

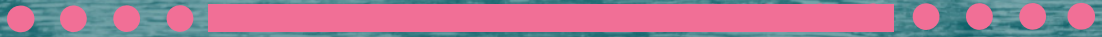


STRATEGIC PLAN

2022-2025



CONTENTS



1	A WORD FROM OUR PRESIDENTS.....	3
2	A WORD FROM OUR CEO.....	6
3	ABOUT CAMBRIDGE SU.....	7
	What does Cambridge SU do?.....	9
4	GUIDING PRINCIPLES OF THE MERGER.....	11
5	RESEARCH.....	13
6	VISION, MISSION & VALUES.....	15
	Vision & Mission.....	16
	Values.....	17
7	STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES.....	20
	Communications.....	21
	Communities & Extra-Curricular.....	23
	Empowering Change.....	25
	Advice & Welfare.....	27
	Commercial Growth.....	29
	Our People.....	31

A WORD FROM OUR PRESIDENTS

As a brand new organisation, Cambridge SU has not had a strategic plan before. We wanted this very first strategy to develop a comprehensive and ambitious plan for the next three years, which is creative, student-focused, and inclusive.

At Cambridge SU we are committed to not only having a positive impact on Cambridge students' education but also their wider University life. We want to be a key part of helping students develop the skills, communities, and experiences they will take with them way beyond their time at University.

We think that this strategy is an ambitious and challenging plan that will see Cambridge SU develop into a much stronger organisation than previous Students' Unions at Cambridge.

“

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We are really excited about the challenge, and we can't wait to get started on our plans to make a difference to students at Cambridge.

Zaynab Ahmed
Zaynab Ahmed
Cambridge SU
President (PG)

&

Amelia Jabry
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Cambridge SU
President (PG)





A WORD FROM OUR CEO


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Rich Wiltshire
Cambridge SU CEO



3 ABOUT CAMBRIDGE SU

Cambridge SU is the official students' union of the University of Cambridge and is both a charity and a company limited by guarantee.

Despite its relatively small size, Cambridge SU is a complex organisation with a number of different remits including representation and democracy, widening participation, student activities, marketing and communications, commercial activities and events, advice, and student welfare services. It turns over just over £1.2 million per year with around 80% of this coming from grants and the remaining 20% coming from commercial activities and services.

Cambridge SU was formed in July 2020 following the merger of Cambridge University Students Union (CUSU) and The Graduate Union (GU). The main objectives of the merger were to;

Improve Postgraduate Representation

Improve Representation of BME Students

Improve Support to Student Activities and Opportunities

These three guiding principles remain key to the mission of Cambridge SU beyond the merger.

Cambridge SU carries out a number of charitable and commercial activities with its main objects being;

- the advancement of education of students at the University of Cambridge, through campaigning, activities, and support services
- and the promotion of equal access to education at the University of Cambridge.

The union is principally overseen by a board of trustees and a team of 8 elected sabbatical officers. Sabbatical officers (Sabbs) are students, elected by a cross-campus ballot of all union members, to run Cambridge SU for a year. The board of trustees is made up of 5 of the sabbatical officers, 3 student trustees, and 4 external trustees. As well as the elected sabbatical officers and board of trustees, the SU employs 25 staff over 3 distinct teams overseen by a CEO and two directors making up a senior management team.

WHAT DOES CAMBRIDGE SU DO?



> Campaigning

The SU, through its Liberation Campaigns and Sabbatical Officer Team, campaign to ensure students at Cambridge receive the best University experience.



> Representation

We are committed to representing student interests, whether that be on university committees, through our campaigns representing different constituencies, or through our Student Advice Service.



Access

The SU runs many access projects and initiatives that support fair access to Cambridge. We also empower students to run their own access projects, student societies and JCRs and MCRs to also do lots of work to make Cambridge accessible to all.



Activities

Cambridge SU has a dedicated team of staff to support activities at Cambridge. The SU runs many events throughout the year and hosts a directory advertising the clubs and societies at Cambridge to students.



