



**Oregon State**  
University

**College of Science**  
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**February 17, 2022**

**Dear College of Science Strategic Partners,**

The College of Science's (COS) [Strategic Partners](#) will engage in three small focus group sessions on Feb 23, March 2 and March 3, 2022. The purpose of these sessions is for you to provide input and vision to the College of Science's new strategic plan, **Strategic Plan 2022-2027**, which will update our [2015-2020 Strategic Plan](#). Our new plan will provide the college with broad overarching goals and actions that align with our 2021 Diversity Action Plan "[Embedding Equity, Access and Inclusion](#)," and Oregon State University's [Strategic Plan SP4.0](#).

The deliberative phase of our strategic planning process builds capacity through community engagement, visioning, assessment, and action to create measurable progress and improvement to advance inclusive excellence in all aspects of our [mission](#). In recognition of the importance of embedding equity in the functions of our organization and the processes supporting these functions, your insight and ongoing commitment are necessary to develop a strong strategic plan.

Your input will be used in an anonymous manner, without the inclusion of any identifying attributes. Our [Strategic Planning Committee](#) will look for broad themes and issues that emerge from the collective responses of COS members to inform actions and timelines in our final strategic plan. You can find details of our engagement process on this [website](#).

Our session will be 90 minutes long in which we will engage you in a focus group listening session to deliberate a set of four **strategic questions**. Our facilitators will moderate all the sessions and take notes of the discussion.

In the remainder of this document, you will find the following materials.

**Conversation Guidelines to be followed at all our sessions.**

**Strategic Questions for COS Strategic Partners Focus Group Sessions.**

Please review these materials, reflect on our conversation guidelines and come prepared to engage! We appreciate your willingness to participate in this process.

Sincerely,  
Vrushali Bokil  
Chair, COS Strategic Planning Committee  
Associate Dean for Research & Graduate Studies  
College of Science, Oregon State University

# Conversation Guidelines

## College of Science

### [Embedding Equity Access and Inclusion](#)

**Respect** Each of us has the right to hold opinions and beliefs that are our own. Assume good intent from everyone. Let us challenge or criticize ideas and not the person.

**Listen** Practice active listening. Each of us has the right to speak. Allow everyone their chance to speak and participate.

**Appreciate** When a person is speaking, listen deeply, courteously, and with full attention.

**Speak** Share your voice, your experience and your discomfort. Be mindful of how much talking space you occupy. At the same time, be empowered to speak up when someone dominates the conversation.

**Interrogate** Have real conversations and interrogate reality. Be prepared to check your biases, to question yourself and others. Support your statements with evidence and rationale, and expect the same from others.

**Recognize** Each of us possesses many identities. We do not speak to represent our race, our gender or any of our other identities. We speak for our whole unique selves.

**Advocate** Look to see who is present and who is not, and be intentional in seeking out and amplifying voices that are not in the room.

**Transform** When the conversation becomes difficult, breathe. Take care of yourself. Find the source of your anger or discomfort and transform it to constructive action. Practice humility and compassion.

**Protect** Take the ideas, stories and what you've learned with you and share. Leave the names and who said what in our virtual discussion room. Maintain the privacy of our meetings.



# Strategic Partner Questions

**Descriptions:** Participants will answer **four Strategic Question Sets outlined below** in a small group setting (10 or less participants). A facilitator will moderate the session and one or more note-takers will capture emerging themes in the group conversation.

**Question Set 1** From your unit's perspective, how does the College of Science (COS) contribute to the [mission, commitments and vision of Oregon State University](#)? When you talk about, or hear others talk about the COS in university forums, workgroups and other settings what is the perception that is generated about the COS? Is there a story that best exemplifies this perception?

What **best practices** should we adopt in the next 1-5 years to achieve inclusive excellence<sup>1</sup> in our mission and realize our vision? Are there best practices that will be mutually beneficial to our respective units and that strengthen our collaboration?

**Question Set 2** What are the College of Science's **signature strengths in research**? What areas of research and innovation should we prioritize in the future to **raise our impact**? What priorities in collaboration do you hear about from your faculty and staff that partner with the College of Science?

What aspects should we focus on to promote Science and prepare students for the workforce? Are research and discovery integrated in student learning experiences? When you hear from your students about the courses that they take in the COS, do they seem hopeful about their future success or job prospects?

What is the College of Science "brand"? What are we known for?

**Question Set 3** What **transformative ways of teaching and learning** has the COS invested in? What novel and innovative approaches are we known for? How have these contributed to increased learning, improved access to education and student success?

What teaching and learning experiences within the College of Science have been the most **impactful to student success**? What college services and resources have students used that have helped them achieve academic goals? If you were thinking about undergraduates, how about graduate students? Or vice versa?

How should the college invest in delivering content to **best support student learning and success**? In which educational tools and techniques should we invest in the future to achieve inclusive excellence in our mission?

**Question Set 4:** As an external Strategic Partner, what **challenges and trends** do you see as potentially affecting or influencing how our college provides its services and conducts its mission?

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<sup>1</sup> [Inclusive excellence](#) is the recognition that an organization's success is dependent on how well it values, engages and includes the rich diversity of its community members, including its students, faculty, staff, alumni, friends and affiliates.

What **key issues** must the College of Science leadership, faculty, students and staff deal with and what **opportunities** should the college pursue?