



THE QUEEN'S  
ANNIVERSARY PRIZES  
FOR HIGHER AND FURTHER EDUCATION  
2017



SRUC



SRUC Strategic Plan  
2018-2023

# Introduction

Throughout a history spanning more than 100 years, SRUC has demonstrated an outstanding tradition of innovation, partnership and growth to support resilient rural economies and communities.

The changes and opportunities facing the rural sector here in Scotland and the UK - not least as a result of Brexit - are once in a lifetime, while the complexity of feeding the world's exploding population demands truly game changing action.

SRUC is in a unique position to respond and, to ensure we are able to do so, we have embarked on a bold and ambitious journey. It involves building on our history of adapting to continuous change so that our contribution to sustainable, innovative and competitive rural economies remains relevant and high impact.

Informed by intensive engagement with our staff, students and stakeholders, this strategic plan sets out how we will deliver by becoming a unique 21st Century university that is regional yet international; vocational; market led; and mission diverse. With such massive change factors at play, this is the only means by which the new knowledge and innovation needed for economic growth and solutions to global challenges, and the development of human capital to exploit them, can be brought together effectively.

Transformation is already underway at SRUC and it must continue at pace. Success requires openness and a sustained effort on the part of our leadership and staff. This is about capitalising on our unique position and redefining the way we work with each other, with our students and with our partners to create a truly inspirational asset for the rural sector and for wider society.



*Wayne Powell*

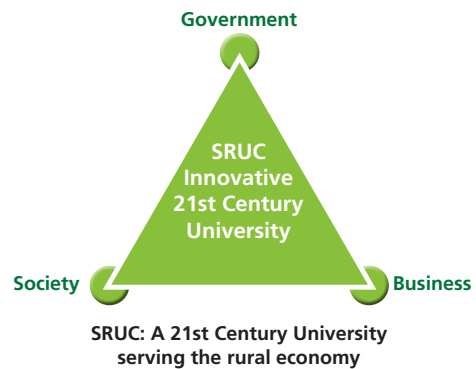
Prof. Wayne Powell  
SRUC Principal and Chief Executive

# Context: why a rural university?

## A unique force for Scotland

Through our heritage, experience and expertise, we are deeply involved in supporting government, rural business and communities. We occupy a unique position as an anchor institution connecting these three elements for the benefit of rural economies and wider society. The creation of our new university will further strengthen our ability to be that connecting force.

As employers and entrepreneurs of the future in a rapidly changing world, Scotland's workforce must be well qualified and work ready, with skills that fit modern job opportunities. We want to reshape and refine the traditional university model to become a 21st Century 'innovation factory' serving the rural sector. In this era of rapid technological change, we will not only prepare learners for their first job, as a rural university we will work with them as partners as they develop skills that benefit them throughout their life and support them in lifelong professional development. We will offer our students a lifetime guarantee that, even as demands change, they and the sector in which they work can succeed.



## Student experience at the heart of what we do

For our learners, and in support of Scottish Government priorities, our university will provide a variety of appropriate routes for individuals pursuing rural careers into the next stage of their 'learner journey'. This includes flexible study options, opportunities for lifelong learning and accessible work-based learning.

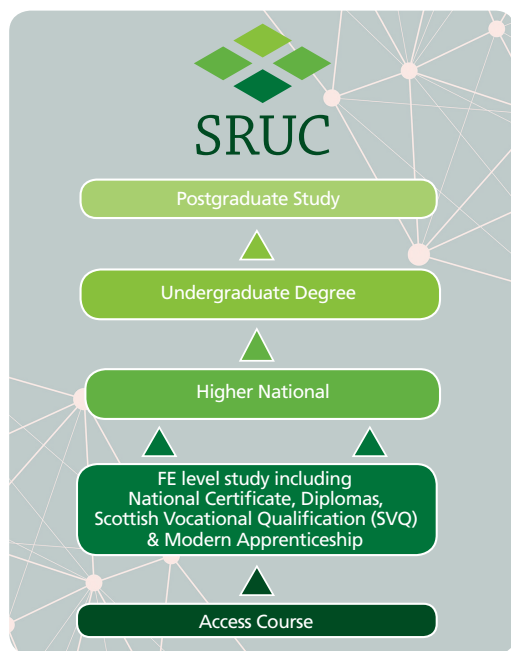
Unlike most other Scottish colleges and universities, SRUC already offers numerous routes into training and academic study, with opportunities for progression from entry level right through to PhD. We have a unique regional presence and strong links with employers, schools, industry and other partners. Our new faculty model - and our future university status - will strengthen this approach by ensuring we deliver regional

training, education, research and consultancy to meet local economic needs.

