

Challey Institute

STRATEGIC PLAN 2022-2024

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MISSION AND VISION



MISSION

The Sheila and Robert Challey Institute for Global Innovation and Growth aims to advance understanding in the areas of innovation, trade, institutions, and human potential to identify policies and solutions for the betterment of society.



VISION

We envision a world where economic opportunity and flourishing are available to all.



INSPIRATION

An important inspiration for the formation of the Challey Institute was Mancur Olson, a graduate of North Dakota State University and pioneer in the fields of Public Choice and New Institutional Economics. Olson's rigorous interdisciplinary approach to exploring big questions was and still is unique, earning him interdisciplinary recognition and esteem. Upon his death, a colleague wrote in *The Economic Journal*, "The combination of an economist's analytical approach, the political scientist's regard for institutions, and the historian's knowledge of the subtleties and complexities of the world, was what made Olson the social scientist he was."

Challey Institute Strategic Plan

OVERVIEW

The Sheila and Robert Challey Institute for Global Innovation and Growth's Strategic Plan, 2022-2024, guides the priorities of the Challey Institute over the next three years. The plan aims to ensure that we achieve our mission, while wisely using resources to maximize their impact.

The plan aligns with North Dakota State University's Strategic Plan, 2021-2026, with its goals of: (1) create and maintain an open and collegial environment to promote inclusivity and diversity of perspectives as a cornerstone of education, research, and outreach; (2) provide transformational experiences for students from diverse backgrounds through high-quality education and opportunities for personal and professional development; (3) advance NDSU's stature as a nationally and internationally recognized research university...scholarly activities to generate new insights and knowledge that will benefit the state and address central challenges of our global future; (4) provide innovative, student-centered education and conduct transformative research that impacts the state through meaningful outreach; and (5) support and enhance innovation and excellence through strategic investments in sustainable infrastructure.

This plan is the result of collaboration among Challey Institute personnel, with important feedback from a variety of stakeholders, including NDSU faculty, staff, students, donors, and alumni; Fargo-Moorhead-West Fargo and Greater North Dakota community members; and other external stakeholders.

ACHIEVING OUR MISSION

As an interdisciplinary institute housed within the College of Business, the Challey Institute serves the entire campus at North Dakota State University, as well as extending beyond the academy to impact our community, region, nation, and world. The Challey Institute works toward achieving its mission by: (1) engaging in peer-reviewed research aimed at important questions surrounding opportunity and flourishing, (2) disseminating research results in a variety of formats and outlets to enhance understanding by policymakers and the general public, and (3) providing student programming that enhances student understanding of the foundations of economic opportunity and flourishing.

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RESEARCH

The Challey Institute will be a leading research center in the areas of innovation, trade, institutions, and human potential. By producing peer-reviewed research for academic journals and other types of publications, the Institute will disseminate knowledge that helps people live fuller and more prosperous lives. The Institute will focus on providing insight into big questions affecting economic opportunity and flourishing. As stated by Mancur Olson in an investigation of why some nations are rich and others are poor: “The best thing a society can do to increase prosperity is to wise up... When we are right – and have the clarity needed to prevail against the special interests and the quacks – we make an extraordinary contribution to the amelioration of poverty and the progress of humanity” (Olson, Journal of Economic Perspectives, 1996).



STUDENT PROGRAMMING

Through teaching and extracurricular activities, the Challey Institute advances undergraduate and graduate student understanding in the areas of innovation, trade, institutions, and human potential, through the lens of economic opportunity and human flourishing. The Institute will pursue curricular and co-curricular content in these areas in all disciplines at North Dakota State University. We will also work with graduate students of any discipline who are interested in these areas. We aim to engage every student at North Dakota State University with Challey Institute instruction and activities.



OUTREACH

Consistent with the land-grant mission of North Dakota State University, the Challey Institute aims to make its peer-reviewed research accessible to the general public. We want to be public opinion leaders, engaging in op-ed writing, speaking, and media appearances to disseminate scientific knowledge to the larger community. The Institute will produce research briefs and participate in local and regional speaking engagements to inform the public on issues related to innovation, trade, institutions, and human potential. The Institute’s activities in this area will enable more informed decisions and better understanding of these issues by policymakers and the general public.

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COMPARATIVE ADVANTAGE

The Challey Institute's interdisciplinary nature, our University's land grant history, and our location in the rural Midwest all serve as sources of comparative advantage.

