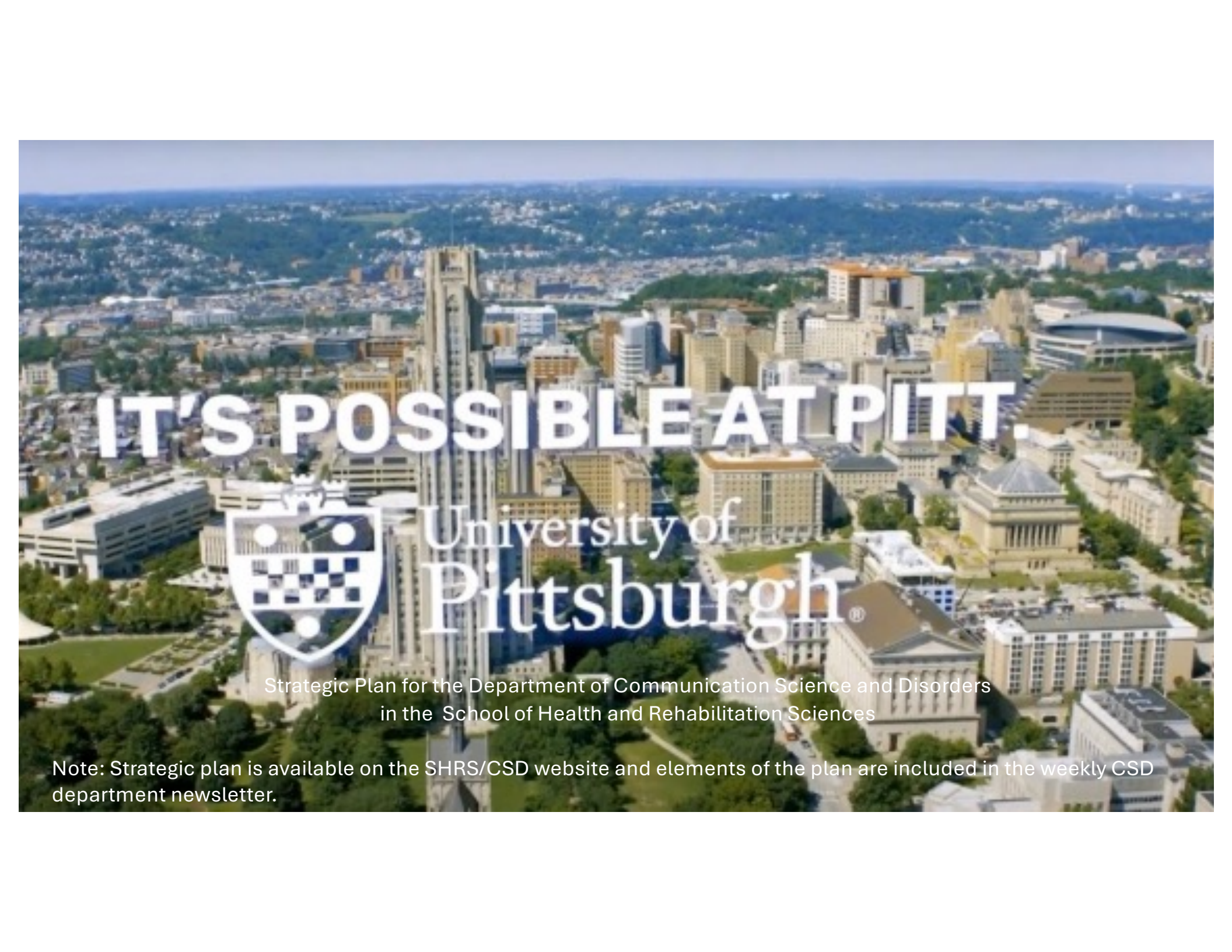


An aerial photograph of the Pittsburgh city skyline, showing a dense cluster of buildings, including the PPG Place tower, and surrounding green spaces. The University of Pittsburgh logo is overlaid on the left side of the image.

