



**Canon**

# **NAVIGATING HIGHER ED SECURITY AND SUSTAINABILITY AMID FUNDING CUTS**

How to Keep Core Initiatives Moving  
Forward Despite Fiscal Uncertainty

# THE FUNDING SQUEEZE MEETS RISING RISK

Colleges and universities face mounting financial pressures just as cybersecurity and sustainability expectations continue to grow.

→ **Federal research funding is shrinking.** Proposed cuts of **\$18 billion** in National Institutes of Health (NIH) funding<sup>1</sup> and **\$5.1 billion** in National Science Foundation (NSF) funding<sup>1</sup> will impact research programs at public and private universities.

→ **State cuts are coming.** At least **15 states** have proposed or enacted reductions to public university funding in 2025, some significantly.<sup>1</sup> This is after **17 states** experienced declines in state appropriations from 2024 to 2025 (adjusted for inflation).<sup>2</sup>

→ **Enrollment is in peril.** The dreaded “enrollment cliff” is here, with experts estimating a **15% decrease** in the number of college age students between now and 2029.<sup>3</sup>

## When Funds Lapse, Cybersecurity and Sustainability Suffer



**40%**

of colleges say their cybersecurity team is **understaffed**,<sup>4</sup> while the number of tracked threat actors worldwide **grows by 400%**.<sup>5</sup>



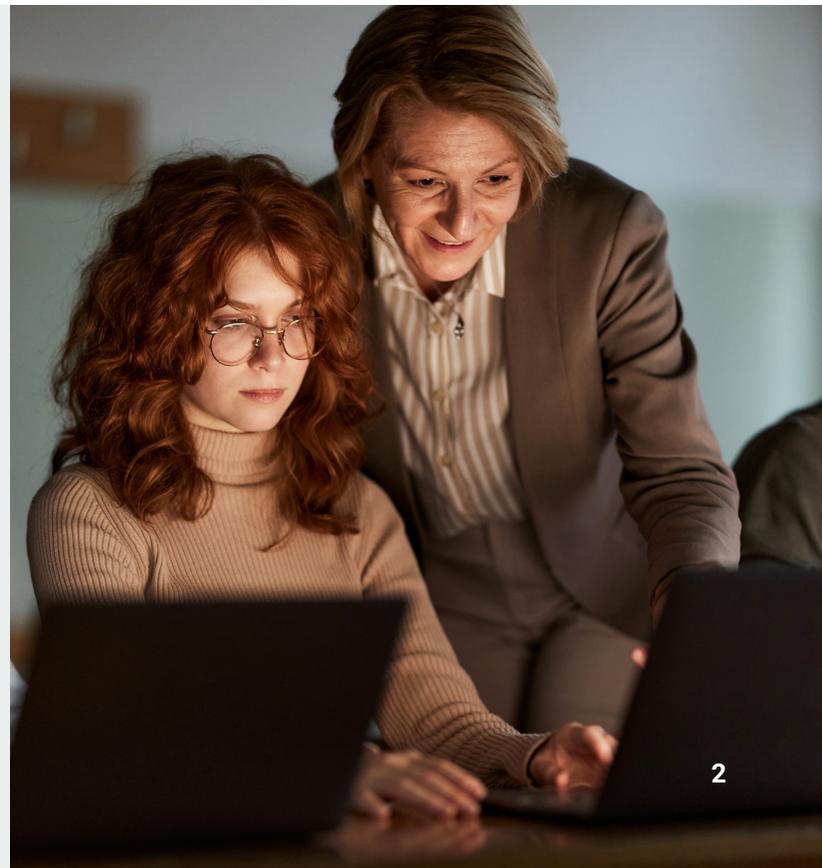
**Only 52**

**U.S. universities** participated in the 2025 Times Higher Education Impact Rankings, down from 58 in 2024, a possible indicator that **sustainability efforts are stalling out**.<sup>6</sup>



### THE KEY TAKEAWAYS:

- **IT leaders** need modern cybersecurity approaches to help close vulnerabilities without increasing spend.
- **Sustainability leaders** must to expand current eco-friendly practices on a budget.
- **Procurement directors** require more cost-effective ways to adopt modern, secure cloud-based solutions.





# HOW UNIVERSITY LEADERS ARE INTEGRATING SECURITY AND SUSTAINABILITY

Industry trends—and insights from Canon's Educational Advisory Board—reveal how higher education is balancing financial pressure by pursuing one integrated strategy: a secured, sustainable imaging and workflow ecosystem that reduces risk, cuts waste, and elevates campus experiences.

## 1. Build a Unified Security and Sustainability Foundation

Institutions are strengthening outcomes across campus by consolidating systems, standardizing policies, and treating security and sustainability as shared infrastructure.