Inspired by NDSU alumnus Mancur Olson, the Challey Institute applies a unique interdisciplinary approach that includes scholars from a variety of fields. Utilizing the varying insights, methodologies, and perspectives from multiple disciplines gives us the ability to advance understanding of important issues in a way that more narrowly focused centers or institutes are unable to do.

Our University's land grant history, and its associated commitment to access and engagement with the community, gives us advantages in reaching large numbers of students and engaging with the broader community. We can play a major role in transforming the lives of ordinary citizens (students and the community) by sharing information and starting conversations about big ideas.

Finally, our location in the rural Midwest provides us with insights that serve as an advantage in addressing important questions and puzzles. Because many important questions and puzzles surrounding economic opportunity and flourishing involve rural and small urban communities in middle-America, we experience many of the challenges on a daily basis. Living in the middle of these puzzles provides us with important insights and a better understanding of the questions that will give us an advantage in addressing them.

PUZZLES OF THE RURAL MIDWEST

An important question related to economic growth and opportunity is how to resolve regional workforce shortages in rural and small urban areas. This is a problem that has plagued Fargo, ND, for the last several years, providing on the ground evidence that helps to sharpen our research in this area. Another important challenge facing middle-America is looking for a way to foster a culture of innovation and entrepreneurship in rural and small urban areas. Recent surveys have shown that North Dakota is at the center of a puzzle: According to one recent compilation, North Dakota is ranked the second best state in the country for startups (business.org, 2019). However, according to another, it is fourth worst in terms of innovation (WalletHub, 2021).

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PARTNER ORGANIZATIONS

As an interdisciplinary institute at NDSU, we partner with other organizations across the University in pursuit of our vision and mission. Partnerships can take many forms, including but not limited to: funding, programs, events, and resource sharing. We have long-term partnerships with the Center for Entrepreneurship and Family Business, housed in the College of Business, and the Center for the Study of Public Choice and Private Enterprise (PCPE), housed in the College of Agriculture, Food Systems and Natural Resources.

In addition, the Challey Institute serves as an umbrella organization for a broader network of centers and programs committed to economic opportunity and flourishing at NDSU. These organizations pursue a joint mission and collaborate on student programming, research, and outreach efforts. PCPE serves as an organization under the umbrella of the Challey Institute.

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Start-Up Phase

During the start-up phase (2022-2024), we aim: (1) to advance knowledge in a way that provides solutions to solve big problems, such as reducing poverty and providing more people with opportunities to flourish; (2) to extend our reach to students across campus at NDSU through classes, events, and other extracurricular opportunities; (3) to gain recognition as the “go to” place in understanding the foundations of innovation, opportunity, and human flourishing, and to achieve a reputation where local, regional, and national media and policymakers seek out our experts in these areas.



GOALS

1 - Recruitment

Recruit faculty and researchers who will work to enhance understanding, disseminate knowledge, and facilitate student programming around issues related to economic opportunity and flourishing

2 - Research

Generate research aimed at providing insights and knowledge that will benefit the region, the nation, and the world, tackling important questions surrounding economic opportunity and flourishing

3 - Student Programming

Provide transformative student programming opportunities to as many NDSU students as possible, allowing students to engage in big questions surrounding economic opportunity and flourishing and gain an appreciation of diverse perspectives

4 - Outreach

Engage in outreach to the broader community and policy audiences to facilitate a better understanding of issues related to economic opportunity and flourishing

5 - Brand

Build the Challey Institute brand in order to increase the effectiveness and impact of our research, student programming, and outreach activities

Challey Institute Strategic Plan

Goal: Recruitment

Recruit faculty and researchers who will work to enhance understanding, disseminate knowledge, and facilitate student programming around issues related to economic opportunity and flourishing

1. Recruit new* tenure-track faculty in disciplines across campus

- Identify areas of need for the Challey Institute and seek partner departments that are willing to recruit in those areas.
- Identify potential partner organizations that may facilitate fit with the Challey Institute's mission in different departments – e.g. recruit for joint appointments with PCPE.

*The Challey Institute has recruited eight faculty members through 2021, with plans to recruit additional faculty in the next two academic cycles. This is in addition to the PCPE director and three other PCPE faculty members who were hired prior to the Challey Institute being formed; all new and existing PCPE faculty are scholars of the Challey Institute.

