



Yorkshire
Universities

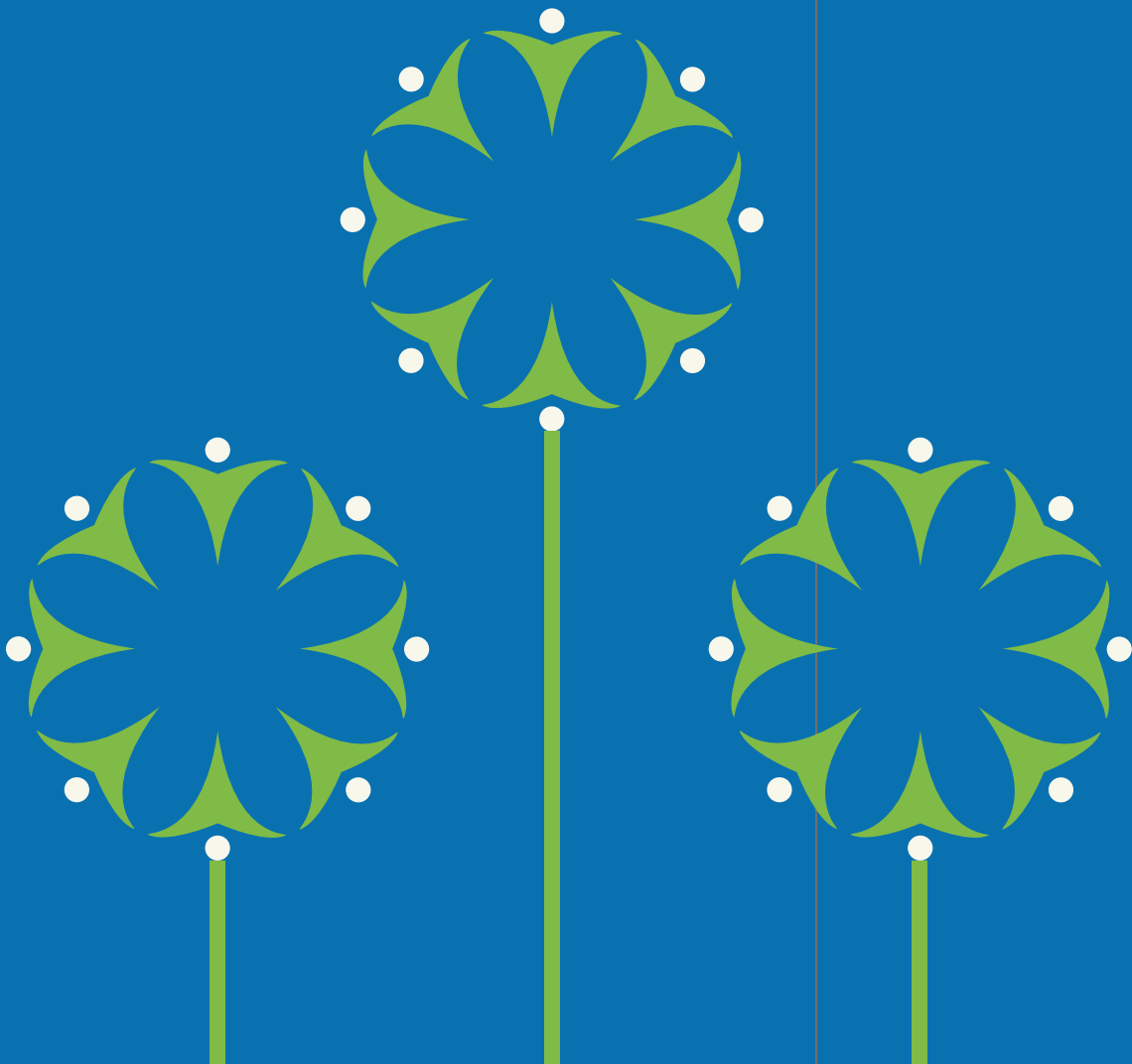
Powering
Place
Unlocking
Potential

YU 2025–30 Strategy

yorkshireuniversities.ac.uk

2025
2026
2027
2028
2029
2030

Yorkshire Universities champions Yorkshire, aspiration, and opportunity.



Contents

04	Context
05	Our Vision, Mission & Strategic Priorities
06	Our Strategic Priorities:
06	Amplifying Regional Strengths
08	Unlocking New Ideas and Investment
10	Partnering to Drive Place-based Impacts
12	Our Approach
14	Our Values
16	Our Organisational Goals



Context

YU's 2025-2030 Strategy comes at a time when the UK and the wider world are facing complex inter-connected changes. These developments, relating to global megatrends such as climate, demographics, migration, widening inequities, health, shifting geopolitics, and the rapid adoption and use of Artificial Intelligence (AI), have been evident for some time, but have now become the central concerns of policymakers.