Student Support Services

From the Student Advice Service, to low-cost services including the Print Shop and Gown Shop, the SU offers a wealth of services to support students during their time at Cambridge.

4

GUIDING PRINCIPLES OF THE MERGER

The merger and formation of Cambridge SU achieved the following objectives;



POSTGRADUATE REPRESENTATION

- Joint undergraduate & postgraduate Presidents
- Creation of a postgraduate Access, Education & Participation Officer
- Restructured forums for reps to meet the needs of undergraduates & postgraduates
- Balanced and equal representation of undergraduate and postgraduate Sabbatical and Student Trustees



ACTIVITIES & OPPORTUNITIES

- Staff support for reps and campaigns with a Campaigns Coordinator, Events Coordinator & Student Rep Coordinator
- Introduction of a Societies Coordinator to support student clubs and societies
- A more efficient and well-resourced Students' Union
- Welfare support that is intrinsically linked with the broader community



BME REPRESENTATION

- Creation of a full-time BME sabbatical officer
- Improved BME representation in the Students' Union
- Putting the needs of BME students at the heart of the Students' Union's work

This strategy offers the next stage in Cambridge SU's development which will take these principles and go further.



5 RESEARCH

In order to inform this strategy, we carried out detailed and extensive research into what Cambridge students want from their SU. The core objectives of this research were as follows:

- Assess areas where the SU could help enhance students' lives and help them achieve their goals.
- Assess areas where the SU could impact engagement and satisfaction.
- Highlight priority areas for strategic focus over the next three years taking into account the above and the SU's operating environment.
- Highlight key impact measurements for the SU to track, enabling us to assess the success of our Strategy.

This research was split into two phases, a survey and focus groups.

PHASE 1: SURVEY

A survey designed specifically for the SU was conducted in February 2021, which received

 **1,262**
STUDENT RESPONSES

The responses consisted of

728 
UNDERGRAD STUDENTS

 **186**
POSTGRAD TAUGHT STUDENTS

270 
POSTGRAD RESEARCH STUDENTS

PHASE 2: FOCUS GROUP

From those who took part in the survey

37
STUDENTS

were recruited to take part in
online video focus groups



These groups comprised of



UK
STUDENTS (UG)


INTERNATIONAL
STUDENTS (UG)


TAUGHT
STUDENTS (PG)


RESEARCH
STUDENTS (PG)


STUDENTS LIVING
OUTSIDE OF COLLEGE (PG)



6 VISION, MISSION & VALUES

This strategy develops a strong organisational purpose for Cambridge SU with a Vision, Mission, and Values that the SU will seek to achieve over the next 3 years.

OUR VISION

We will increase the power of the Cambridge student community to deliver positive change whilst also enhancing our students' experience.

OUR MISSION

We will provide high-quality tools, skills, strategies, knowledge, and development opportunities for students to shape their education and experiences. We are proactive in building student communities and developing effective relationships.

OUR VALUES



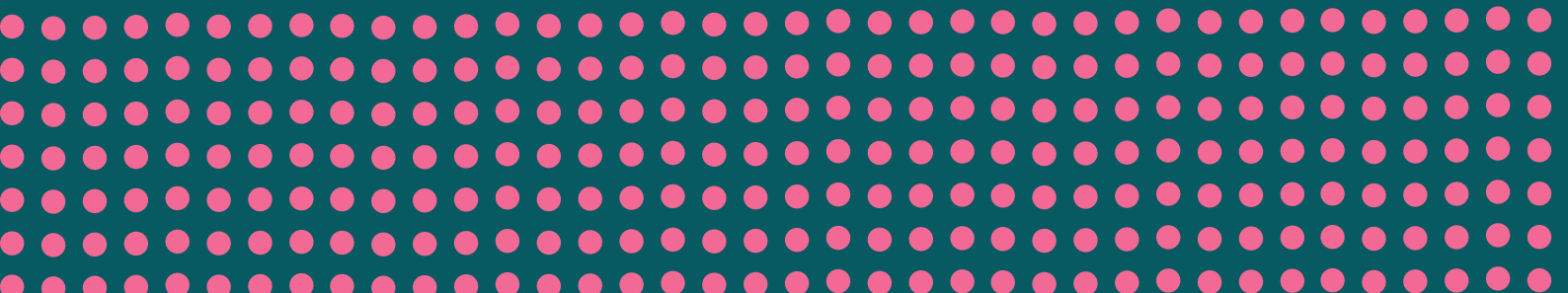
> OPEN

We will be clear, honest, transparent, and accessible to all students.