2. Engage other NDSU faculty in activities that align with the mission of the Challey Institute. This includes a Challey Institute Faculty Fellows (Fellows) program that pays NDSU faculty (who are not faculty in the Challey Institute or in partner organizations) a stipend to do work aligned with the Challey Institute's mission, as well as looking for other opportunities to collaborate with faculty across campus.

Challey Institute Strategic Plan

Goal: Research

Generate research aimed at providing insights and knowledge that will benefit the region, the nation, and the world, tackling important questions surrounding economic opportunity and flourishing

1. Identify and support targeted research
 - Meet as a group of Challey Institute Faculty Scholars (Scholars) to identify key areas where we have a comparative advantage in doing research.
 - Identify research consumers (e.g. state governments, chambers of commerce) and work with them to obtain funding/direction to study issues impacting the upper Midwest.
 - Issue request for proposals to perform research with policy implications for the U.S. and the upper Midwest.
 - Select and fund research proposals in these areas.
2. Share implications of research for specific issues and policies
 - Provide annual training workshops for affiliated faculty (Scholars, Fellows, partner organizations) to learn about creating outreach materials to convey research implications in a non-technical manner. These workshops may cover op-ed and non-technical writing, media training, and presentations to community groups.
 - Affiliated faculty will write research and policy briefs, op-eds, and blog posts based on research findings.
 - Affiliated faculty will speak about their research findings at business and community events outside of academia.
3. Provide resources (e.g., data, software, travel) for Scholars to perform high-quality, peer-reviewed research.
4. In addition to targeted studies, support other research aligned with the mission by affiliated faculty and the Challey Institute director.
5. Hold regular meetings with affiliated faculty to discuss individual and organizational goals and to facilitate comradery, teamwork, and collaboration.
6. Support sabbatical-style visiting appointments for Scholars to generate increased external collaboration and learning.
7. Collaborate with faculty across the NDSU campus to explore joint research opportunities.
8. Explore collaboration opportunities with other university centers and think tanks with similar missions.
9. Scholars will develop and measure tangible research goals on an annual basis.

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Goal: Student Programming

Provide transformative student programming opportunities to as many NDSU students as possible, allowing students to engage in big questions surrounding economic opportunity and flourishing and gain an appreciation of diverse perspectives

1. Develop a certificate in private enterprise that is available to all NDSU students. This program is a 9-credit certificate that aims to: (1) introduce students to the fundamentals of business and economics; (2) give students an appreciation for the differences between different economic systems (e.g. socialism and capitalism) and their implications; (3) give students an appreciation for the positive role that entrepreneurs and businesses can play in society; and (4) engage students in discussion, critical thinking, and exposure to diverse points of view surrounding important societal issues.
2. Host the Human Progress and Flourishing Workshop, a series that invites academic researchers to present their research at NDSU. The series is aimed at graduate and undergraduate students and faculty from all disciplines. The series focusses on issues surrounding innovation, trade, institutions, and human flourishing. Students can attend individual events or enroll in a 1-credit class aligned with the series.
3. Invite thought leaders to campus each year to talk about ideas surrounding economic opportunity and flourishing through the Menard Family Distinguished Speaker Series. These are public events using a mixture of presentation and Q&A-style formats.
4. Co-sponsor scholarships for all first-generation students who major in business. These students will be expected to attend Challey Institute events and engage in activities throughout the year. This scholarship is offered jointly with the Olson Dean of Business.
5. Provide scholarships for students who pursue the certificate in private enterprise and attend Challey Institute events.
6. Sponsor one-day discussion colloquia and semester-long reading groups facilitated by Scholars on topics aligned with the mission. Use a streamlined process for student selection and coordinate themes aligned with other speakers and activities.
7. Support affiliated faculty in developing and teaching undergraduate/graduate courses and specializations aligned with the mission. Examples include 'Market Values' and the 'Human Progress and Flourishing Workshop'.
8. Explore opportunities for sponsoring Ph.D. students affiliated with the Challey Institute. This may involve providing graduate assistantships for students across campus whose research interests align with the mission, providing assistantships for students who teach courses that cover our content, and developing a Ph.D. or interdisciplinary specialization aligned with existing Ph.D. programs.
9. Support undergraduate student research with affiliated faculty.

