

ANKARA UNIVERSITY INTERNATIONAL ADVISORY BOARD MEETING REPORT

Dear Participants,

On behalf of Ankara University, it is my great pleasure to welcome you here. The International Advisory Board Meeting held on October 21, 2024, has been a significant step forward in advancing our goals of internationalization, academic excellence, strategic research priorities, and societal contribution.

In this meeting, the valuable insights and recommendations of our distinguished advisors have inspired us in shaping the strategic roadmap for the future of Ankara University. Strengthening our leadership on both national and international platforms will be achievable through projects born out of collective wisdom and scientific collaboration.

I would like to express my gratitude for your contributions and insights, and I hope the outcomes of this meeting will serve as a successful roadmap for all of us.

Sincerely,

Prof. Dr. Necdet ÜNÜVAR

Rector, Ankara University

The Ankara University International Advisory Board Meeting, held on October 21, 2024, created a critical platform to shape the university's future focused on internationalization, academic performance, strategic research areas, and social contribution. The opinions presented by the expert advisors who attended the meeting shed light on the strategic steps that Ankara University needs to increase its national and international competitiveness.

The meeting appreciated the university's efforts to increase international collaborations and presented concrete suggestions such as expanding Erasmus and English-language education programs. It was also emphasized that focusing on strategic research areas such as rare diseases, environmental technologies, and nanotechnology would strengthen the university's global academic identity. Innovative education models such as increasing financial and mentoring support for young researchers and developing interdisciplinary education programs were also among the prominent topics of the meeting.

Ankara University Strategic Action Plan, which was created in line with the results of the meeting, includes concrete goals and actions aimed at increasing internationalization, academic performance, and research capacity. This plan contains strategic initiatives such as efficient use of resources, technology transfer, support for multidisciplinary research centers, and attracting international academics. It was also emphasized that more cooperation with the local community and the development of social assistance programs are needed to increase the regional and social impact of the university.

Ankara University aims for sustainable success by prioritizing academic excellence and social contribution considering the recommendations of the International Advisory Board. This meeting has been an important guide for the university in taking concrete steps to support its global vision.

Prof. Dr. Kaan ORHAN

Dean of Research, Ankara University

Meeting Participant List

The Ankara University International Advisory Board Meeting has put forward significant insights and recommendations to advance the university's development in critical areas such as internationalization, academic performance, strategic research priorities, infrastructure strengthening, and social contribution. The strategic action plan, prepared based on the analyses and presented at the meeting, outlines concrete steps that will enable the university to achieve its goals in these areas. Details are provided in Table 1 below.

Table 1

Highlights of the Ankara University International Advisory Board Meeting (October 21, 2024)

