

Development Plan

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Through education and research, Seoul National University has long embodied Korea's intellectual leadership, contributing to the nation's development and to the wider world. Today, SNU faces profound challenges both beyond and within the university. The AI revolution, the climate crisis, U.S.-China rivalry, and social polarization are reshaping our world and forcing universities to reconsider their purpose and public role. At SNU, the urgent question is how to sustain academic excellence while fulfilling our public mission. Our people are outstanding, but the university has yet to realize the full power of their collective potential.

I propose a new direction for SNU: 'Pioneering, the SNU Way.'

'Pioneering, the SNU Way' captures three ideas. First, amid profound uncertainty, we must set the standards for a new era rather than rest on past achievements or relative standing. Second, we must build a system of autonomy and connection that turns individual excellence into university-wide strength. Third, we must begin now to lay the groundwork for SNU's centennial: a leading global university that represents Asia and contributes to the world.

This plan rests on three values: autonomy, connection, and aspiration. Autonomy is fundamental to SNU and gives every member a sense of ownership of the university. Connection brings people, disciplines, and societies together to create new possibilities. Aspiration is the determination to reach beyond what we have already achieved and set higher standards for ourselves. Together, autonomy and connection will turn that aspiration into action.

SNU now needs growth in quality, grounded in strong foundations, rather than expansion for its own sake. We must address the core problems that have constrained our potential honestly, rather than pursue projects for appearances. Anyone can make promises. What ultimately makes the difference is the ability to deliver on them.

The plan that follows sets out how I will renew SNU and help it lead in the age of AI.

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To: Chair, Seoul National University Presidential Search Committee

Pioneering, the SNU Way

A university that sets the standard for our time

Vision	A university that sets the standard for our time
Core values	Autonomy Connection Aspiration
Commitment to action	Powered by autonomy and connection, we will aim higher and lead the way.

Nine Pledges

Setting the standards for a new era	1	Educating students to lead in the age of AI
	2	Giving ambitious research the time and support to thrive
	3	Rewarding excellence and supporting well-being
Redesigning autonomy and trust	4	Building a stronger, more self-reliant financial foundation
	5	Making university administration simpler, smarter, and more responsive
	6	Empowering colleges through autonomy and shared governance
Connecting with the world	7	Connecting our campuses through distinctive strengths
	8	Putting SNU's expertise to work for society
	9	Opening more pathways to the world

1 Educating students to lead in the age of AI

We will develop distinctly human strengths and practical AI capabilities together, giving every student greater scope to realize their potential.

1-1 Redesign liberal education around human agency

- Strengthen liberal education to deepen thinking, ethical awareness, community spirit, and the ability to act.
- Redesign educational content, teaching methods, assessment, and the credit system from knowledge transmission toward competency-based learning.
- Improve LnL (Living & Learning) to provide every incoming student with an opportunity for residential learning.

1-2 Build AI capability in every field

- Create a university-wide framework for foundational AI education, led by the Undergraduate College, and partner with an AI competency assessment platform.
- Provide financial and administrative support for discipline-specific instruction in the effective use of AI.
- Recruit teaching-focused faculty to meet growing demand for courses.

1-3 Give students greater ownership of their education

- Expand undergraduate research and integrated bachelor's-to-master's-to-doctoral pathways, and strengthen incentives to identify the next generation of scholars early.
- Develop career-oriented learning pathways through internships, capstone projects, industry collaboration, and employment support.
- Strengthen systems that balance students' freedom to choose a major with the sustainability of the academic ecosystem.
- Make course registration easier and create flexible graduation requirements.

1-4 Make teaching loads and academic operations more flexible

- Lower the annual teaching-load standard from 18 credits to 9 credits, with autonomy by major.
- Support curriculum reform by major in response to reduced teaching hours.
- Relax course-cancellation criteria to reflect differences across disciplines, and make semester and class operations more flexible.

1-5 Create a lifelong learning system

- Expand the Institute for Continuing Education into a separate corporation, SNU Lifelong University (working title), as a lifelong education platform for the public.
- Offer online and in-person non-degree and career-transition education for workers, retirees, and socially disadvantaged groups.
- Run public-interest and revenue-generating programs according to their target audiences and purposes.

Priority Actions

- Establish an annual teaching load of three courses (nine credits) and give colleges autonomy over it
- Expand LnL (Living & Learning) to all first-year students
- Teach foundational AI competencies to every undergraduate and partner with an AI competency assessment platform
- Launch SNU Lifelong University (working title)

2 Giving ambitious research the time and support to thrive

We will create a stable research environment where faculty can pursue major questions over the long term, beyond the pressures of short-term performance competition.