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Goal: Student Programming

Provide transformative student programming opportunities to as many NDSU students as possible, allowing students to engage in big questions surrounding economic opportunity and flourishing and gain an appreciation of diverse perspectives

10. Invite international academics business executives, and government officials to participate in a residency program as visiting senior scholars. Scholars-in-residence will present workshops, teach classes, conduct research, and exchange ideas with the NDSU community.

11. Collaborate with existing partner organizations and develop new partner relationships to enhance our reach to students across the University.

12. Connect with existing student groups across campus to introduce content and ideas to a broader range of students.

13. Explore opportunities to connect students with internship opportunities aligned with the mission (e.g., Institute for Humane Studies internships, State Policy Network internships).

14. Collaborate with NDSU departments and colleges to develop interdisciplinary events (e.g., an event where scholars from multiple disciplines explain Nobel Prize winning research in simple terms; a panel event discussing a public policy issue from multiple disciplinary perspectives).

15. Scholars will develop and measure tangible student impact goals on an annual basis.

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Goal: Outreach and Brand

Engage in outreach to the broader community and policy audiences to facilitate a better understanding of issues related to economic opportunity and flourishing

1. Affiliated faculty will engage in outreach based on their expertise and peer-reviewed research. This may include writing research briefs, op-eds, or blog posts, developing podcasts, participating in media interviews, or other forms of outreach aimed at educating the public.
2. Affiliated faculty will speak at business and community events with the aim of informing the public on issues related to their expertise and peer-reviewed research.
3. Invite specialists to train faculty in writing to popular audiences and speaking with the media.
4. Scholars will develop and measure tangible outreach goals on an annual basis.

Build the Challey Institute brand in order to increase the effectiveness and impact of our research, student programming, and outreach activities

1. Provide a consistent message to all stakeholders that promotes our activities and furthers our mission.
2. Publish and disseminate content on our website and through social media and other communication channels.
3. Produce communication and marketing materials for stakeholder groups, including: donors, NDSU faculty and administrators, NDSU students, NDSU alumni, state and local policymakers, the Fargo-Moorhead community, and members of the general public.
4. Create a community of supporters who are interested in improving economic opportunity and flourishing.
5. Work with partner organizations to streamline branding and promote clear communication regarding collaborations and shared activities.
6. Develop and maintain strong relationships with the University and with local, region, and national organizations and leaders who are interested in issues of economic opportunity and flourishing.
7. Develop metrics to measure the strength of our brand and evaluate it over time.

Challey Institute Strategic Plan

Next Phase

After our start-up phase (2025-), our aspirational goals are: (1) to be on the leading edge of producing knowledge that advances our understanding and promotes human flourishing and economic opportunity; (2) to have a transformational impact on all students at NDSU, helping them ponder big questions and opening their eyes to the larger environment within which innovation and flourishing occur; (3) to have a strong reputation as an institute with experts in economic opportunity and human flourishing, serving as the “go to” place for people asking questions about innovation, entrepreneurship, trade, institutions, and human potential.



STRATEGIES

Research

After the start-up phase, we plan to have more well-defined research areas and teams. We will meet on a regular basis to identify areas of research and collaborative opportunities. We will continue to generate research results, disseminate research, and publicize research. We will work on interdisciplinary grant applications, aiming to tackle big research issues.

Student Programming

We aim to impact every student at NDSU through our courses, extracurricular activities, and speaker events. An important component of this goal will be to make our undergraduate certificate as meaningful as possible. We want this certificate to be viewed as an essential part of the NDSU experience, and one that awakens students to big questions and the world around them. We also aim to have heavy involvement of graduate students from multiple disciplines who will engage in research and teaching in the areas of innovation, trade, institutions, and human flourishing.

We will continue to expand our programming for undergraduate and graduate students, with the aim of reaching more students, increasing student openness to ideas, and helping students explore important questions affecting opportunity and flourishing. We aim to increase student attendance at our events, increase student engagement in extracurricular activities, increase student enrollment in our classes, and increase student collaboration with affiliated faculty in research activities.

Outreach and Brand

We aim to have a well-established reputation as experts in understanding contributors to economic opportunity and human flourishing, with a desire to empower individuals. We aim to regularly share our ideas in high-profile media outlets and to speak with local and regional media about issues affecting the upper Midwest, U.S., and the world.