SPEAKER	HIGHLIGHTS
<p style="text-align: center;">Prof. Dr. Necdet Ünüvar, Rector <i>Ankara University</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ankara University has been a pioneer in research and education since 1946. ▪ The university comprises 19 faculties, 14 vocational schools, 16 institutes, and 49 research centers. ▪ The meeting aims to advance the research-oriented vision of Ankara University. ▪ Strengthening global collaborations and aligning with international standards are key priorities. ▪ Leadership in science and innovation are the core mission of Ankara University.
<p style="text-align: center;">Prof. Dr. Asghar Zaidi, Consultant <i>Government College University</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Prof. Dr. Asghar Zaidi emphasized the importance of an interdisciplinary approach to collaboration. ▪ He stated that cooperation should provide solutions to Türkiye's real problems and global challenges. ▪ He expressed interest in the university's cooperation with local industry and its patent outcomes. ▪ He noted that the involvement of international faculty members fosters best practices. ▪ He called for practical solutions to bridge the gap between academia and commercialization.
<p style="text-align: center;">Prof. Arben Merkoçi, Advisor <i>Catalan Institute of Nanoscience and Nanotechnology</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Prof. Arben Merkoçi commended Ankara University's focus on advanced technology and artificial intelligence research centers. ▪ He emphasized that nanotechnology is an interdisciplinary field with a wide range of potential applications. ▪ He highlighted the importance of collaborations with local industry and partnerships with European programs. ▪ He noted the value of expanding postdoctoral programs and research capacity. ▪ He stated that spin-off company programs should be strengthened to increase EU cooperation. ▪ He emphasized the importance of research independence and active participation in EU programs.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ He stated that the establishment of an office to support researchers regarding EU funding opportunities is necessary.
<p>Prof. Martin C. Michel <i>Johannes Gutenberg University</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Prof. Martin Michael has been collaborating with Ankara University Faculty of Pharmacy for seven years. ▪ He suggested that Erasmus funds should be utilized efficiently for mobility and internationalization. ▪ He emphasized that limited resources for large-scale research are a challenge. ▪ He suggested that research budgets be allocated based on past achievements and grants secured. ▪ He noted the importance of experienced mentors for successful spin-off companies. ▪ The collaboration demonstrates excellence with over 20 joint publications.
<p>Prof. Kari L. Franson <i>University of Southern California</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Prof. Kari L. Franson emphasized the importance of clinical trainees becoming experts in evidence-based medicine. ▪ She highlighted the need for research design and data science training for future clinicians. ▪ She noted the importance of using digital technologies in patient care. ▪ She emphasized the transition from hospital-based care to community and outpatient settings. ▪ She proposed collaborating with the pharmaceutical industry to develop life-saving treatments. ▪ Emphasized the value of clinic students' ability to create meaningful information using the data at hand.
<p>Prof. Robert Bradley Day <i>University of Tennessee</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Prof. Brad Day emphasized the ten-year collaboration with Ankara University. ▪ He suggested that research themes should align with the university's strengths and global practices. ▪ He emphasized the importance of preparing students for the global workforce. ▪ He stated that international experiences should be integrated with professional and academic development. ▪ He stated that globalization goals should be compatible with local and academic goals. ▪ He suggested increasing student and faculty exchange programs.
<p>Prof. Önder Ergönül, Advisor <i>Koç University</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Prof. Önder Ergönül specialized in infectious diseases at Ankara University. ▪ He emphasized that Ankara University has a great capacity in terms of manpower and research opportunities. ▪ He noted that antimicrobial resistance is a global public health problem.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ He suggested collaboration in niche areas, including education, research, and public health impacts. ▪ He called for increasing research capacity and supporting evidence-based medical practices. ▪ He stated that academic cooperation will play an important role in solving global health problems.
<p>Prof. Gökhan S. Hotamışlıgil <i>Harvard University</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Prof. Gökhan S. Hotamışlıgil graduated from the Faculty of Medicine at Ankara University and is a professor at Harvard University. ▪ He emphasized that key areas for research and resource allocation should be defined. ▪ He drew attention to the challenges in retaining academic talent and attracting bright minds to the academy. ▪ He suggested turning local strengths, such as medicine, archaeology, agriculture, and gastronomy to advantage. ▪ He expressed the importance of structuring universities innovatively, in line with a mission that is visionary. ▪ He suggested creating multidisciplinary research groups that leverage resources and expertise.
<p>Prof. Claudio Santi <i>University of Perugia</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Prof. Claudio Santi praised the holistic organization of Ankara University's research structure. ▪ He emphasized that multidisciplinary research as well as transdisciplinary approaches should be encouraged. ▪ He noted that the future of research is based on complexity and systems thinking. ▪ He suggested focusing on nanomaterials and biomaterials in the context of a circular economy. ▪ He emphasized the importance of industrial links for financing European projects. ▪ He stated that allocating funds to basic research is critical to the sustainability of research. ▪ He noted that bilateral agreements offer valuable opportunities for cooperation projects in Europe.
<p>Prof. Germán Francisco de la Fuente Leis <i>University of Zaragoza</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Prof. Germán Francisco de la Fuente Leis emphasized that the focus should be on pioneering science rather than bibliometric measurements. ▪ He suggested supporting talented professionals across various fields at Ankara University. ▪ He highlighted the rapid integration of artificial intelligence into industry and its transformative potential. ▪ He drew attention to the importance of quantum technologies and superconductivity in energy, medicine, and computing. ▪ He highlighted the impressive applications of laser technology in medicine and industry.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ He addressed environmental issues such as energy efficiency, greenhouse gas emissions, and combating toxic substances. ▪ He suggested that Ankara University's international collaborations and existing strengths be further developed. ▪ Drawing inspiration from Anglo-Saxon models, he encouraged a more practical and entrepreneurial approach to education. ▪ He recommended investing in interdisciplinary research groups that would produce solutions to real-world problems.
<p style="text-align: center;">Prof. Alpdoğan Kantarcı <i>The Forsyth Institute, Harvard University</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Prof. Alpdoğan Kantarcı emphasized the interdisciplinary nature of the research laboratory. ▪ He stated that his research addresses the interactions of systemic and oral diseases with a holistic approach. ▪ He expressed the need for specialized research institutes focusing on priority areas at the global level. ▪ He argued that research should have a universal impact, not at a national or European level. ▪ He emphasized the importance of creating a supportive ecosystem for young and talented researchers at Ankara University. ▪ He highlighted the role of the Technology Transfer Office in the effective implementation of research applications. ▪ He suggested establishing a center of excellence for research and innovation at Ankara University. ▪ He noted the need for sustainable financial and ecological systems to support long-term research goals.
<p style="text-align: center;">Prof. Fabrizio Sarghini <i>University of Naples Federico II</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Prof. Fabrizio Sarghini works on artificial intelligence applications in food engineering and agriculture. ▪ He suggested providing financial support to young researchers to start their careers. ▪ He emphasized the importance of stringent criteria to enhance academic excellence in faculty hiring. ▪ He spoke about the success of dual degree programs carried out between multiple universities. ▪ He suggested the establishment of central offices to facilitate access to international funds. ▪ He drew attention to the development of project writing skills for research fund applications. ▪ He emphasized the role of international collaborations in improving education and research approaches. ▪ He suggested emulating the successful funding and recruitment strategies of leading European universities.