> EMPOWERING

We will give students the tools and skills they need to achieve their own goals.





> COMMUNITY-BUILDING

We will build and support student communities to combat loneliness, isolation, and stress.



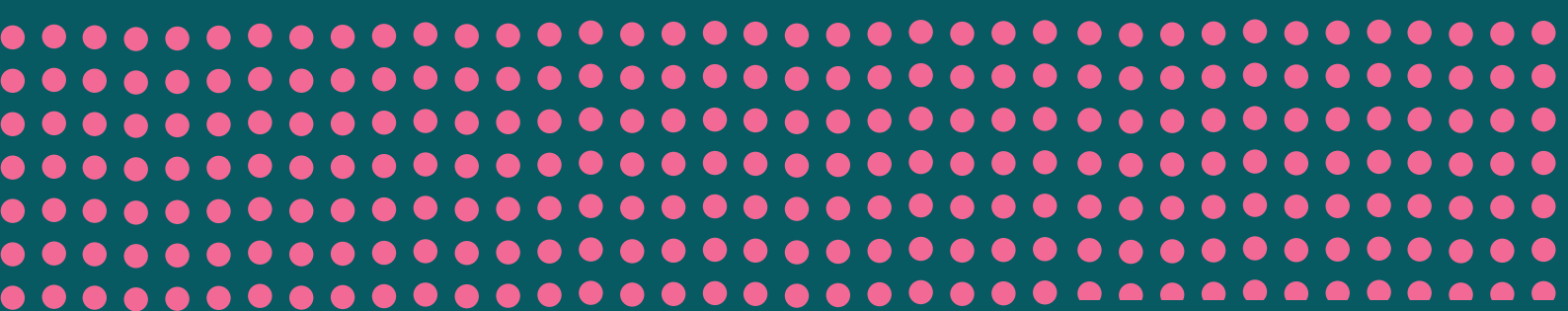
> BOLD

We will take risks, drive change and not be afraid to push boundaries.



> CREATIVE

We will try new things, forge our own path and be different.





7 STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

The following Strategic objectives outline what we will do over the next three years to develop Cambridge SU, how we will do them, and the reasons why we are acting in these areas.

- > Communications**
- > Communities & Extra-Curricular**
- > Empowering Change**
- > Advice & Welfare**
- > Commercial Growth**
- > Our People**



OBJECTIVE 1 COMMUNICATIONS



> What

We will ensure that our communications are clear, relevant and make a sincere connection with students.

> How we will measure

By 2022 we will produce a communications strategy that will guide the way that the whole organisation communicates. The communications strategy will deliver;

- a 50% increase in engagement across social media platforms, and engagement in SU activities by the end of 2023
- a 60% open rate and 50% growth in engagement rates across all departmental messaging
- 60% of students spoken to will tell us that they know they have a good understanding of who the SU is and that the SU has paid professional staff with an understanding of the work that they do for them by 2025

The SU will define our role and our offer to colleges and J/MCRs in a college engagement plan that is shared with all JCRs and MCRs by 2023.

By 2025 students will be more involved in our decision making processes; we will see a 50% increase in submissions to council and an increase of 50% in engagement with our priority change making campaigns.

> Why

Students have told us in our research that they lack a clear understanding of what the SU is here to do and our research recommends that the SU more clearly communicates to students when it has listened to their views and represented them to the university. Students have told us that our comms need to be shorter and more targeted and we have identified comms as both a weakness and an opportunity in our own internal analysis.

