

Engage Students through Transformative Experiences - Project Charter

General Project Information	
Project Name: 2025-26	Project #1 RECRUITMENT – Expand the digital ecosystem (website, socials, virtual reality tours, etc.) to increase student engagement.
Origination Date:	September 1, 2025
Project Champion: Project Team Members:	Chad Sperling Alyssa Montgomery, Tracy Jo Peterson, Maura Nelson, Chase Fennell, Shannon Nelson, Bree Dronen, Lauren Kelley
Executive Sponsor:	Shari Olson
Project Rationale: <i>Describe the business need or problem this project addresses:</i>	Engage students through transformative experiences.
Project Goals/Objectives/Success: <i>Describe how this project will resolve the business need. What does success look like?</i>	Priority #1 - Recruitment – • Increase prospect/leads by 15-20% per year for 3-years. • Reduce the number of days students are placed on hold for high school transcripts, immunization records, college transcripts and/or guided self-placement to an average of 5 days.
Strategic Alignment: <i>Select how this aligns with the Strategic Directions and Priorities of the College</i>	ACCESS – Meet students where they are to ensure all have access to high-quality educational opportunities. Strategies X 1.1 Expand recruitment to underserved populations. ☐ 1.2 Provide flexible learning opportunities. ☐ 1.3 Remove financial barriers for students. X 1.4 Provide clear pathways for students. X 1.5 Remove student enrollment barriers. X 1.6 Streamline transition from pre-college services to programs. STUDENT SUCCESS – Improve outcomes, success, and completion through quality programs, advising, and student development. Strategies X 2.1 Support students in achieving their educational goals. ☐ 2.2 Provide high-quality, relevant, engaging, and rigorous coursework. X 2.3 Create a vibrant, supportive, and welcoming environment for students. X 2.4 Provide exceptional student support services. ☐ 2.5 Provide individualized services to increase retention and support learning, education, and career goals. ☐ 2.6 Close equity gaps to improve success for all students. PARTNERSHIPS – Strengthen partnerships with school districts, institutions of higher education, employers, and community organizations. Strategies ☐ 3.1 Expand collaboration with education partners. ☐ 3.2 Increase community engagement. ☐ 3.3 Expand employer partnerships. ☐ 3.4 Respond and adapt to the ever- changing market and partner needs. ADVANCING EQUITY – Create an inclusive culture where all can reach their full potential. Strategies X 4.1 Embody a welcoming and inclusive environment for all.

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	X 4.2 Ensure equitable access to resources for historically underserved individuals. ☐ 4.3 Ensure our campus community represents a rich array of experiences and viewpoints. ☐ 4.4 Establish community bonds through an understanding of our common humanity.
Change Management Impact: <i>What departments/ groups will be impacted by the change & how will they be impacted?</i>	Marketing, Communications & Recruiting Impact: This team will lead the strategy and execution of digital enhancements, including website updates, social media campaigns, and virtual tours. Change: Increased workload related to development, SEO optimization, and digital storytelling. Recruiting strategies will evolve to leverage new digital tools and platforms for outreach. Lead nurturing workflows will be redesigned to align with enhanced digital engagement. The volume of leads would increase, requiring updated tracking, segmentation, and follow-up processes within Salesforce CRM. Staff may need training on new digital tools and CRM features to manage leads effectively. Admissions & Enrollment Services Impact: Will benefit from improved lead generation and streamlined enrollment processes. Change: Processes will be adapted to reduce delays in transcript and placement documentation. Enhanced coordination with Recruiting and Advisors will be needed to ensure smooth handoffs and timely follow-up. IT Impact: Will support any technical implementation and integration of digital tools into Salesforce CRM environment. Change: Will collaborate with Marketing and Recruiting to access custom objects, workflows, and automations that align with new recruitment strategies. Will manage user permissions, data security, and system performance to ensure Salesforce remains a reliable source of truth for recruitment and enrollment data. Academic Departments Impact: Program faculty may be asked to contribute content for virtual tours and program pages. Will play a key role in shaping how their programs are represented in the expanded digital ecosystem. Change: Opportunity to showcase programs more effectively, but may require time for interviews, video shoots, or content review. Faculty may be asked to contribute content for program pages, virtual reality tours, and student testimonials. Programs will have increased visibility through digital channels, which may lead to more direct inquiries and interest from prospective students. This shift may require faculty to engage more actively in digital recruitment efforts. Student Services Impact: May see increased demand for digital support tools. Change: Need to align support services with new digital touchpoints to ensure consistent student experience. Institutional Research Impact: Will track and analyze conversion rates and enrollment efficiency. Change: May need to adjust data collection and reporting processes to reflect new digital engagement metrics.