<p>Prof. Helena Burger <i>University of Ljubljana</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Prof. Helena Burger is a specialist in physical and rehabilitation medicine at the University of Ljubljana. ▪ She emphasized that rehabilitation medicine is an interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary field. ▪ She highlighted the importance of combining basic research, pharmacy, environmental, nutritional, and engineering knowledge. ▪ She suggested collaboration with international colleagues to advance rehabilitation practices. ▪ She encouraged the development of innovative devices and methods through interdisciplinary studies.
<p>Prof. Gökhan Mutlu, Advisor <i>University of Chicago</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Prof. Gökhan Mutlu is a professor of medicine and chief of the division of pulmonary critical care medicine at the University of Chicago. ▪ He emphasized that Ankara University should analyze its research activities in detail at the school, faculty, and department levels. ▪ He suggested involving external advisory board members in the process to identify strengths. ▪ He recommended identifying strengths, opportunities, and areas for development by performing a SWOT analysis. ▪ He noted that rare diseases in Türkiye could be a strong local research area for further development. ▪ He suggested naturally increasing international collaborations by establishing strong research programs. ▪ He suggested aligning research priorities with funding sources such as TUBITAK, European agencies, or NIH. ▪ He emphasized the importance of using existing resources to develop strategic focus areas.
<p>Prof. Amiran Gogatishvili <i>The Czech Academy of Sciences</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Prof. Amiran Gogatishvili is a mathematician at the Czech Academy of Sciences. ▪ The collaboration with Ankara University began 12 years ago when a doctoral student came to Prague. ▪ He emphasized that Türkiye's intellectual potential is especially presented at Ankara University. ▪ He stated that Ankara University's English-language mathematics program (now in its second year) will foster international cooperation. ▪ He stated that mathematics is a global discipline that benefits from such initiatives. ▪ He said the Erasmus program should continue to promote positive changes. ▪ He praised the strength of the Ankara University Faculty of Science in mathematical and scientific research collaborations.

<p style="text-align: center;">Prof. Maria Alessandra Ragusa <i>University of Catania</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Prof. Maria Alessandra Ragusa emphasized that Ankara University stands out with its 49 research centers, especially in the field of medicine. ▪ She noted that the university could strengthen its global presence by increasing its international student enrollment. ▪ She suggested offering more courses in English to attract Erasmus and other international students. ▪ She highlighted the importance of increasing interaction with the local community and recommended developing outreach programs. ▪ She proposed the creation of an interdisciplinary master's program in data analysis that would bridge economics and computer science. ▪ She emphasized that work in the field of agriculture should be diversified and strengthened. ▪ She noted that improving international programs, community engagement, and modern academic offerings would enhance the university's reputation and attract more students.
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Some of the advisory opinions that support the prominent issues in the Ankara University International Advisory Board meeting in Table 1 are given below.