The integration of education and training with cutting edge research and nationwide consultancy and veterinary services offers learners unique exposure to new knowledge, unrivalled industry intelligence and contacts to enhance their skills, knowledge, ability to innovate and readiness for work.

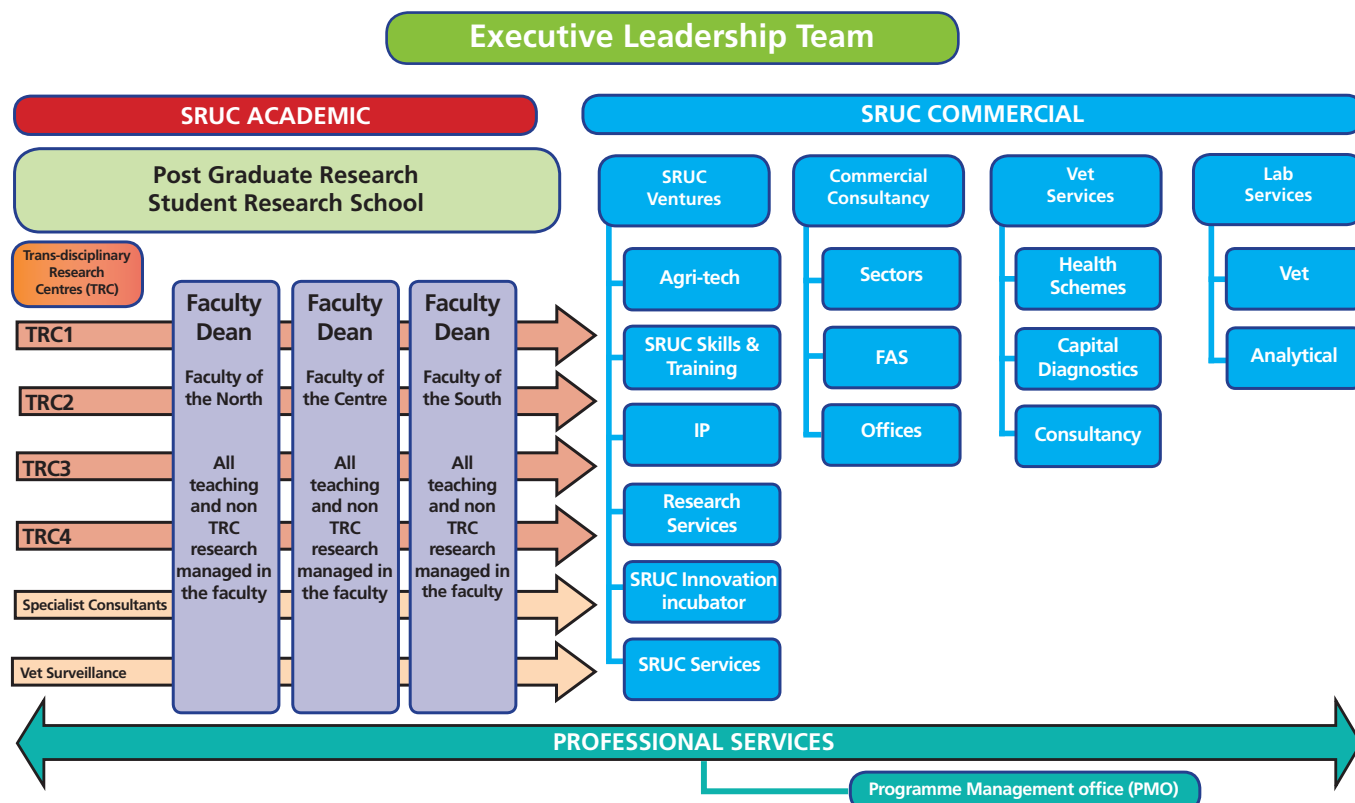
## Research of benefit to society

Furthermore SRUC's best in class research delivers social and economic impact addressing local rural sector challenges that also have international resonance. SRUC possesses a unique asset in our vast resource of epidemiological, social, economic, genomic, and biological data. This presents a major opportunity. We will reflect and anticipate the priorities of the Scottish Government and other funders, converting this information into knowledge of benefit to society.