- **Consolidate and standardize:** Replace duplicative systems with Canon imageFORCE MFDs and A4 printers managed by uniFLOW Online to cut licensing costs, simplify security, and reduce support burdens.
- **Treat cybersecurity as shared infrastructure:** Advance zero trust with badge-based pull print, multi-factor authentication (MFA), role-based permissions, encryption, and secure scan-to-approved destinations—supported through multi-year service terms for predictable upkeep.
- **Standardize platforms and policies:** Common device configurations, consistent patching, and unified retention practices help to mitigate risk, improve energy use, and reduce reliance on short-term funding.

## 2. Digitize and Automate High-Risk Workflows

Universities are reducing manual work and lowering cyber exposure by transforming paper-dependent processes into secure, automated digital flows.

- **Digitize to automate:** Therefore™ and IRISXtract™ move paper-heavy workflows (registrar forms, onboarding, records retention) into secure, automated processes—helping to reduce manual errors and security gaps.
- **Secure digital intake and routing:** Scan-to-approved destinations with metadata tagging routes documents directly into student information systems and records repositories—lowering exposure and ensuring compliance.

### 3. Increase Visibility and Accountability Across Campus

Centralized insights are helping IT, sustainability teams, and procurement make better decisions, track impact, and strengthen governance.

- **Centralize visibility while preserving choice:** uniFLOW Online delivers campus-wide dashboards for usage, costs, and security posture while allowing departments to keep the tools they prefer—improving bargaining power and providing auditable sustainability metrics.
- **Track and report reductions:** Measure declines in print volume, ink, and paper through uniFLOW Online and align reporting with frameworks such as STARS.

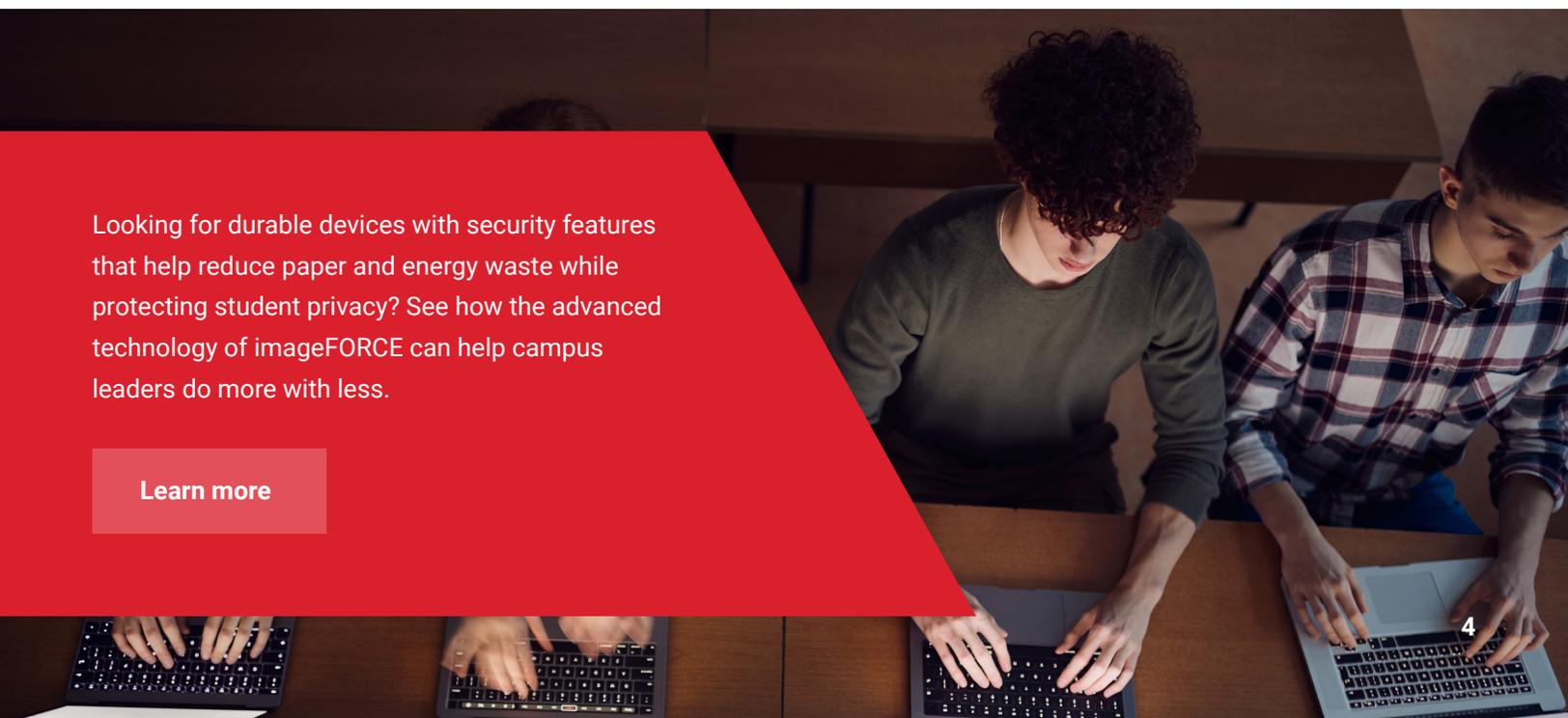
### 4. Procure Smarter and More Sustainably