# IT'S POSSIBLE AT PITT.



University of  
Pittsburgh®

Strategic Plan for the Department of Communication Science and Disorders  
in the School of Health and Rehabilitation Sciences

Note: Strategic plan is available on the SHRS/CSD website and elements of the plan are included in the weekly CSD department newsletter.

| PLAN FOR PITT                                                      | 1. CULTIVATE STUDENT SUCCESS                                     |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>SHRS</b><br><b>5-YEAR</b><br><b>PERFORMANCE</b><br><b>GOALS</b> | ATTAIN TOP-10 NATIONAL RANKINGS FOR MARQUEE EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS |

## CSD GOALS:

Currently, there is a shortage of both Speech Language Pathologists and Audiologists in the US. Integrate simulation into the graduate programs to enhance and accelerate clinical learning to support larger cohorts of students and thereby larger graduating classes ready to provide professional care to those in need of communication assessment and treatment.

Faculty development to support classroom and clinical teaching capacity to meet the needs of modern undergraduate and graduate students and environments.

Expand capacity for multidisciplinary, community-engaged, and precision-focused research in communication sciences and disorders by growing research training across all programs through NIH R25 and T32 awards, NSF REU support, and foundation-funded training grants.

Develop specific research training pathways that allow cohorts of Communication Science (BA), Speech-Language Pathology (MA/MS), and Audiology (AuD) students to meaningfully participate in research communities and complete distinctive, end-to-end research projects.

| Goal                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | Measurable objectives                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | Strategies                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | Schedule for Analysis                                                            |
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| Currently, there is a shortage of both Speech Language Pathologists and Audiologists in the US. Integrate simulation into the graduate programs to enhance and accelerate clinical learning to support larger cohorts of students and thereby larger graduating classes ready to provide professional care to those in need of communication assessment and treatment. | Simulation embedded in the MA-SLP program by 2027.<br>Simulation introduced into AuD program by 2027.<br>Formalized opportunity for CSD undergraduates to be trained as standardized patients to participate in OSCEs related to work study and/or credit bearing opportunity.<br>Majority of faculty participating in evaluating OSCEs by 2028.         | Introduce simulation as part of curriculum during CSD retreat.<br>Hire faculty member expert in simulation.<br>Make use of simulation spaces in the new SHRS facility and the Health Home Lab.<br>Continuing education for faculty and staff related to simulation through Department meeting interactions. | Progress reviewed in a fall semester department meeting and yearly retreat (May) |
| Faculty development to support classroom and clinical teaching capacity to meet the needs of modern undergraduate and graduate students and environments.                                                                                                                                                                                                              | Faculty and student evaluations of didactic and clinical courses and instruction.<br>Review of all syllabi and canvas courses by 2029.                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | Continuing education provided by the University of Pittsburgh Center for Teaching and Learning (UCTL) during department meetings and yearly department retreat.                                                                                                                                             | Progress reviewed in a fall semester department meeting and yearly retreat (May) |
| Expand capacity for multidisciplinary, community-engaged, and precision-focused research in communication sciences and disorders by growing research training across all programs through NIH R25 and T32 awards, NSF REU support, and foundation-funded training grants.                                                                                              | T32 submitted by May 2027. Revision (if needed) in 2028.<br>R25 TRANSLATES revision submitted January 2028 with resubmission ready September 2028 if needed.<br>Identify funding mechanism for undergraduate CSD students with a plan to submit in 2028.                                                                                                 | Director of Research Training leadership role created to support these endeavors.<br>Teams created and supported to submit these proposals.                                                                                                                                                                 | Progress reviewed in a fall semester department meeting and yearly retreat (May) |
| Develop specific research training pathways that allow cohorts of Communication Science (BA), Speech-Language Pathology (MA/MS), and Audiology (AuD) students to meaningfully participate in research communities and complete distinctive, end-to-end research projects.                                                                                              | Review of all current research pathways (e.g., how students know about opportunities, how students are matched to opportunities, how faculty workloads are adjusted, current participation) by end of 2027.<br>Further develop guidelines for the MA-SLP Thesis option in terms of student readiness and consistency of experience by beginning of 2028. | Director of Research Training leadership role created to support these endeavors. This individual will guide these reviews with appropriate faculty and leadership.                                                                                                                                         | Progress reviewed in a fall semester department meeting and yearly retreat (May) |

| PLAN FOR PITT                                                      | 2. PROPEL SCHOLARSHIP, CREATIVITY AND INNOVATION |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------|
| <b>SHRS</b><br><b>5-YEAR</b><br><b>PERFORMANCE</b><br><b>GOALS</b> | ACHIEVE TOP-10 NIH AND TOTAL RESEARCH FUNDING    |

#### CSD GOALS:

Leverage CSD's distinctive expertise to establish a precision diagnostics core resource that lowers the entry barrier both to cutting-edge communication assessment and to the effective inclusion of participants with communication challenges, serving cross-disciplinary investigators across Pitt, UPMC, and CMU as well as industry partners.