7 STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

> What

We will develop strong communities and support students in their extra-curricular activities.

> How we will measure

We will be the central support service for the majority of student societies at Cambridge.

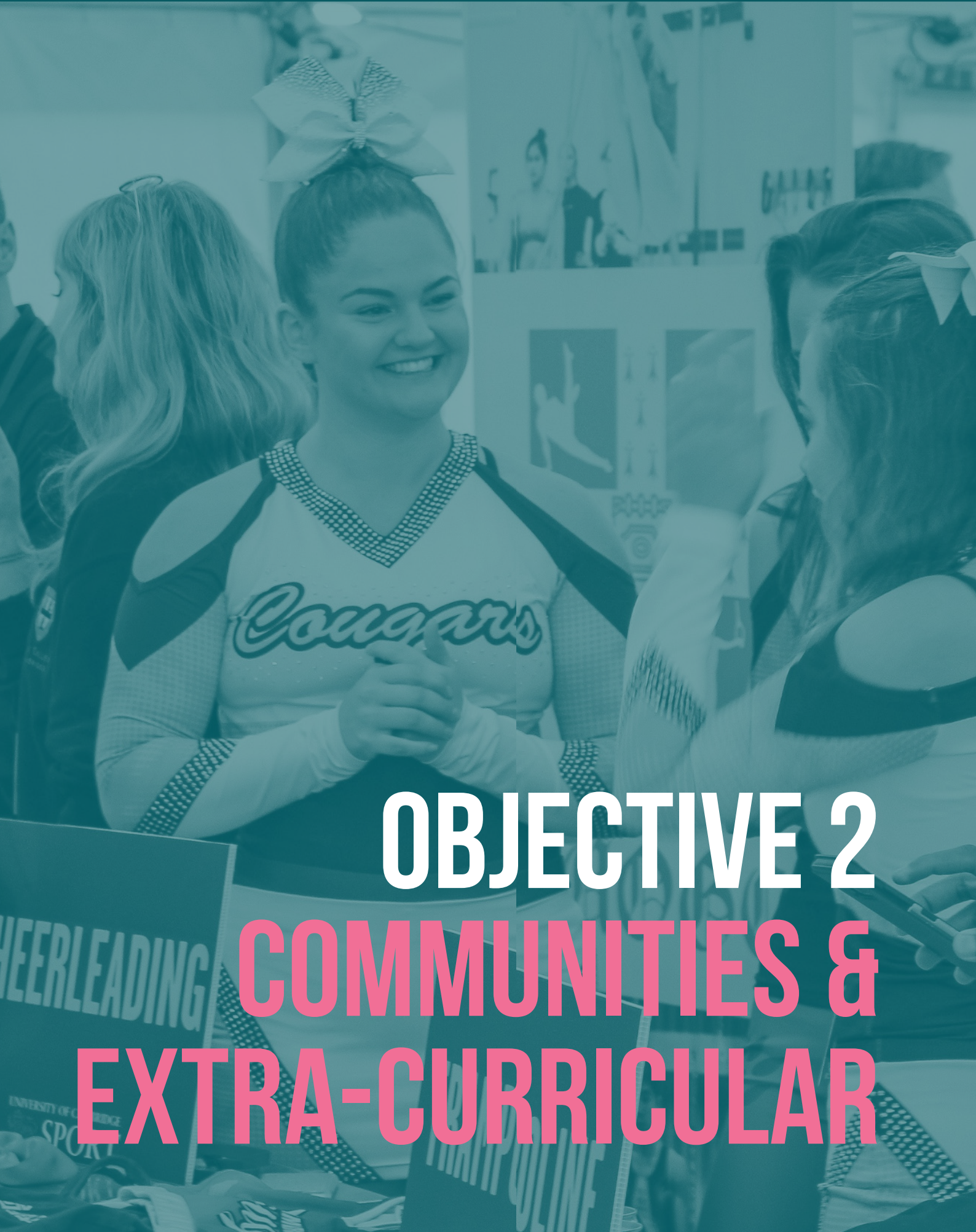
By 2025 75% of society committee members surveyed will tell us that they see Cambridge SU as the primary source of support for student groups.