SRUC Progression Pathways

# SRUC as a modern university



## Towards a faculty structure

During 2018 we shall establish a new business model comprising regional faculties in North, Central and South West Scotland as shown in the diagram above. The faculties will maximise the potential of our fantastic people and expertise while creating new opportunities for partnerships, co-location, investment and growth. Regional Deans have been appointed to each faculty. They will play a central role in shaping our new Academic model.

We shall develop a clear progression-based approach to excellent Further and Higher Education at each of our campuses. A broad range of Further Education teaching will be delivered at each location. Local investment will focus on providing high quality practical resources, including high-performing farms as platforms for SRUC activity.

Research will be firmly based within the faculty structure, ensuring strong researcher-student interaction at all levels. We will establish a mixed model in which most staff contribute to teaching, research and knowledge transfer.

Links between the Academic and Commercial parts of SRUC shall be strengthened. Vets and specialist consultants will be drawn into the faculties to consolidate, promote and develop a greater ethos of scientific exchange.

We shall also establish a limited number of cross-faculty, outcome driven Transdisciplinary Research Centres (TRCs). They will develop and maintain research partnerships within and beyond Scotland to tackle local, national and international challenges. A key feature of the TRCs will be active engagement with students and industry partners. The Centres will reflect the growing trend towards public/private partnerships in research and the need to achieve maximum impact from innovation by involving end users and other stakeholders in the research and development process.

Activity is already underway to help shape the faculties with discussions scheduled across our teaching, research, consultancy and veterinary activities. We envisage the faculties will be operational by the beginning of the 2018/19 academic year.



## North

Faculty of Food,  
Agriculture and  
Leisure.

## Central

Faculty of Land Economy  
and Policy, Animal,  
Plant and Soil Science.

## South & West

Faculty of Dairy Science,  
Forestry and Engineering.

## SRUC Commercial

As the biggest changes to agriculture and food production in a lifetime take shape, we are fundamentally redefining and repositioning our commercial activities to meet the changing requirements of farms and rural businesses.

We shall create a practical route for SRUC innovations to be explored and taken to market and will actively seek out partners, within and beyond Scotland, with whom to develop new business.

Building on our existing consultancy business, we will set ourselves apart by providing new, high quality, innovative products and services. These will be delivered by an expert team armed with the cutting edge data and expertise needed to support our evolving customer base as it prepares for and adapts to the post-Brexit environment.

We shall provide improved support for our regional office network for continued growth. Leaner internal systems will give our consultancy staff the space to focus on their core activities. We shall appoint new management to enhance the co-ordination of our largest contracts.

We will revitalise our veterinary laboratory services through our new collaboration with Moredun Research Institute; by increasing our capacity; and by developing new products. This will include better aligning our soil and environmental sample testing with our consultancy field services to deliver a truly differentiated service consistent with anticipated changes to agricultural policy.

# Vision, mission, values

## Vision

To be a unique, market-led and mission diverse 21st Century rural university.

## Mission

To drive the future needs of a dynamic, innovative and competitive rural sector in Scotland and to solve the biggest global agri-food challenges.