Procurement teams are maximizing long-term value by consolidating contracts, standardizing requirements, and embedding sustainability into secure workflows to keep data safe and costs down.

- **Consolidate contracts:** Streamline purchasing across devices, software, services, and supplies to help reduce the administrative burden of RFPs.
- **Leverage cooperative buying:** Shorten procurement cycles and unify security requirements across the institution.
- **Select sustainable paper within secure workflows:** Choose recycled stock confidently while maintaining secure access to printing and scanning devices so environmental gains don't compromise data protection.

Looking for durable devices with security features that help reduce paper and energy waste while protecting student privacy? See how the advanced technology of imageFORCE can help campus leaders do more with less.

[Learn more](#)



# REIMAGINING THE ROLE OF PRINT ON THE DIGITAL CAMPUS

The right print strategy can help universities achieve their cost, security, and sustainability goals without sacrificing the student and faculty experience.

## Save Money and Enhance Engagement

Campuses are shifting from “everything print” to “high-value print” (alumni magazines, annual reports, and key advancement pieces), and colleges are relying more on large-format printing to drive engagement with vivid event signage, gameday programs, and stickers. Canon’s large-format and production printers cover a diverse range of needs and can help deliver measurable ROI.

## Raise STARS Scores

Document reductions in print and ink and select mid-recycled paper stocks to help capture points and savings—tracked with uniFLOW Online reporting.

## Move Toward Zero-Trust

Expand MFA and secure access by requiring badge swipes to release jobs from printers, copiers, scanners, and MFDs. Lock down scan destinations and print queues to help minimize data exposure.

## Modernize Your Print Environment

Replacing outdated inkjet and legacy devices with secure, networked solutions can help reduce cyber risks. Consolidation ensures every printer—including A4 models—shares a consistent security posture for stronger protection while default eco-settings reduce waste.

## Transform Print Support

As everyday print volume drops, campuses still need secure, reliable printers, scanners, and MFDs, along with digital workflows to support logistics and operations.



## Get More Insights

Hear directly from other IT, sustainability, and procurement leaders in our EnvisionED podcast and digital magazine.

[Read more](#)

# BUILD A SECURE, SUSTAINABLE PRINT ECOSYSTEM WITH CANON

As universities move toward fewer vendors and higher integration, a unified imaging, document, and workflow approach to print can help advance finance, cybersecurity, and sustainability goals. Canon brings it all together:

- **Centralize monitoring and reporting** across all devices with uniFLOW Online to track paper, ink, costs, and security compliance.
- **Simplify print infrastructure** with a network of connected scanners, A4 printers, copiers, and MFDs under common policies.
- **Empower students, faculty, and staff** to securely print anywhere, anytime, and from any device with authenticated release.
- **Create uniform contracts** with consistent terms, end dates, and sustainability metrics across campus units.
- **Automate paper-based processes** like student registration and record retention using Therefore™ and IRISXtract™ for secure digital workflows.
- **Expand your presence on and off campus** with professional-quality posters, booklets, and course resources produced on production and large-format devices.
- **Align your security posture** with Canon solutions that support widely-adopted frameworks like the NIST Cybersecurity Framework (CSF) and meet FedRAMP authorization requirements to streamline procurement.

## The Power of a Strategic Partner

Just like students and faculty work together to build a common good, Canon embraces **Kyosei**, the Japanese concept of living and working together for the **benefit of all**.

Learn how Canon can transform your campus

### SOURCES:

<sup>1</sup> Pew, "[Higher Education's Uncertain Fiscal Future](#)," November 2025.

<sup>2</sup> National Education Association, "[Higher Ed State Funding Report](#)," September 2025.

<sup>3</sup> AGB, "[Impacts of the Enrollment Cliff in 2025-2026](#)," July 2025.

<sup>4</sup> EdTech Magazine, "[Survey Reveals Top Cybersecurity Issues in Education](#)," June 2024.

<sup>5</sup> Quorum Cyber, "[Emerging Cyber Threats in the Higher Education Sector in 2025](#)," March 2025.

<sup>6</sup> Inside Higher Ed, "[U.S. Higher Ed's Investment in Sustainable Development Lags](#)," June 2025.



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