

STRATEGIC  
PLAN  
2023-2027

# OUR STRATEGY FOR THE FUTURE

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

This document is the abridged version of the Strategic Plan 2023–2027.

The unabridged version can be downloaded here:  
<https://www.hs-esslingen.de/en/university/profile/vision/>

SUBJECT	PAGE
● FOREWORD	3
● ESSLINGEN UNIVERSITY IN TIMES OF CHANGE	4
● STATUS QUO OF ESSLINGEN UNIVERSITY	6
● OUR STRATEGY – OUR SELF-PERCEPTION	8
● STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT GUIDELINES	9
● STRATEGY PYRAMID OF ESSLINGEN UNIVERSITY	10
● STRATEGIC GOALS AND MEASURES	12
○ IMPRINT	19

## FOREWORD

### DEAR READERS,

Our society and our economy are facing enormous challenges: Digitalisation is changing whole branches of industry, our region in particular is being affected by the transformation of the automotive industry. The reorganisation of our economy which will be required right through to climate neutrality is only in its infancy, and our ageing society means that the health and care system must be adapted accordingly. As a university of applied sciences, we see ourselves as a driving force of this transformation, which we are helping to shape through our research & transfer and the continuing education we offer. If Esslingen University is to do justice to this claim, comprehensive reforms are necessary.

The strategic plan integrates this and many other ideas into an overall strategy for the next five years. Although this strategy has been coordinated at one central point, its actual content comes from everyone at the university. Over the last three semesters, all units have been involved in this process and have defined goals for their particular areas. This now enables us to present an ambitious yet realistic plan which is supported by the university as a whole.

We would therefore like to express our gratitude to all members of Esslingen University for their committed involvement!

We are now really looking forward to implementing this strategy with all of you as a joint endeavour!



Prof. Christof Wolfmaier  
President



Prof. Dr. Fabian Diefenbach  
Vice-President Strategy and Communication

## ESSLINGEN UNIVERSITY IN TIMES OF CHANGE

Esslingen University is one of the leading universities of applied sciences in Germany. It provides academic training in management, engineering and the social sciences. Around 6,300 students are enrolled in 28 bachelor and 14 master degree programmes on three campuses. They are taught by 219 professors.

At Esslingen University, our top priority is to provide a combination of excellent teaching and significant amounts of practical work. Applied research is another of our strengths.

### OUR STRENGTHS

#### | **Learn from the best**

We are one of the leading universities of applied sciences in Germany. This is regularly confirmed by rankings in the ZEIT newspaper and WirtschaftsWoche magazine.

#### | **Exploring the current issues of our time**

Our researchers tackle issues concerning sustainable energy management and mobility, intelligent production and smart factories, as well as social, nursing, health and education research in the context of a changing society.

#### | **Excellent networking with business and society**

We maintain close contacts with the companies and organisations in our region.

#### | **Internationality is part of our life**

We facilitate intercultural exchange with our 90 partner universities across the globe — with the USA, Mexico and Finland, for example.

In March 2021, our university introduced a new structure with six (instead of eleven) faculties which are supplemented by five interdisciplinary institutions. The university is thus adapting to the demands which society is now placing on it. Our outstanding profile in engineering, management and the social sciences will give our university the dynamism and interdisciplinary constellation needed to respond to the rapid transformation and the demands which result therefrom.

Our strategic plan has been compiled hand-in-hand with the strategic development in the units, many of which have been reconfigured.



# STATUS QUO OF ESSLINGEN UNIVERSITY

We started our strategic planning by carrying out a SWOT analysis of our organisation. The point of reference for this analysis was the restructuring of our university in particular.

## STRENGTHS

- | University with **an excellent reputation** and long tradition
- | **Broad spectrum of disciplines** in engineering, management and the social sciences
- | Well **networked** and located in a **strong economic region**
- | Committed, competent **colleagues**
- | **New university structure** as basis for synergy creation and exploitation

## WEAKNESSES

- | Some degree programmes are in need of **reform and better coordination**
- | **Investment bottleneck** for several buildings and the infrastructure
- | **Processes and structures** in need of optimisation
- | **Collaboration opportunities** within the university not yet exploited to the full

## OPPORTUNITIES

- | **Digitalisation** to improve flexibility and enhance quality esp. in teaching and administration
- | Position Esslingen University as a role model for **climate protection**
- | Establish Esslingen University as a driving force in the upcoming **transformation of the regional economy**

## THREATS

- | **Greater competition** from other universities
- | **Fluctuating demand** from prospective students, esp. for the bachelor programmes
- | Employers **are changing job profiles**



## OUR STRATEGY – OUR SELF-PERCEPTION

### OUR VISION

The shared vision 2030 for Esslingen University describes our idea of the future:

**WE ARE AN OUTSTANDING EDUCATIONAL ENVIRONMENT AND A DRIVING FORCE FOR INNOVATION IN ENGINEERING, MANAGEMENT AND THE SOCIAL SCIENCES – AND THEIR INTERACTION.**

This strategic plan is now enabling us to implement the corresponding strategy.