We will develop strong and inclusive communities for marginalised students, so that by 2025 we will have doubled the number of students who are actively engaged in the SU Liberation Campaigns.

> Why

Students have told us in our research that non-college based societies lack resources, guidance and support and our own internal analysis identifies increased support for societies as a significant opportunity. Our research recommends that students want the SU to help bring them together so that they can build communities and friendships. We identified as part of our internal analysis that we want to be more effective in engaging students in our liberation work, and for that to be on a meaningful basis.





OBJECTIVE 2 COMMUNITIES & EXTRA-CURRICULAR



OBJECTIVE 3 EMPOWERING CHANGE



> What

We will make it easier for both undergraduate and postgraduate students to influence their academic experience, We will empower students to make change and we will give them the tools they need to eliminate inequality and champion fair access across the collegiate university.

> How we will measure

We will empower academic reps to deliver positive change for their cohorts so that;

- by 2025 90% of academic reps surveyed will say that support from Cambridge SU has benefitted them as representatives.
- 75% of faculties meet baseline standards for academic representation co-developed with Cambridge SU

We will become a central hub of knowledge and support for J/MCRs, giving them the resources to improve their own college experience so that by 2025 90% of J/MCR leaders will say that Cambridge SU is providing effective tools to reduce inequality in the student experience between colleges.

By 2025, 60% of students surveyed will see the SU as effectively providing support to students who want to make change, including; tackling issues of injustice and inequality; and shaping their academic experience.

> Why

Students have told us in our research that there are significant disparities across the colleges in multiple areas and that they see Cambridge SU as being a key central figure to tackling college inequality. Increased engagement and interaction with college representatives has also been identified as an opportunity through our own internal analysis. Students have told us through our research that they want the SU to be more involved in the learning experience.

7 STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

> What

We will be seen by undergraduate and postgraduate students as the primary source for independent advice and welfare guidance throughout the collegiate University.

> How we will measure

We will ensure that students have a roadmap to gain the support and help they need to navigate any issues they may face with their education.

Students will see the Student Advice Service as the primary resource for independent, professional advice, signposting and casework for those in need.

By 2025 60% of students surveyed will report that they are aware of the Student Advice Service and the services that it offers.

> Why

Students have told us in our research that they often need help to navigate the complex support systems in their colleges and the wider university. The Student Advice Service offers these and is valued highly by those who use it, however our internal analysis has identified the need to make more students aware of and able to use the service.



OBJECTIVE 4

ADVICE & WELFARE



OBJECTIVE 5 COMMERCIAL GROWTH



> What

We will protect and grow our diverse income streams including investing in the growth of commercial services that not only generate a profit, but are also beneficial to students.

> How we will measure

We will develop a commercial strategy that will deliver a 50% increase in commercial revenue by 2025.

All new commercial activities and partnerships we develop will have to also benefit students as well as deliver a profit.

We will secure our grant funding at the levels required to effectively fulfil our objectives and will diversify our funding streams to ensure that our income is sustainable for the future.

> Why

Our internal analysis has told us that our commercial income is a significant threat, but also an opportunity. We need commercial income to deliver on our strategic objectives. We believe that commercial services that also deliver benefits to students are more likely to succeed. Our research has shown that students need help in achieving a work/life balance which is partly achievable through relevant commercial services.

7 STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

> What

We will ensure that our staff are highly motivated and supported in their development so that they can deliver excellent service to our students.