2-1 Guarantee annual base research funding and tailor policies by discipline

- Provide every full-time faculty member with KRW 30 million in annual base research funding.
- Integrate diverse academic-activity support expenses into the base research fund, allowing members to spend the total freely without item-level restrictions.
- Adopt separate research policies and asset inventory procedures for non-science and science disciplines.
- Fully reward achievements in innovative and high-risk research and support follow-up research.
- Strengthen international research exchange through overseas research sabbaticals and support for visiting research.

2-2 Consider integrating research-support staff and reform research administration

- Review options for bringing Industry-Academic Cooperation Foundation staff into SNU's corporate workforce and assigning them to dedicated research support roles.
- Expand support for securing international grants, conducting international joint research, and commercializing technology.
- Redesign research administration around researchers' needs, providing integrated support from grant agreements and spending through financial reporting.

2-3 Invest in shared research infrastructure and support for major projects

- Expand research space, shared instrumentation, university-wide GPU infrastructure, and library database subscriptions.
- Expand shared spaces to respond flexibly to colleges' urgent and temporary space needs.
- Create a large-research-project support team staffed by Ph.D.-level personnel to handle project planning, proposals, and administrative support.
- Use AI to shorten IRB review times and make them more flexible by discipline.

2-4 Sustain a diverse academic ecosystem

- Raise the quality of graduate education by strengthening faculty incentives.
- Expand sustained, long-term research support for basic, underrepresented, and emerging fields.

2-5 Support researchers at every career stage

- Strengthen orientation and teaching development for new faculty, and expand support for relocation and housing.
- Build administrative, space, and institutional support so affiliated joint-appointment professors can work effectively.
- Create postdoctoral fellowships linked to global corporate brands, such as Samsung-SNU Postdoctoral Fellows.
- Expand TA support and basic research and living support for full-time master's and doctoral students.

Priority Actions

- Provide KRW 30 million in annual base research funding for every full-time faculty member
- Review integrating Industry-Academic Cooperation Foundation staff into SNU's corporate workforce
- Create postdoctoral fellowships linked to global corporate brands
- Establish a support team for large research projects and recruit more technicians

3 Rewarding excellence and supporting well-being

We will ensure that every member of the SNU community can teach, conduct research, and work with pride.

3-1 Build a compensation system targeting average full-professor pay of approximately USD 200,000 (KRW 300 million)

- Improve faculty compensation with the goal of making it the most competitive in Asia.
- Expand staff performance bonuses and establish a rational compensation system.
- Restructure SNU's finances to provide sustainable funding for compensation and financial support.

3-2 Expand housing and provide loan guarantees for faculty and staff

- Establish an Office of Housing to build an integrated housing and welfare support system for members.
- Rebuild and expand faculty and staff apartments to improve aging housing conditions.
- Provide housing support during the reconstruction of student dormitories.
- Arrange unsecured loans of KRW 300 million for faculty and staff through agreements with financial institutions.

3-3 Provide family support at every stage of life

- Build a tailored life-cycle support system that integrates childbirth, childcare, education, medical care, and caregiving.
- Expand on-campus childcare centers and after-school care and consolidate the family-support service window.
- Create tailored working environments such as flexible work and protect members' rights through life and legal counseling.

3-4 Improve health and wellness support

- Rebuild the gymnasium as a multi-wellness center and expand welfare infrastructure.
- Expand programs that connect health, exercise, rehabilitation, and psychological counseling.
- Support care linked to Seoul National University Hospital and secure burnout-prevention programs and recovery spaces.

3-5 Prepare for a higher retirement age and create meaningful post-retirement roles

- Redesign roles so members can use their experience and expertise after retirement, including faculty positions at SNU Lifelong University for ages 65 to 70.
- Improve regulations in preparation for extending the retirement age.

Priority Actions

- Target average full-professor pay of approximately USD 200,000 (KRW 300 million) and expand staff performance bonuses
- Establish an Office of Housing and rebuild faculty and staff apartments
- Integrate tailored life-cycle support
- Rebuild a multi-wellness center to strengthen faculty and staff welfare

4 Building a stronger, more self-reliant financial foundation

We will give SNU greater control over its future by reshaping how it raises, manages, and invests resources.

4-1 Put professional expertise at the center of financial governance

- Build an integrated management system for SNU's finances centered on a professional chief financial officer (CFO).
- Establish a budget operating system that links a mid- to long-term financial strategy with investment priorities.