In the UK, the financial pressures materialising due to the rising costs of providing education and conducting research, alongside widening access and participation, as well as international student recruitment and graduate retention, are presenting profound challenges for the higher education sector. The 2025 Spending Review, new Industrial Strategy, mission-led focus on growth, new international trade relationships, and the roll out and extension of regional devolution in England within a multi-party system, also frames the domestic environment within which higher education institutions (HEIs) find themselves operating.

These drivers are shaping YU's Strategy for the period 2025–2030.

Our Vision

We will enable strategic collaborations with the higher education sector and partners to grow economic prosperity, resilience, and opportunity in Yorkshire and beyond.

Our Mission

We convene, connect, and champion our members: amplifying regional strengths, unlocking new investment and ideas, and partnering to drive beneficial and inclusive place-based impacts.

Our Strategic Priorities

Yorkshire Universities (YU) will focus on three Strategic Priorities during the 2025-2030 period:

1. Amplifying regional strengths.
2. Unlocking new ideas and investment.
3. Partnering to drive place-based impacts.

Strategic Priority 1

Amplifying Regional Strengths

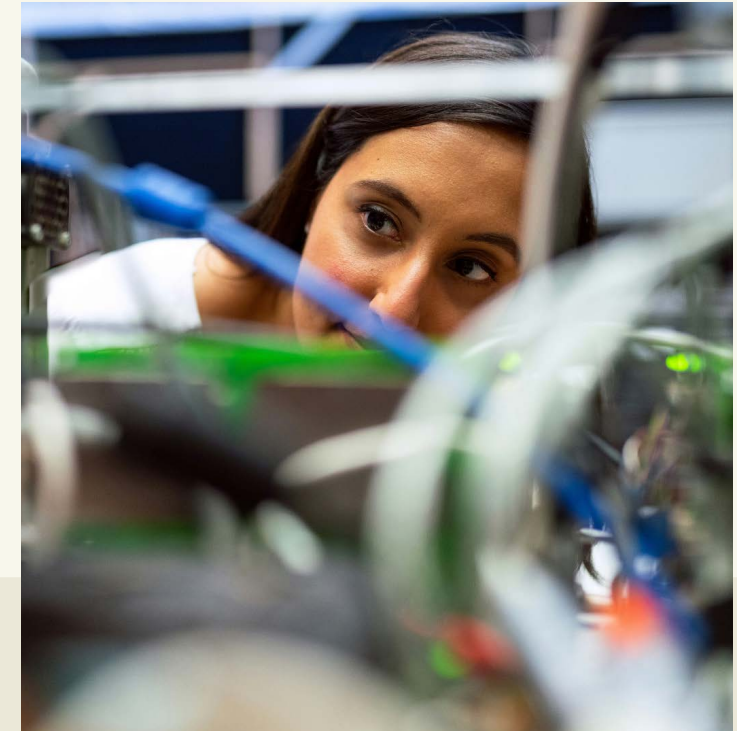
Objectives

- Raise the visibility and profile of YU regionally and nationally as the representative body for our members in the region.
- Support and contribute towards the ongoing evolution and development of the regional higher education sector, particularly focusing on research & innovation and future-ready skills.
- Embed higher education as a key anchor partner within strategic foreign direct investment and inward investment strategies and plans in the region.
- Be a leading player in building, widening, and deepening a national community of practice for sectoral and regional higher education representation.



Intended Impact:

An influential national and global voice for Yorkshire.



Activity Highlights

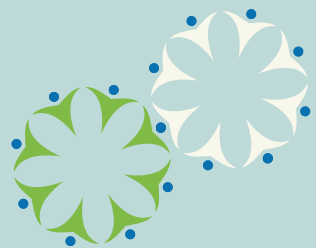
- Strengthen Yorkshire's engagement and influence with UK government departments and agencies.
- Facilitate collective action on agreed priorities by convening and enabling YU's working groups to share best practice and develop collaborative proposals.
- Strengthen YU's relationships with Universities UK (UUK) and national mission groups through closer strategic engagement, information sharing, and use of case studies.
- Strategically engage with UKREiF and learn from trade and investment experience in the Midlands and other regions.
- Articulate YU members' collective research specialisms, innovation strengths, and support for business and enterprise in key growth clusters and sectors.