> How we will measure

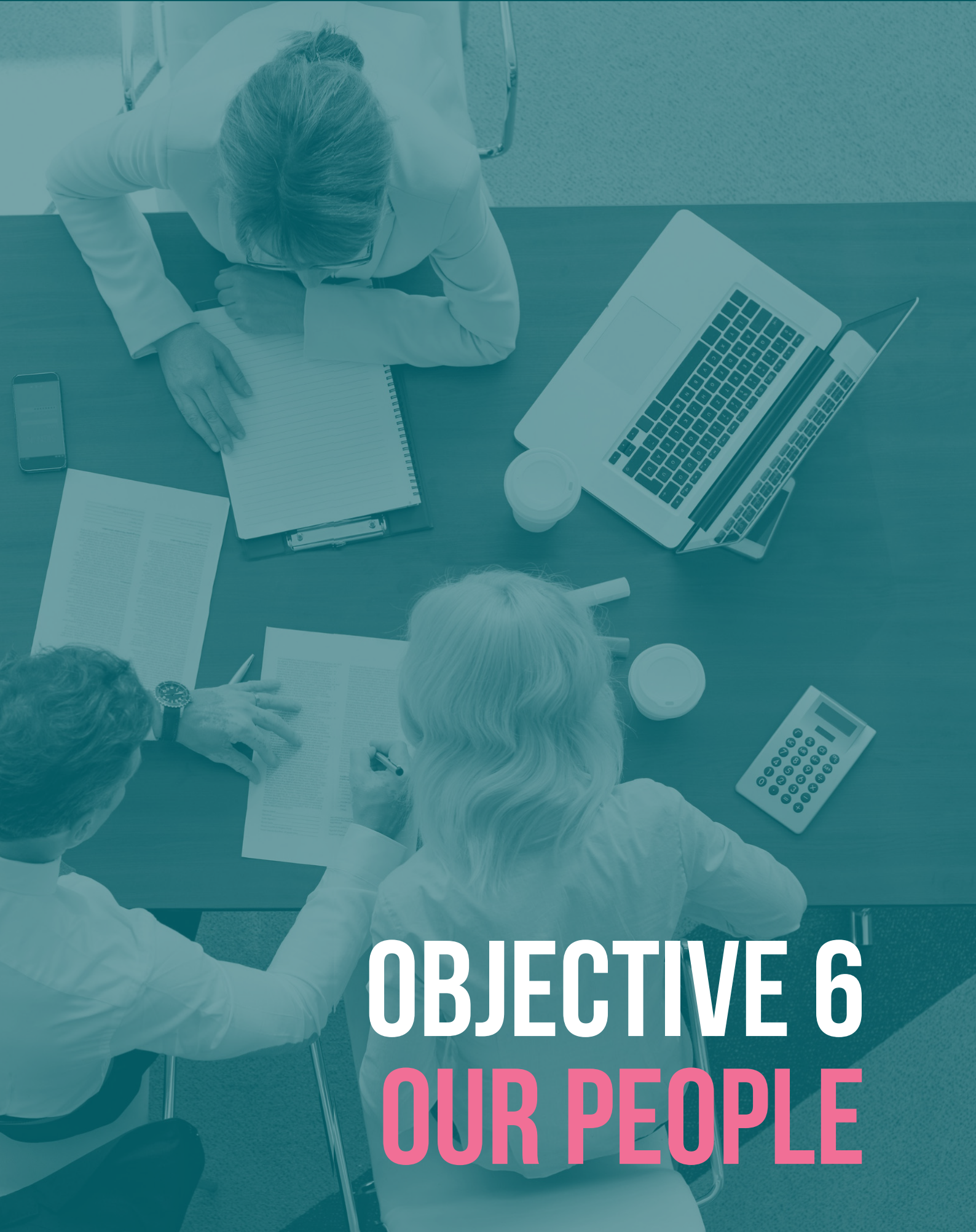
We will develop and implement an HR strategy that ensures staff are supported, rewarded and offered all relevant development opportunities.

By 2022 we will have implemented a staff survey that collects the opinions of all SU staff.

By 2024 90% of staff surveyed will report that they feel Cambridge SU is a great place to work; the majority of staff understand how key decisions are being made and that they have the resources they need to achieve their goals.

> Why

Our staffing is our single biggest resource with over 70% of our revenue spent on staffing. Internal analysis identifies a strongly motivated workforce as a significant strength and low staff morale as a significant threat.



OBJECTIVE 6

OUR PEOPLE



www.cambridgesu.co.uk