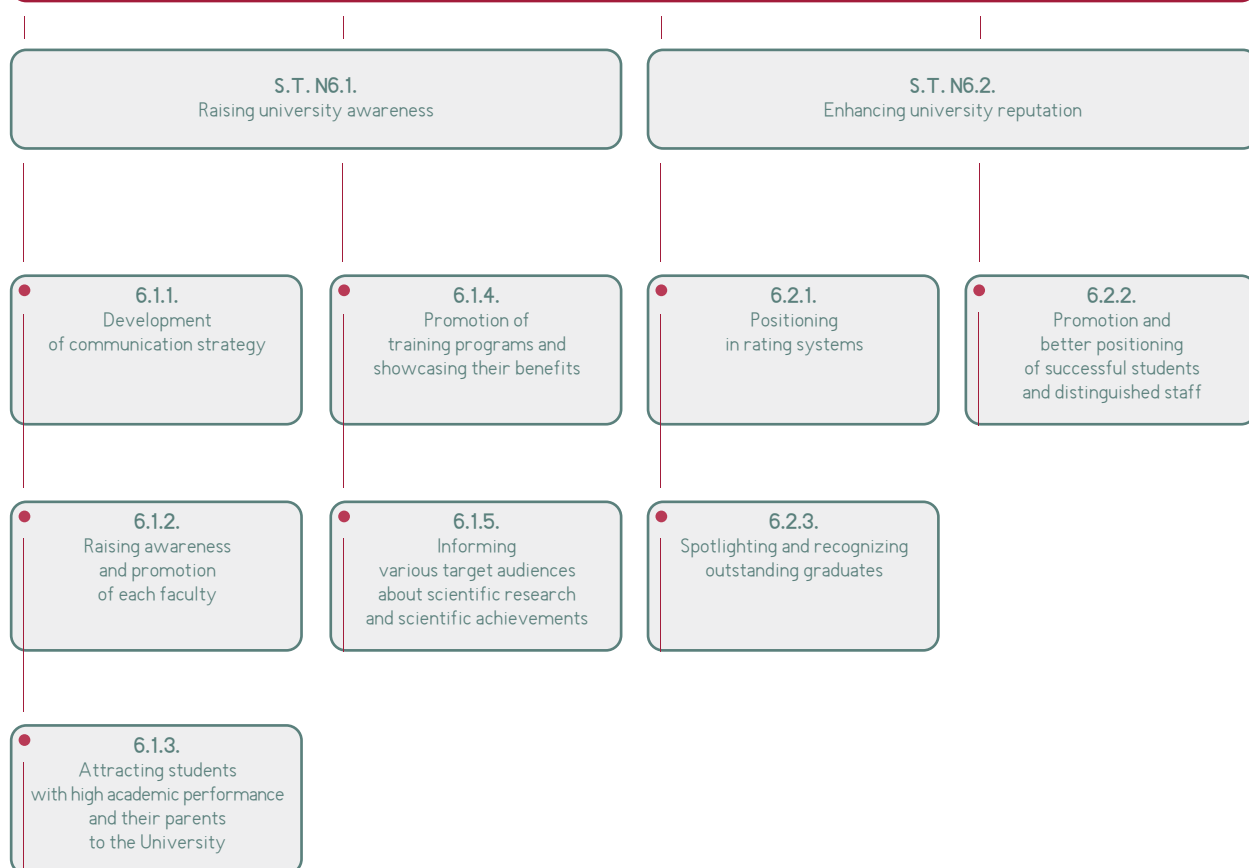
S.G. N4: RAISING THE STANDARD OF RESEARCH ACTIVITIES AT THE UNIVERSITY



S. G. N5: DEVELOPMENT OF STUDENT SERVICES



S.G. N6: ENHANCING UNIVERSITY AWARENESS AND REPUTATION LOCALLY AND INTERNATIONALLY





STRATEGY

2024-2030