Prof. Maria Alessandra Ragusa

- *"Ankara University's increasing international student enrollment will strengthen its reputation and attract more students."*
- *"Interdisciplinary graduate programs that will respond to modern needs such as data analysis should be developed."*

Prof. Martin Michael

- *"Student and researcher exchanges with Erasmus funds are critical to strengthening internationalization."*

Prof. Brad Day

- *"We must prepare our students to join the global workforce and provide them with opportunities to gain work experience in different countries."*
- *"Providing seed funding to young researchers will enhance their innovation capabilities."*

Prof. Claudio Santi

- *"Transdisciplinary approaches are the key to providing innovative solutions to modern academic problems."*
- *"We should focus on future technologies such as nanomaterials and biomaterials."*

Prof. Gökhan Mutlu

- *"Focusing on areas of strength, such as rare diseases, ensures global research leadership by increasing international collaborations."*
- *"SWOT analyses should be conducted for the development of research infrastructure and effective use of existing resources."*

Prof. Fabrizio Sarghini

- *"Interdisciplinary master's programs and dual degree programs will meet the global academic needs of students."*

Professor Helena Burger

- *"Rehabilitation medicine is a field where different disciplines come together and require working together."*

Prof. Amiran Gogatishvili

- *"Ankara University's English mathematics program is an important step to strengthen international cooperation."*

Prof. Arben Merkoçi

- *"I think nanotechnology creates synergies in many areas, from health to the environment, and these areas should be expanded."*
- *"Technology transfer and the establishment of spin-off companies will increase the university's global impact."*

Prof. Germán Francisco de la Fuente Leis

- *"We need to focus more on issues like environmental technologies, reducing greenhouse gas emissions and energy efficiency."*

Prof. Alpdoğan Kantarcı

- *"Interdisciplinary laboratory structures can provide powerful solutions to modern academic needs."*

Prof. Gökhan S. Hotamışlıgil

- *"We must ensure that limited resources are used most efficiently by determining the areas where research activities should focus."*
- *"Retention of academics and the promotion of young researchers are critical to the long-term success of the university."*

Prof. Önder Ergönül

- *"Focusing on global issues such as antimicrobial resistance will increase both research and public health impact."*

The issues highlighted in the Ankara University International Advisory Board Meeting, along with the topics based on advisor opinions in Table 1, are as follows:

- International Collaborations and Programs
- Interdisciplinary and Transdisciplinary Approaches
- Strategic Research Areas

- Strengthening Research Infrastructure
- Local and Community Participation
- Innovative Education Models
- Support for Young Researchers

Featured Kunals and Contextual Analysis

1. *International Collaborations and Programs*
 - Ankara University's efforts to increase international student enrollment were appreciated. It was suggested that Erasmus programs be expanded and that more courses be offered in English. (Prof. Maria Alessandra Ragusa, Prof. Martin Michael, Prof. Amiran Gogatishvili, Prof. Brad Day)
2. *Interdisciplinary and Transdisciplinary Approaches*
 - Interdisciplinary research and education in modern fields such as data analysis, artificial intelligence, and nanotechnology should be encouraged. (Prof. Claudio Santi, Prof. Alpdoğan Kantarcı, Prof. Fabrizio Sarghini)
3. *Strategic Research Areas*
 - Focusing on niche areas such as rare diseases, environmental technologies, and quantum technology can strengthen the university's global research identity. (Prof. Gökhan Mutlu, Germán Francisco de la Fuente Leis)
4. *Strengthening Research Infrastructure*
 - It was suggested that SWOT analyses should be conducted, spin-off companies should be increased, and Technology Transfer Offices should be supported. (Prof. Arben Merkoçi, Prof. Martin Michael, Prof. Gökhan Mutlu)
5. *Local and Community Participation*
 - Increasing the interaction with the local community and developing social assistance programs were suggested. (Prof. Maria Alessandra Ragusa, Prof. Fabrizio Sarghini)
6. *Innovative Education Models*
 - The creation of interdisciplinary master's programs and dual degree programs in fields such as economics and computer science was suggested. (Prof. Maria Alessandra Ragusa, Prof. Fabrizio Sarghini)
7. *Support for Young Researchers*
 - Providing financial and infrastructural support to young researchers is important to encourage innovation and retain talent. (Prof. Brad Day, Prof. Fabrizio Sarghini)