4-2 Mobilize new sources of large-scale funding

- Secure large-scale funding by actively using university bonds and idle assets.
- Expand overseas research funding and attract funding from domestic and international private foundations.
- Expand funding through active planning and identification of large national projects.

4-3 Strengthen SNU's capacity to generate its own revenue

- Revitalize SNU Holdings by securing a CEO and professional staff, attracting capital, and reorganizing its business portfolio.
- Create an alumni-participation investment fund.
- Launch SNU Lifelong University (working title) and pursue both revenue-generating and public-interest projects.
- Establish a system that returns technology-commercialization and intellectual-property revenue to the university.

4-4 Build a strategic fundraising platform that creates lasting value

- Develop purpose-specific giving programs for scholarships, basic fields, and internationalization.
- Develop and operate naming programs and project-based fundraising products, including endowed chairs by college and DARPA-style project fundraising.
- Expand fundraising programs tailored to donors such as entrepreneurs and retired alumni and introduce planned giving.
- Encourage small, recurring gifts from younger alumni and establish a global alumni fundraising network.
- Expand tailored fundraising programs and participation at the department and college levels.

4-5 Direct the university budget toward clear priorities

- Reconsider priorities in allocating the corporate budget.
- Strengthen and make transparent an integrated financial operating system covering the corporation, the Industry-Academic Cooperation Foundation, and the Development Foundation.

Priority Actions

- Increase internally generated resources by KRW 1 trillion
- Raise KRW 1 trillion in development funds
- Secure a total of KRW 2 trillion in new funds over four years

5 Making university administration simpler, smarter, and more responsive

We will redesign workflows, roles, and organizational structures around the experience of faculty, staff, and students, and establish the data governance and shared ontology needed for effective AI transformation (AX).

5-1 Redesign administration around the experience of the university community

- Clear promotion and rank bottlenecks through a better rank system and a long-term human-resources strategy.
- Redesign administrative processes and organizational culture around the experience of students, faculty, and staff.
- Create an always-on channel for policy suggestions and reports of administrative friction.

5-2 Implement an integrated AX agent

- Automate repetitive tasks and duplicated procedures, and provide a single point of access to services.
- Introduce an integrated AI system to support academic guidance, regulation searches, and document drafting.
- Standardize guidance, search, and administrative-response services and establish an AX support system.

5-3 Build AI capability and professional expertise across the administration

- Expand opportunities for faculty and staff to receive generative-AI training, including department-level programs.
- Share AX best practices and build a system for expanding practical adoption.
- Educate members on AI ethics, security, and responsibility principles and establish practice standards.

5-4 Establish accountable data governance

- Establish data governance centered on the University Innovation Center, build common management standards, and connect key administrative data across departments.
- Clarify security-management standards, including privacy protection and access rights, and establish accountability.
- Establish analysis and data-use systems to support data-based decision-making.

5-5 Delegate authority and minimize approvals

- Reduce approval steps and improve processing speed through wider delegation.
- Revise facilities-management and administrative-system manuals and expand discretion in the field.
- Simplify regulation and bylaw revision procedures to improve decision-making.

Priority Actions

- Redesign administrative systems and cut processing time by 50%
- Build a data-governance and management system
- Reduce archives by 80% and achieve 100% paperless administration
- Cut regulation-revision and decision-making cycles by 50%

6 Empowering colleges through autonomy and shared governance

The central administration will provide strategy, coordination, and support; colleges will have the authority to lead innovation.

6-1 Connect education and research across organizational boundaries

- Build an education and research governance system that connects freely across college and department boundaries.
- Provide practical support for interdisciplinary education and research.

6-2 Give colleges greater authority and budget autonomy

- Expand the autonomy of colleges while the central administration supports, coordinates, and shares responsibility.
- Expand college operating budgets and respect autonomy in finance, academic operations, and evaluation standards.

6-3 Streamline central governance and strengthen communication

- Reorganize the vice-presidential offices and delegate real authority to office heads: vice president for academic affairs (education, research, students, international affairs, and industry cooperation); vice president for planning and finance (planning, finance, facilities, personnel, administration, information, communication, external relations, and legal affairs); and vice president for the multi-campus system (Siheung, Pyeongchang, Yeongeon, and Suwon campuses).
- Establish a task force to improve the presidential election system.
- Institutionalize quarterly communication between the central administration and faculty, staff, and students.
- Expand students' opportunities to participate in university decision-making discussions.

6-4 Strengthen government and external relations

- Establish standing communication channels with the Office of the President, the Ministry of Education, and the Ministry of Planning and Budget.
- Develop and operate educational programs for National Assembly aides.