Broaden the department's research portfolio in both scale and source: sustain federally funded investigator-initiated science at its core, lead and co-lead center-scale new multi-PI grants and clinical trials that engage partners in Bioengineering, the CNBC, and the School of Medicine, and expand support from foundations, industry, philanthropy, and health system partners.

Support programmatic research through the Programmatic Research Roadmap tool, a faculty-owned living document that helps structure the deliberate use of limited research time toward a coherent vision and, in aggregate, surfaces the thematic clusters and collaborations that can seed collaborative initiatives.

| Goal                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | Measurable objectives                                                                                                                                                                                                            | Strategies                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | Schedule for Analysis                                                            |
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| Leverage CSD's distinctive expertise to establish a precision diagnostics core resource that lowers the entry barrier both to cutting-edge communication assessment and to the effective inclusion of participants with communication challenges, serving cross-disciplinary investigators across Pitt, UPMC, and CMU as well as industry partners.                                     | Submit and NIH proposal to the recent call: <b>Advancing the Inclusion of People with Disabilities in Clinical Research Challenge</b> to fund this activity (2027 submission).<br>Identify director for this enterprise in 2027. | Space for this activity has already been created. When operational, this will become a training site for AuD and SLP students.                                                                                                                                        | Progress reviewed in a fall semester department meeting and yearly retreat (May) |
| Broaden the department's research portfolio in both scale and source: sustain federally funded investigator-initiated science at its core, lead and co-lead center-scale new multi-PI grants and clinical trials that engage partners in Bioengineering, the CNBC, and the School of Medicine, and expand support from foundations, industry, philanthropy, and health system partners. | One center-scale grant submission (multi-PI) by 2028.                                                                                                                                                                            | The CSD Office of Research was created to support these largescale initiatives and has already demonstrated success.<br>Chair will work within the new workload policy guidelines to make sure individuals have identified time to work on these largescale projects. | Progress reviewed in a fall semester department meeting and yearly retreat (May) |
| Support programmatic research through the Programmatic Research Roadmap tool, a faculty-owned living document that helps structure the deliberate use of limited research time toward a coherent vision and, in aggregate, surfaces the thematic clusters and collaborations that can seed collaborative initiatives.                                                                   | All faculty will have completed the Programmatic Research Roadmap tool by Summer 2028 (appropriate for Appointment Stream as well as Tenure Stream faculty given CSD's focus on broad scholarship).                              | CSD Office of Research will monitor progress and meet individually with faculty to complete this process.                                                                                                                                                             | Progress reviewed in a fall semester department meeting and yearly retreat (May) |

| PLAN FOR PITT                                                      | 3. WELCOME AND ENGAGED                              |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------|
| <b>SHRS</b><br><b>5-YEAR</b><br><b>PERFORMANCE</b><br><b>GOALS</b> | BUILD ROBUST INTERPROFESSIONAL EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS |

### CSD GOALS:

Development and implementation of online and in-person programs (credit bearing, certificates, CEs) and other interprofessional offerings to meet the increasing demand for advanced professional training in CSD and beyond. Offerings will be responsive to the demographic changes facing higher education (e.g., shrinking undergraduate student population, individuals pursuing second careers, working families, growing need for communication, swallowing, hearing and balance services in other countries, and diverse learners) as well as market trends in health care (e.g., growing need for leaders in healthcare and education). Online programs increase the reach of CSD which enhances our ability to engage diverse learners and the communities we serve.

LEND – Leadership Education in Neurodevelopment Disease and other Rare Conditions. Integrate the Communication Van into the LEND programming (Audiology Supplement) to provide service-learning opportunities to trainees while reducing loss to follow-up in the pediatric population in Western PA who experience hearing loss.