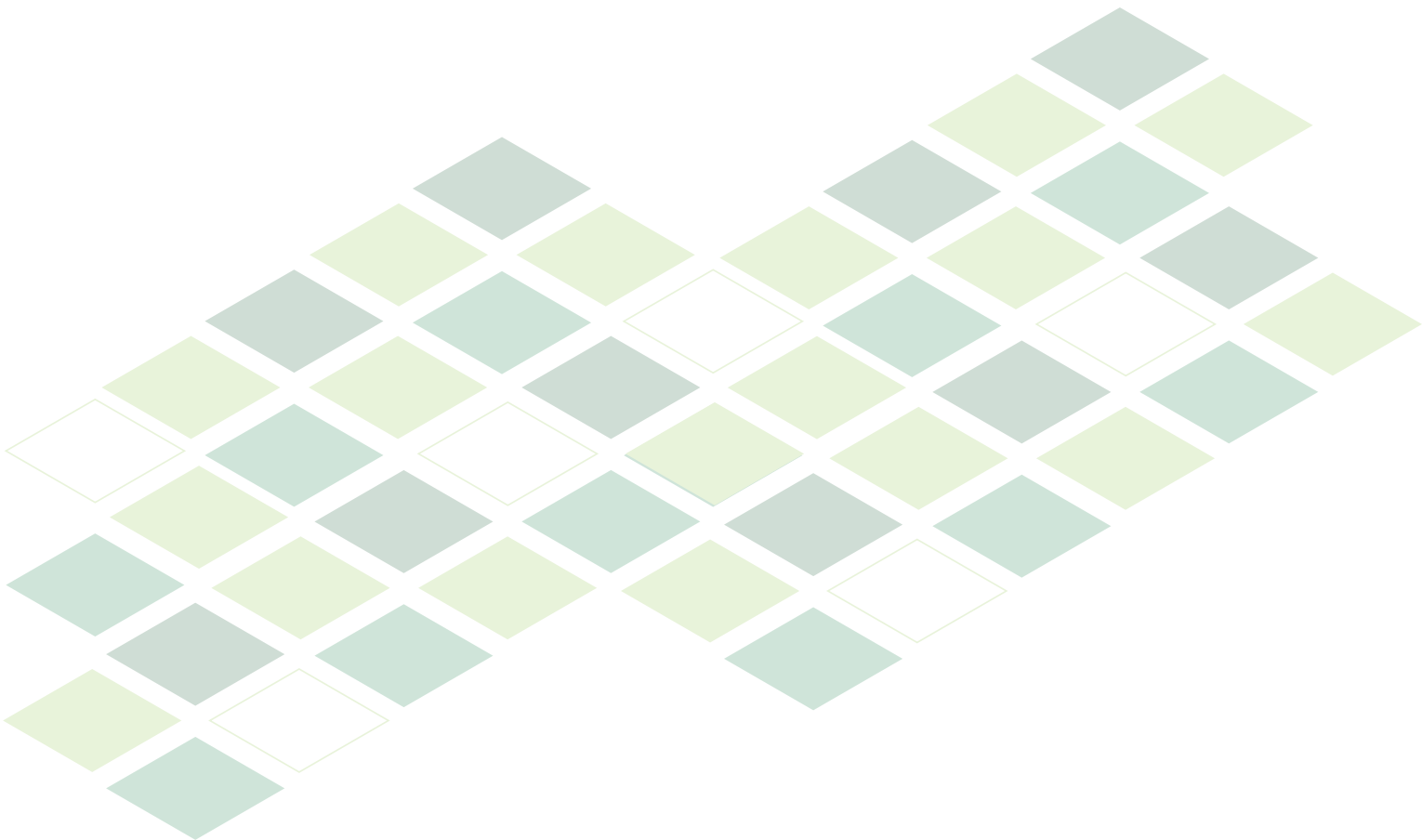
## Values

**Respect** – we will recognise that everyone in the organisation makes a valuable contribution to our success.

**Innovate** - we don't wait for things to happen, we constructively challenge how things are done.

**Support** – we look beyond the boundary of our own roles to support others and share knowledge.

**Excel** - we take pride in contributions, have high standards of excellence and always work to our core values.



# Strategic aims 2018 -2023

SRUC's strategic aims will define our success as a new, 21<sup>st</sup> Century university.

## Integration

- We will be recognised as Scotland's national rural university. Our faculties in North, Central and South West Scotland will include a nationwide consultancy network offering world leading, integrated research, education and consultancy with local, national and global reach and impact.

### Achieved by:

- Appointing Faculty Deans for the North, Central and South West and developing clearly distinctive but complementary plans for each faculty in terms of:
  - Delivering teaching and learning programmes that provide a holistic rural training base at Further Education level and more specialist options in Higher Education.
  - Producing research outcomes that address relevant local and international challenges.
  - Providing cutting edge advisory services and knowledge exchange programmes to ensure that knowledge drives behaviour.

- We will have one name for one organisation.

### Achieved by:

- Consolidation of our current brands into one consistent brand across the organisation.