In summary, the issues discussed at the Ankara University International Advisory Board meeting cover critical priorities for the university such as internationalization, interdisciplinary approaches, strategic research areas, strengthening infrastructure, community participation, innovative education models, and support for young researchers. The advisors' views emphasize that the university should strengthen its reputation by increasing international student enrollment (Prof. Maria Alessandra Ragusa), expanding collaborations with programs such as Erasmus (Prof. Martin Michael), and responding to modern academic needs through interdisciplinary programs (Prof. Claudio Santi, Prof. Fabrizio Sarghini). Strategically, it was stated that focus areas

such as rare diseases and environmental technologies would create opportunities for global collaborations (Prof. Gökhan Mutlu, Germán Francisco de la Fuente Leis), besides it was suggested that the research infrastructure be strengthened with SWOT analyses and Technology Transfer Offices (Prof. Arben Merkoçi, Prof. Martin Michael). The meeting shows that financial support and mentoring for young researchers as well as increasing community participation are critical for long-term success (Prof. Brad Day, Prof. Fabrizio Sarghini). These recommendations provide a comprehensive roadmap for the university to increase its competitiveness locally and globally.

Emerging Key Themes

1. International Collaborations

Increasing international student enrollment and expanding partnerships align with Ankara University's global vision. *Prof. Maria Alessandra Ragusa and Prof. Amiran Gogatishvili* emphasized that diversifying Erasmus and English programs is critical to attracting talent.

2. Interdisciplinary Research

To tackle global challenges, it is necessary to transcend traditional academic boundaries. *Prof. Claudio Santi and Prof. Alpdoğan Kantarcı* drew attention to the importance of interdisciplinary initiatives in areas such as artificial intelligence and nanotechnology.

3. Research Infrastructure and Strategic Focus

SWOT analyses and suggestions to focus on niche areas such as rare diseases can help Ankara University gain a stronger identity at both national and international levels. *Prof. Gökhan Mutlu and Germán Francisco de la Fuente Leis* brought these issues to the forefront.

4. Innovation in Education

The implementation of innovative educational models such as dual degrees and interdisciplinary master's programs is an essential step in meeting modern academic needs. *Prof. Fabrizio Sarghini and Prof. Maria Alessandra Ragusa* shared successful examples of such programs.

5. Social Participation and Talent Support

Outreach programs and financial support for young researchers will both strengthen social ties and encourage innovative research. *Prof. Brad Day and Prof. Fabrizio Sarghini* made significant suggestions in these areas.

Table 2

Content Analysis of the Views Expressed at the Ankara University International Advisory Board Meeting (October 21, 2024)

Main Categories	Participants' Opinions	Total Number of Views
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Internationalization and Collaborations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The university's international collaborations should be increased. (Prof. Dr. Asghar Zaidi, Prof. Amiran Gogatishvili, Prof. Maria Alessandra Ragusa) - Erasmus program and expansion of English courses are necessary. (Prof. Maria Alessandra Ragusa, Prof. Martin Michael) - Supporting young researchers through international programs is crucial. (Prof. Brad Day, Prof. Amiran Gogatishvili) 	6
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Interdisciplinary Studies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary approaches should be adopted (Prof. Claudio Santi, Prof. Alpdoğan Kantarcı, Prof. Helena Burger) - New programs should be established in modern fields such as data analysis (Prof. Maria Alessandra Ragusa) 	4
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Resource and Infrastructure Improvements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Strengthening the research infrastructure and conducting SWOT analyses are rewarding endeavors. (Prof. Gökhan Mutlu, Prof. Arben Merkoçi) - Increasing the number of technology transfer offices and spin-off companies is essential. (Prof. Arben Merkoçi, Prof. Martin Michael) 	4
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Regional and Community Participation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - There should be more interaction with the local community. (Prof. Maria Alessandra Ragusa, Prof. Fabrizio Sarghini) 	2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Determination of Strategic Areas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Prioritizing areas such as rare diseases and environmental technologies is crucial. (Prof. Gökhan Mutlu, Germán Francisco de la Fuente Leis) 	2