Expand and enhance opportunities for multidisciplinary research training within the PhD program through collaborations with Bioengineering, School of Medicine, Center for the Neural Basis of Cognition, VA and other strategic partner programs.

| Goal                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | Measurable objectives                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | Strategies                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | Schedule for Analysis                                                            |
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| Development and implementation of online and in-person programs (credit bearing, certificates, CEs) and other interprofessional offerings to meet the increasing demand for advanced professional training in CSD and beyond. Offerings will be responsive to the demographic changes facing higher education (e.g., shrinking undergraduate student population, individuals pursuing second careers, working families, growing need for communication, swallowing, hearing and balance services in other countries, and diverse learners) as well as market trends in health care (e.g., growing need for leaders in healthcare and education). Online programs increase the reach of CSD which enhances our ability to engage diverse learners and the communities we serve. | Strategic partnership with one outside entity to offer ongoing, curated continuing education to clinicians who participate in the education of CSD students (by 2028).<br>Two new online certificates created by CSD for constituents in need of communication expertise (by 2028).<br>Development of the CSD MA-SLP Online graduate program with appointed Director, addition of the clinical director, and course preparation (full online program available 2030). | MA-SLP and AuD Program Directors will identify partners and create a curriculum with stakeholder input.<br><br>Work with Pitt Edge for certificate course development. Courses hosted by PittProfessional.<br>Appointment director from within current faculty to have necessary leadership. | Progress reviewed in a fall semester department meeting and yearly retreat (May) |
| LEND – Leadership Education in Neurodevelopment Disease and other Rare Conditions. Integrate the Communication Van into the LEND programming (Audiology Supplement) to provide service-learning opportunities to trainees while reducing loss to follow-up in the pediatric population in Western PA who experience hearing loss.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | LEND, CSD, UPMC CHP, Early Interventionists, Parents/Caregivers meeting to identify appropriate services to be provided through the mobile unit (Spring 2027). Collect data on testing in van vs lab-based testing.<br>Create clinical placement for these activities starting in late Spring 2027.<br>Submit Oberkotter funding to supplement support for these activities (November 2026 submission, funding in 2027).                                              | CSD LEND faculty will coordinate these activities. UPMC CHP and Early Intervention representatives have already been identified.<br>Data collection ongoing as part of R25 TRANSLATES program and AuD research projects (2026-2027).<br>CSD LEND faculty submitting the Oberkotter funding.  | Progress reviewed in a fall semester department meeting and yearly retreat (May) |
| Expand and enhance opportunities for multidisciplinary research training within the PhD program through collaborations with Bioengineering, School of Medicine, Center for the Neural Basis of Cognition, VA and other strategic partner programs.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | Combined student and faculty activities across programs.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | New Director of Research Training in CSD will coordinate these initiatives with support of other CSD faculty who have joint/secondary appointments.<br>Use of Research Round Table to set up                                                                                                 | Progress reviewed in a fall semester department meeting and yearly retreat (May) |

| PLAN FOR PITT                          | 4. PROMOTE ACCOUNTABILITY AND TRUST               |
|----------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------|
| SHRS<br>5-YEAR<br>PERFORMANCE<br>GOALS | LEAD ROBUST PHILANTHROPIC AND FUNDRAISING EFFORTS |

## CSD GOALS:

Focused, department-wide effort to publicize the engaged activities of the faculty, staff and students of CSD. This includes but is not limited to multiple social media posts per week, a quarterly newsletter to a wide, national audience, and podium, poster and leadership presence at the national conferences that intersect with CSD.

Support from CSD to the development office and office of the Dean to have talking points related to all notable CSD research, teaching and service activities with this updated on a quarterly basis. This language will be suitable for discussion with potential donors.

Make unique resources available in the department for lease to outside entities who require these specialized testing environments and/or testing capabilities.