- We will evidence added-value impact from the integration of our research, teaching, consultancy and veterinary surveillance.

### Achieved by:

- Developing our new integrated faculty model encompassing research, teaching, consultancy and veterinary surveillance, and a complementary range of commercial consultancy, research services and new product development businesses within SRUC to:
  - Produce students that help shape the rural industries and agenda in Scotland and beyond.
  - Undertake research that drives innovation and progress in the land based sector.
  - Ensure our research and learning drives real change with rural communities and at farm level.
  - Fully realise the commercial values of our expertise and activities both nationally and internationally.
- Establishing short life working group by March 2018 to map out all SRUC marketing activity and develop a group marketing strategy.

- We will grow revenue to £100 million by 2023. We will reinvest surpluses to deliver our vision.

### Achieved by:

- Developing three new products and five new services.
- Leveraging new investment to support our core activity.
- Seeking profitable acquisitions and joint ventures, establishing three new strategically driven partnerships by 2020.
- Identifying three new innovative ideas per year from proof of concept through to implementation across the organisation.
- Development of an SRUC investment club (ALBA Agri Tech) by the end of 2018.

# Industry-facing

- We will have a regional presence which shapes economic, skills and training strategies at local and regional levels.

**Achieved by:**

- Using the strength of close working relationships between farmers and our our consultancy services to develop and support our clients' workforce skills requirements and build career opportunities for our students.

- We will achieve the highest possible result in the new Knowledge Exchange Framework which will benchmark how effectively universities engage with industry.

**Achieved by:**

- Improving commercial income.
- Making better use of our intellectual property by exploiting and increasing the number of inventions within SRUC.
- Ensuring we will have industry-facing research and education projects which add value to partners.

- We will be the UK market leader in rural consultancy services, recognised for our expertise and the first choice of our customers.

**Achieved by:**

- Developing the capability and expertise of our consultants to provide innovative, customised and practical solutions for their customers.
- Developing new markets and making the best use of our recognised expertise.

- We will operate a highly efficient, quality assured veterinary diagnostic laboratory services to support farm animal disease surveillance and to provide associated globally recognised veterinary consultancy services.

**Achieved by:**

- Maximising the range of excellent opportunities presented by consolidation of our laboratory functions and expertise to the new Moredun Research Institute.
- Investing in innovative diagnostics research and associated laboratory technologies.



## Innovation for Impact

- We will have a 'best in class' result in the 2020 Research Excellence Framework (REF) exercise to measure the quality and impact of research in UK higher education institutions.

### Achieved by:

- Improving our research environment by increasing partnerships, postgraduate numbers and research income.
- Improving the quality and number of our research outputs.
- Improving the impact of our research as evidenced by top scoring REF case studies.
- Capitalising on our intellectual capital and talent by creating a unique internal 'orchard' to nurture entrepreneurial innovation.

## International

- We will be engaged in collaborative, international research partnerships to tackle global challenges and benefit Scotland.

### Achieved by:

- Developing a clear priority ranking of international opportunities that maximise the education, research and commercial synergies with SRUC strengths.
- Supporting the development of joint teaching, research and commercial partnerships within identified countries and regions.
- Develop at least four long-term strategic partnerships between SRUC and international partners as vehicles for future investment and development.

## Inspiring

- We will be at Gold level in the Teaching Excellence Framework in recognition of our excellence in teaching, learning and outcomes, helping to inform prospective student choice.

### Achieved by:

- Improving the quality of our teaching.
- Improving the quality of the learning environment.
- Improving student outcomes and learning gain, establishing a clear progression pathway from Further through to Higher Education.

- We will be a leaner, more agile and consistently high performing organisation.

### Achieved by:

- Streamlining structures and service delivery models, improving efficiency and focusing on impact and performance delivery.
- Developing smarter, more innovative and more agile ways of working.
- Reducing overhead costs across the organisation by 10% by mid-2019.

- We will be recognised as an employer of choice where a culture of engagement, innovation and excellence thrives.

### Achieved by:

- Driving and developing an energised, engaged and empowered culture.
- Developing leaders who can inspire and support people through change.
- Creating an organisational reputation that attracts the most talented people.



*Scotland's Rural College*  
*Leading the way in Agriculture and Rural Research, Education and Consulting*

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