6-5 Apply sunset rules to offices and committees

- Regularly evaluate committees, task forces, and centers and reorganize overlapping functions.
- Improve the practice of automatically renewing temporary bodies and establish principles for reorganizing their functions.

Priority Actions

- Establish a task force to build networked governance for education and research units
- Expand college operating budgets and support for convergence education and research
- Institutionalize quarterly communication with the faculty union, staff union, and student council
- Enact sunset rules for committees
- Develop and operate educational programs for National Assembly aides

7 Connecting our campuses through distinctive strengths

We will organize SNU's campuses as one integrated system, with each campus serving as a regional hub for innovation and real-world experimentation.

7-1 Create a people-centered, sustainable campus with better transportation

- Introduce a digital energy-management system (EMS) for autonomous, efficient electricity use and lower carbon emissions.
- Build a dense transportation network including expanded parking, light-rail connections, and a smart-mobility system.

7-2 Create an integrated governance model for all campuses

- Assign a vice president responsibility for the multi-campus system and align organizational, personnel, and financial arrangements accordingly.

7-3 Develop each campus's distinctive role and regional partnerships

- Bring buildings around SNU into campus use in connection with the Nakseongdae AI Valley.
- Develop the Pyeongchang, Siheung, and Suwon campuses as innovation and experimentation hubs alongside their regions (Experimental Stations).
- Pursue the free transfer of the academic forest and convert affiliated schools into experimental schools for educational innovation.

7-4 Build an AI corridor and a biomedical cluster across campuses

- Establish a metropolitan AI-belt strategy linking Gwanak, Siheung, and Yangjae.
- Create the Yeongeon-Gwanak-Siheung biomedical cluster and secure a foundation for biomedical research and industry.

Priority Actions

- Achieve 100% digital EMS for efficient power use and lower carbon emissions
- Establish dedicated vice-presidential responsibility for the multi-campus system
- Bring buildings around the Gwanak campus into campus use and establish a master plan to rebuild Hoam Faculty House

8 Putting SNU's expertise to work for society

We will translate SNU's academic achievements into tangible progress for the nation and society.

8-1 Advance the SNU 2+10 initiative

- Propose to the government 'two global leading universities and ten SNUs at once.'
- Expand research and education cooperation with regional national universities by field and identify common agendas.

8-2 Use admissions to help shape the future of education

- Use evidence and a vision of the qualities future students will need to improve admissions procedures and assessment.
- Introduce in-depth evaluation linked to faculty incentives to point the way for education and strengthen fairness.

8-3 Create a platform for addressing national and social challenges

- Strengthen the National Future Strategy Institute's role as a think tank through a platform-based approach.
- Build a cooperation network with leading global think tanks such as Brookings, RAND, and the Hoover Institution.

8-4 Help industry solve real-world problems

- Expand socially beneficial university-industry cooperation that addresses problems faced by small and medium-sized enterprises and startups.
- Strengthen support for technology transfer to industry and the dedicated office that facilitates it.

Priority Actions

- Build government support for the SNU 2+10 strategy and expand cooperation by field with regional national universities
- Sign partnerships with the Brookings Institution, RAND, and the Hoover Institution

9 Opening more pathways to the world

We will expand opportunities for every member of the SNU community to learn, collaborate, and grow through global engagement.

9-1 Launch a G20 network of leading universities: Global Research University Network (G-RUN, working title)

- Build a cooperation network with 20 representative universities from different countries to address global agendas together through scholarship.
- Host the event on a rotating basis by country, invite the host country's leader, and attract sponsorship from the country's leading companies.

9-2 Expand global learning and professional opportunities (outbound)

- Expand exchange-student destinations by linking with G20 initiative universities such as Harvard and Oxford.
- Introduce an exchange-staff program so members can grow through exposure to administration at leading global universities.

9-3 Making SNU a destination for global talent (inbound)

- Build a one-stop support system for visas, housing, daily life, and administration to help international faculty and students settle.
- Invite distinguished scholars from abroad, expand international summer courses and official development assistance (ODA) programs, and coordinate these initiatives.

9-4 Establish SNU hubs in strategic regions

- Establish education and research cooperation hubs and overseas offices in strategic regions such as Silicon Valley.
- Build networks on the ground abroad in partnership with alumni, overseas universities, and companies.

Priority Actions

- Build joint research, joint curricula, and international-forum partnerships through the G20 initiative (G-RUN, working title)
- Support global experiences for all undergraduates, introduce a staff exchange program, and establish one-stop support for international members
- Establish a Silicon Valley startup hub and an overseas network linked to alumni and companies