| Goal                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | Measurable objectives                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | Strategies                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | Schedule for Analysis                                                                   |
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| <p>Focused, department-wide effort to publicize the engaged activities of the faculty, staff and students of CSD. This includes but is not limited to multiple social media posts per week, a quarterly newsletter to a wide, national audience, and podium, poster and leadership presence at the national conferences that intersect with CSD.</p> | <p>Average of 3-4 relevant posts per week across social media platforms.<br/>           Quarterly newsletter with standard sections and primarily graphics that show CSD success and innovation.<br/>           Continued success in poster and podium presentations submissions at national conferences.</p> | <p>Vice Chair of Innovation and CSD staff will provide a coordinated approach for submission of social media posts (Fall 2026). Chair will follow up with faculty and staff to encourage regular contributions (Spring 2028).<br/>           All Vice Chairs will support the quarterly newsletter and will collaborate on format. Leverage grant funding, Research Development Funds, and department support to continue to populate meetings with CSD faculty.</p> | <p>Progress reviewed in a fall semester department meeting and yearly retreat (May)</p> |
| <p>Support from CSD to the development office and office of the Dean to have talking points related to all notable CSD research, teaching and service activities with this updated on a quarterly basis. This language will be suitable for discussion with potential donors.</p>                                                                    | <p>Slide deck of talking points for all research labs by January 2027).<br/>           Slide deck of all CSD initiatives by May 2027.</p>                                                                                                                                                                     | <p>Vice Chairs of Research and Innovation will provide support for the collection of these data from faculty and staff through ongoing communication and reminders.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | <p>Progress reviewed in a fall semester department meeting and yearly retreat (May)</p> |
| <p>Make unique resources available in the department for lease to outside entities who require these specialized testing environments and/or testing capabilities.</p>                                                                                                                                                                               | <p>Identification of resources that can be monetized. Gather needed information re: the Anechoic Chamber as a first example of a leasable resource (by Winter 2027).</p>                                                                                                                                      | <p>Work with PittLabs to create the process to register resources and make available for reservation (and payment) (by Summer 2027).<br/>           Go live with PittLabs in Winter 2027.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | <p>Progress reviewed in a fall semester department meeting and yearly retreat (May)</p> |

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|--------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>PLAN FOR PITT</b>                             | <b>5. IT'S POSSIBLE AT PITT</b>                                                                                   |
| <b>SHRS<br/>5-YEAR<br/>PERFORMANCE<br/>GOALS</b> | ENHANCE LOCAL, NATIONAL, AND INTERNATIONAL REPUTATION<br>GROW STUDENT & FACULTY ENGAGEMENT AND CAREER DEVELOPMENT |

### CSD GOALS:

Identify and implement focused leadership and management training opportunities to help develop the next generation of research leaders in CSD, including developing research vision, communicating science, strategic and financial planning, and entrepreneurship.

Build vertical mentoring networks comprised of faculty, PhD students and postdocs, clinical graduate students, and undergraduates to enhance research experiences through near-peer mentoring and focused mentor training.

Implement the vision for an SHRS Policy Institute housed in CSD that will support researchers at all stages to create a pathway to implementation which is dependent on policy change. The SHRS Policy Institute will conduct summer workshops to support researchers nationally and internationally who want to understand how to integrate a pathway to policy into their programs of research.

| Goal                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | Measurable objectives                                                                                                                                                                                                                | Strategies                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | Schedule for Analysis                                                            |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Identify and implement focused leadership and management training opportunities to help develop the next generation of research leaders in CSD, including developing research vision, communicating science, strategic and financial planning, and entrepreneurship.                                                                                                                              | Internal and external leadership training opportunities will be identified (2027). Three CSD staff and/or faculty will participate in leadership training in this area by Spring 2028.                                               | The CSD Office of Research will work within and beyond the Pitt system to identify these opportunities. The CSD OoR will recommend and support individuals to pursue these opportunities and will create a system to review impact. | Progress reviewed in a fall semester department meeting and yearly retreat (May) |
| Build vertical mentoring networks comprised of faculty, PhD students and postdocs, clinical graduate students, and undergraduates to enhance research experiences through near-peer mentoring and focused mentor training.                                                                                                                                                                        | Identify deliverables for this goal by Spring 2027 (at Department retreat). Report on progress for this initiative by Spring 2028.                                                                                                   | Director of Research Training in CSD will manage this effort and gather input from all stakeholders.                                                                                                                                | Progress reviewed in a fall semester department meeting and yearly retreat (May) |
| Implement the vision for an SHRS Policy Institute housed in CSD that will support researchers at all stages to create a pathway to implementation which is dependent on policy change. The SHRS Policy Institute will conduct summer workshops to support researchers nationally and internationally who want to understand how to integrate a pathway to policy into their programs of research. | Approval from SHRS Dean to recruit two faculty specific to this initiative (Summer 2027). Recruit and hire faculty by Spring 2028. Integrate with SHRS faculty through internal workshops. Initiate summer workshops in Summer 2030. | This initiative is built into the CSD Chair start up package and will be guided by the CSD Chair and a select committee of individuals across SHRS.                                                                                 | Progress reviewed in a fall semester department meeting and yearly retreat (May) |