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Desired delivery date: <i>What is driving this date?</i>	June 30, 2026 • Strategic Enrollment Planning: Aligns with Northland’s SEM goals and allows time to impact recruitment cycles for Fall26. • Team Capacity & Existing Commitments: The Marketing & Communications team is currently leading a major ADA compliance & HLC visit website update in Fall 2025. This limits capacity and necessitates a phased, multi-year approach. • Phased Implementation Strategy: ○ Fall 2025–Spring 2026: ▪ ADA compliance and HLC website updates ▪ CRM enhancements (custom lead capture forms, recruiter workflows) ▪ Launch of Social Media Strategy & Visual Storytelling plan, including increased cadence of high-quality content and visual media production ▪ Development of SOP for campus visit scheduling & communication flow ○ Spring–Summer 2026: ▪ Launch of the new Virtual Campus Tour Platform ▪ Implementation of Campus Visit Digital Enhancements ▪ Continued rollout of social media content and engagement strategy ○ Beyond FY26: ▪ Ongoing improvements to the Enhanced Website Experience ▪ Expansion of visual storytelling efforts and strategic content planning • Staffing Considerations: Achieving these milestones will require intentional prioritization and realistic pacing, especially given the limited size of the current team. It is not feasible for the college marketing team to fully support both NCAT initiatives and this digital ecosystem buildout simultaneously. Additional staffing—such as hiring an NCAT comms. director—may be necessary to move forward with both efforts effectively. • Recruitment Cycle Timing: Delivering key tools before Fall 2026 ensures they are in place for the next major recruitment season and annual events.
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Conditions to ground our actions:

- *Create and maintain strong retention and graduation rates*
- *Maximize current staffing to achieve our goals*
- *Stay within the current budget*
- *Enrollment growth is everyone’s job*
- *There is urgency to grow enrollment...we must move now!*
- *Our focus on student engagement is paramount to our success*

Objectives and Success Criteria <i>Describe the measurable outcomes of the project, e.g., reduce cost by xxxx or increase quality to yyyy.</i>		
Objective/Success Criteria		Expected Outcome Measure

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Deliverables List the high-level “products” to be created (e.g., improved xxxx process, employee manual).

- 1. Virtual Campus Tour Platform** - New, fully built-from-scratch interactive tour experience featuring campus spaces, programs, integrated new media content, and embedded lead capture forms connected to Salesforce.
- 2. CRM Enhancements & Recruiting Workflow Enhancements** - Custom lead capture forms for campaigns and events, plus recruiter training and workflow updates to improve lead management and follow-up in Salesforce.
- 3. Campus Visit Digital Enhancements** - Improved website functionality for promoting and scheduling campus visits, including differentiated visit types (e.g., large group tours, high school visits, special events), CRM integration for lead capture and follow-up, and development of a standard operating procedure (SOP) for visit scheduling communications.
- 4. Enhanced Website Experience** - A phased, multi-year initiative to improve website performance, accessibility, and recruitment impact. Includes SEO-optimized program pages, improved visual storytelling, and expanded features beyond content to increase organic search rankings and drive qualified traffic.
- 5. Social Media Strategy & Visual Storytelling** - Develop a strategic plan to elevate Northland’s social media presence through increased visual storytelling, leveraging new resources to produce high-quality content—including video, animation, photography, and student-centered narratives. This includes significantly increasing the cadence of posts, aligning content with recruitment cycles, and building a sustainable framework for ongoing engagement.

External Dependencies Will project success depend on coordination of efforts between the project team and one or more other individuals or groups? Has everyone involved agreed to this interaction?

Admissions: To streamline enrollment workflows and reduce documentation delays.

Academic Departments: For program-specific content contributions to digital platforms and storytelling.

Salesforce Team (IT): To enhance functionality for custom lead capture forms, user access, and automated workflows.

External Vendors: External collaboration is required for the full build of the virtual tour platform and supporting media production. Web developer partner will support site enhancements and ADA compliance, while a brand agency partner may provide high-level creative services aligned with Northland’s brand strategy.

Project Resources

Role	Name	Department
Dean of Liberal Arts & Pathways	Joseph Agbeko	Administration
Interim Dean of Student Success	Sara Johnson	Administration
Director of Institutional Research	Katlyn Tamaalii	IR
Registrar	Sarah Dorn	Student Services
Director of Admissions, Engagement & Retention	Mahogany Morrison	Student Services
Academic Program Faculty	Program Directors	Academics

Notes

Charter Approval Sign-off

Role	Signature	Date (MM/DD/YYYY)
Executive Sponsor	Shari Olson	10/30/2025

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Project Champion	Chad Sperling	10/30/25
Document Revision History		
Document Version	Revision	Date (MM/DD/YYYY)

Project Charter Created: 6-26-25

NEW ADDITION for 2.0 - Athletics website/digital/socials strategy with Shannon and Lauren