Strategic Priority 2

Unlocking New Ideas and Investment

Objectives

- Generate thought leadership and innovative strategic foresight and analysis that will enable members to plan ahead of the curve and shape their future.
- Provide a forum for inter- and intra-HEI discussion and the development of possible interventions that are relevant to the efficiencies and transformation agenda within higher education.
- Ensure that regional policy networks align with YU's Strategy and reinforce academic to policy, or research to policy, engagement functions to ensure greater efficiency and effectiveness.



Intended Impact:

An interconnected, interdependent higher education sector in Yorkshire, which is confident in securing investment and demonstrating public value.



Activity Highlights

- Actively participate and contribute towards discussions between funding bodies and regional higher education groups as a member of Knowledge Exchange UK.
- Provide expert advice and guidance to the Universities Policy Engagement Network's (UPEN) Research England Development-funded project, which is tasked with embedding sector and place-based approaches to academic policy engagement across the UK.
- Monitor emergent drivers and trends that are expected to impact the higher education sector and the region's economy.

Strategic Priority 3

Partnering to Drive Place-based Impacts

Objectives

- Develop priorities and an annual work programme as part of the Memorandum of Understanding with Yorkshire and Humber Councils.
- Work alongside the Yorkshire and Humber Climate Commission.
- Develop the first West Yorkshire Higher Education Compact work programme, including governance and operational arrangements, with members and in partnership with the West Yorkshire Combined Authority.
- Support existing and emergent Yorkshire-wide Mayoral and Mayoral Combined Authority strategies, plans, and actions.
- Refresh the YHealth for Growth agenda to encourage and facilitate the health and care sector to work more closely with YU members.



Intended Impact:
A prosperous and distinctive Yorkshire region shaped by collaboration, where higher education is a proactive change agent.



Activity Highlights

- Promote the value of the West Yorkshire Higher Education Compact and share knowledge and experience with all members through YU's groups and networks.
- Strengthen student and graduate engagement and employability in the sustainability agenda through the annual region-wide Student Sustainability Research Conference.
- Utilise YU's distinct and effective brokerage role in supporting devolution in the four Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority areas.
- Influence new and emergent partnerships and collaborations within and across the North of England.
- Convene members and sector partners to discuss and develop a new Health Workforce Plan for Yorkshire.

Our Approach

The success of the YU 2025–2030 Strategy will be measured by working closely with our members and other stakeholders to gather robust evidence of where YU adds value by raising the profile of Yorkshire’s HE sector, enabling new investment, and establishing and strengthening partnerships.



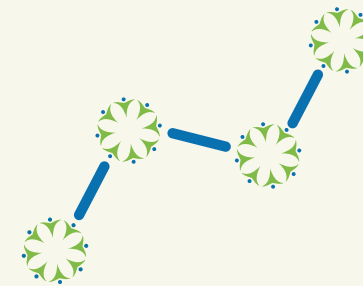
Foresight & Thought Leadership

YU will use data, evidence, insights, and intelligence to help shape the future of the region, thinking three to four steps ahead to influence upcoming trends and opportunities.



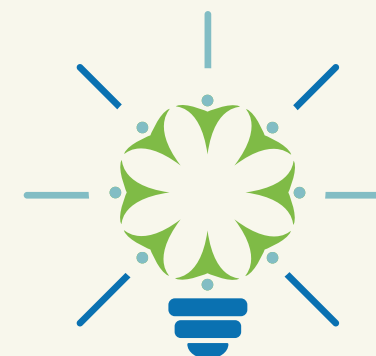
Acting with Agency

YU and its members will not just react but actively shape and reshape the landscape, informed by place and evidence from within the region.



Connection & Networks

YU will draw upon good practice, both regionally and beyond, and facilitate national and regional networks that connect key stakeholders in public, private, and community sectors – joining the dots, connecting the ecosystem, capacities, and conversations.



Innovation & Piloting

YU will encourage ideas and creative exploration and provide a testbed that offers partners a safe environment to experiment collaboratively with novel approaches.

Our Values

Accountability

Clear and timely communication with members and stakeholders, ensuring transparency in decision-making.

Trustworthiness

Acting as an honest broker, respecting confidentiality, and building and maintaining trust.

Inclusivity & Fairness

Creating a welcoming environment for all parties and diverse perspectives.

Authenticity & Integrity

Harnessing good will and mutual interest to make lives better in cohesive and sustainable ways and collaborating in the best interests of the region, not just for or within the higher education sector, but also for civic, community, business, and industry partners.

YU Strategy 2025–30:

Our Organisational Goals



01

To identify and implement innovative approaches that further strengthen collaboration between members and partners, where this adds value to institutional and place-based objectives.

02

To engage all our members as active agents through collective leadership and the championing of YU themes and projects.

03

To develop and promote the YU brand on behalf of members.

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