- **Internationalization and collaboration** were highlighted as some of the most important focus areas for the future of Ankara University. Prof. Maria Alessandra Ragusa stated that the Erasmus program and English courses will play an important role in attracting international students, while Prof. Amiran Gogatishvili and Prof. Brad Day suggested activating existing programs to enhance international collaboration. The impact of Erasmus and the expansion of programs in English are common denominators in these views.

- **Interdisciplinary approaches** were proposed to address to modern academic needs. Prof. Claudio Santi and Prof. Helena Burger emphasized the importance of

transdisciplinary studies, while Prof. Maria Alessandra Ragusa stated that new programs should be created in data analysis and modern fields.

- **Resource and infrastructure improvements** are essential for the achieving strategic goals. Prof. Gökhan Mutlu suggested a SWOT analysis and detailed analysis of infrastructure, while Prof. Arben Merkoçi emphasized the importance of technology transfer offices and spin-off companies.
- **Local and community participation** was considered an important opportunity to strengthen the regional ties of the university. Prof. Maria Alessandra Ragusa and Prof. Fabrizio Sarghini suggested increasing outreach programs and fostering greater interaction with the local community.
- Finally, **the identification of strategic areas** was deemed crucial, especially in terms of supporting niche topics such as rare diseases and environmental technologies. Germán Francisco de la Fuente Leis and Prof. Gökhan Mutlu emphasized that focusing on these areas would be effective both nationally and internationally.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The analyses presented at the Ankara University International Advisory Board meeting reveal significant opportunities and challenges for the university in terms of internationalization, academic performance, interdisciplinary approaches, strategic research areas, and infrastructure strengthening. These critical issues discussed at the meeting indicate that strategic steps should be taken to both increase the university's global competitiveness and deepen its academic impact at the national level. Investments to be made specifically in areas such as attracting international students and academics, activating research activities, and developing innovative education models will contribute to the long-term vision of Ankara University. The recommendations developed considering these basic findings and the justifications for these recommendations are presented below.

Results

- **Internationalization and Collaborations:** Ankara University's international student attraction and collaborations are seen as one of the most important areas to increase its global competitiveness. Programs such as Erasmus and the expansion of courses in English can accelerate this process.
- **Academic Performance and Quality Issues:** It is stated that as academic titles increase, faculty members experience a decrease in capacity, quality, and international collaborations. This situation negatively affects the competitiveness of Ankara University both locally and internationally.
- **Interdisciplinary Approaches and Innovative Education:** It has been emphasized that interdisciplinary programs and graduate models should be

developed in modern fields. Fields such as data analysis, artificial intelligence, and nanotechnology offer opportunities to support both education and research.

- **Strategic Research Fields and Infrastructure:** It is important to strengthen Ankara University's research identity through niche topics such as rare diseases and environmental technologies and infrastructure improvements. Investments in SWOT analyses and technology transfer are necessary to achieve this goal.

Suggestions

1. International Student and Academic Attraction

- New collaborations should be developed for Erasmus and similar exchange programs, and the scope of courses in English should be expanded. This will strengthen global competitiveness by increasing the attraction of international students and academics. (Prof. Maria Alessandra Ragusa, Prof. Martin Michael)

2. Increasing Academic Performance

- Academic performance criteria for faculty members should be reviewed; evaluations should be based on capacity, quality, and international cooperation criteria. Hiring highly qualified individuals from outside, rather than low-performing academics, will increase the academic quality of the university. (Prof. Gökhan S. Hotamışlıgil, Prof. Brad Day)