### OUR PURPOSE

We pursue this vision to make a positive contribution to the public value and to play our part in the advancement of society in the spirit of the statutory responsibilities placed upon us.

- I Through education we enable people to live independent and responsible lives.
- I Through the transfer of innovation and sustainability we enable our regional economy to successfully bring about change.

## STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT GUIDELINES

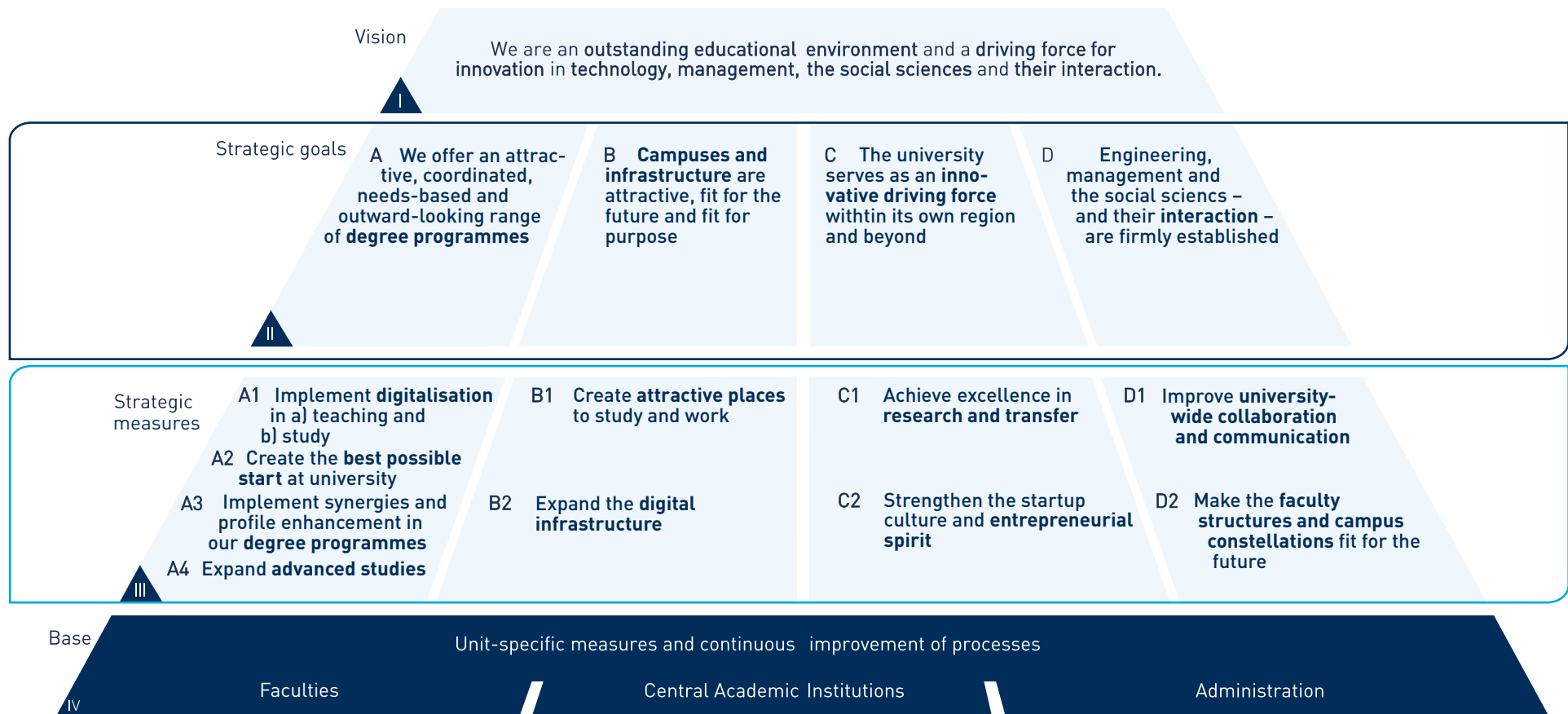
Our vision and the goals derived therefrom have been formalised in a strategy pyramid (see page 10), which formed the starting point of the strategic planning for the numerous sub-areas at our university. These sub-areas are in turn anchored in the university strategy pyramid as project-based strategic measures and also as basic areas. Taken together, they create a target picture for the university and describe the path which will lead us there.