3. Innovative Education and Research Models

- Interdisciplinary master's programs and dual degree opportunities should be established in areas such as data analysis, artificial intelligence, and environmental technologies. These innovative models not only facilitate students' participation in the global workforce but also meet modern academic needs. (Prof. Claudio Santi, Prof. Fabrizio Sarghini)

4. Academic Staff Strategy for Ankara University

- As academic titles move up, it is observed that faculty members experience a decrease in capacity (number of articles and projects), quality (number of articles and citations in Q1, Q2, and Q3 journals), and international collaborations. For this purpose, the following issues come to the fore:
 - **Avoid Internal Recruitment:** Priority should be given to external applicants for academic positions, with preference given to high-performing academics.
 - **Appointment Based on Performance Criteria:** For all appointments, priority should be given to candidates with high capacity, quality, and international collaborations.
 - **Alternative Models for Low-Performing Academicians:** The current positions of academics with low quality, and international collaborations should be reviewed, and they should be reassigned to more suitable positions.

These strategies will increase the number of qualified academic staff and strengthen the competitiveness of the university both locally and internationally. (Prof. Gökhan S. Hotamışlıgil, Prof. Brad Day, Prof. Arben Merkoçi)

STRATEGIC ACTION PLAN

The following Strategic Action Plan, prepared in light of the International Advisory Board meeting held on October 21, 2024, outlines concrete steps aimed at increasing the university's academic, research, and social contribution potential. This plan was created based on a detailed analysis of the views shared at the International Advisory Board meeting. The advisors' suggestions on critical areas such as internationalization, interdisciplinary approaches, strategic research priorities, infrastructure strengthening, innovative education models, and support for young researchers form the basis of this action plan. With these strategic steps, Ankara University aims to increase its academic excellence both locally and globally and to achieve sustainable success.

Table 3
Ankara University Strategic Action Plan: Goals, Strategies, and Actions

Aim	Strategies	Actions	Responsible Unit	Timeline
1. Increasing Internationalization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Expanding global collaborations through new partnerships 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increasing two-way student exchange programs - Intensifying international promotional activities for Erasmus and similar programs 	EU Education Programs Coordination ERASMUS Office	2024-2026
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ To encourage the recruitment of foreign academics to the institution 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increasing the number of academics through national (2232) and international (Marie Curie) programs - Establishing promotion and support mechanisms 	Research Projects Support Office International Promotion and Brand Coordination	2024-2025
2. Interdisciplinary and Innovative Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Developing educational models that focus on modern technologies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The integration of digital tools into medical education - The implementation of postgraduate programs focused on data analytics and artificial intelligence 	Educational Programs Review Commission	2024-2026

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Increase dual degree programs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Expanding dual-degree opportunities through inter-university partnerships 	Educational Programs Review Commission	2024-2025
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Developing an entrepreneurial ecosystem based on technology transfer 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Encouraging academics to establish technology-based companies 	Technology Transfer Office	2024-2025
3. Strengthening the Research Infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Strengthening the infrastructure for multidisciplinary research 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increasing collaborations through multidisciplinary research centers (e.g., nanotechnology) 	Office of the Dean of Research	2024-2026
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Supporting thematic areas in environmental studies and biomaterials - Increasing the capacity and visibility of the project office - Focusing on current thematic areas, such as One Health and antimicrobial resistance 	Research Projects Support Office Coordination BAP Coordination	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Determining research priorities strategically 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Conducting SWOT analyses for the effective use of existing resources 	Strategy Development Department	2024-2026
4. Supporting Young Researchers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ To provide programs that will enhance research competencies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Providing startup funds and project support to young researchers - Establishing mentoring mechanisms 	BAP Coordination	2024-2026

5.	International and Local Promotion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Increase brand awareness and accelerate the attraction of international students 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Expansion of international promotion and brand coordination activities - Facilitating the international student application processes 	International Promotion and Brand Coordination ERASMUS Office	2024-2025
6.	Environmental and Social Contribution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Prioritizing environmentally focused research 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Encouraging studies on environmental issues such as toxicity, nanoplastics, and air pollution 	BAP Coordination	2024-2026
7.	Corporate Collaborations and Innovation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ To increase cooperation in national and international projects 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Developing the international project capacity of technopark companies 	Technopolis	2024-2026