The unabridged version of our strategic plan is available here:  
<https://www.hs-esslingen.de/en/university/profile/vision/>





# STRATEGY PYRAMID OF ESSLINGEN UNIVERSITY



## STRATEGIC GOALS AND MEASURES

### A

**WE OFFER AN ATTRACTIVE, COORDINATED, NEEDS-BASED AND OUTWARD-LOOKING RANGE OF DEGREE PROGRAMMES**

#### A1

**Implement digitalisation in a) teaching and b) study**

Digital teaching is an integral part of university teaching and takes its lead from the didactically meaningful design of educational processes. All students acquire the skills needed in their particular professional field to shape the digital transformation.

#### A2

**Create the best possible start at university**

We have designed and established an orientation phase for the 21st century which offers students digital and individualised teaching formats as well as discipline-specific and interdisciplinary supervision.

#### A3

**Implement synergies and profile enhancement in our degree programmes**

Esslingen University offers a needs-based and synergy-oriented spectrum of degree programmes.

#### A4

**Expand advanced studies**

The advanced studies programmes offered by Esslingen University are well-known in our local region and beyond as an integral component of the university strategy and play an important role in upskilling the specialist workforce and managerial staff and the structural transformation in the region.





## B

**CAMPUSES AND INFRASTRUCTURE  
ARE ATTRACTIVE, FIT FOR THE FUTURE  
AND FIT FOR PURPOSE**

### B1

**Create attractive places to study and work**

New and refurbished buildings do justice to the various usage scenarios and requirements and make the university a more attractive place to study and work.

### B2

**Expand the digital infrastructure**

Esslingen University uses a state-of-the-art digital infrastructure for its research, teaching and administration.



# C

THE UNIVERSITY SERVES AS AN  
INNOVATIVE DRIVING FORCE WITHIN  
ITS OWN REGION AND BEYOND

## C1

**Achieve excellence in research and transfer**

Esslingen University is a driving force for innovation within the region through its application-oriented research and transfer.

## C2

**Strengthen the startup culture and entrepreneurial spirit**

We ensure that the distinguishing characteristic of Esslingen University is its role as an innovative driving force: We exploit the skills spectrum of the university to »venture the inconceivable, achieve the impossible«.



# D

**ENGINEERING, MANAGEMENT AND THE  
SOCIAL SCIENCES — AND THEIR  
INTERACTION — ARE FIRMLY ESTABLISHED**

## D1

### **Improve university-wide collaboration and communication**

Esslingen University has networks and structures which promote interdisciplinary and interinstitutional initiatives, make optimum use of synergies, and facilitate transparent and trusting collaboration.

## D2

### **Make the faculty structures and campus constellations fit for the future**

This development is based on the new university structure with six faculties and interdisciplinary units which was introduced in March 2021. It has been implemented in all areas and has thus made us fit for the future.

**WE ARE LOOKING FORWARD TO NOW  
IMPLEMENTING THE STRATEGY WHICH  
OUR JOINT VENTURE HAS CREATED!**



## **IMPRINT**

Esslingen University is a public corporation. It is legally represented by the President, Prof. Christof Wolfmaier.

### **Published by**

Esslingen University of Applied Sciences  
Kanalstrasse 33  
73728 Esslingen am Neckar, Germany  
Telephone +49[0]711 397-49  
E-Mail [info@hs-esslingen.de](mailto:info@hs-esslingen.de)  
Internet [www.hs-esslingen.de/en](http://www.hs-esslingen.de/en)

### **Editorial team**

Prof. Dr. Fabian Diefenbach, Vice-President Strategy and Communication  
Dr. Carolin Niethammer, Strategy Officer  
Julia Feldmann, Strategy Officer

### **Translation**

TechniText Translations

### **Design**

Viola Schanz, Marketing Assistant

### **Photo credits**

Esslingen University of Applied Sciences

Last updated November 2022



## Esslingen University

Esslingen City Centre Campus  
Kanalstrasse 33  
73728 Esslingen  
Tel. +49 (0)711 397-49

Esslingen Hilltop Campus  
Flandernstrasse 101  
73732 Esslingen  
Tel. +49 (0)711 397-49

Goeppingen Campus  
Robert-Bosch-Strasse 1  
73037 Göppingen  
Tel: +49 (0)7161 679-0

Follow us on:



[WWW.HS-ESSLINGEN.DE/EN](http://WWW.HS-ESSLINGEN.DE/EN)