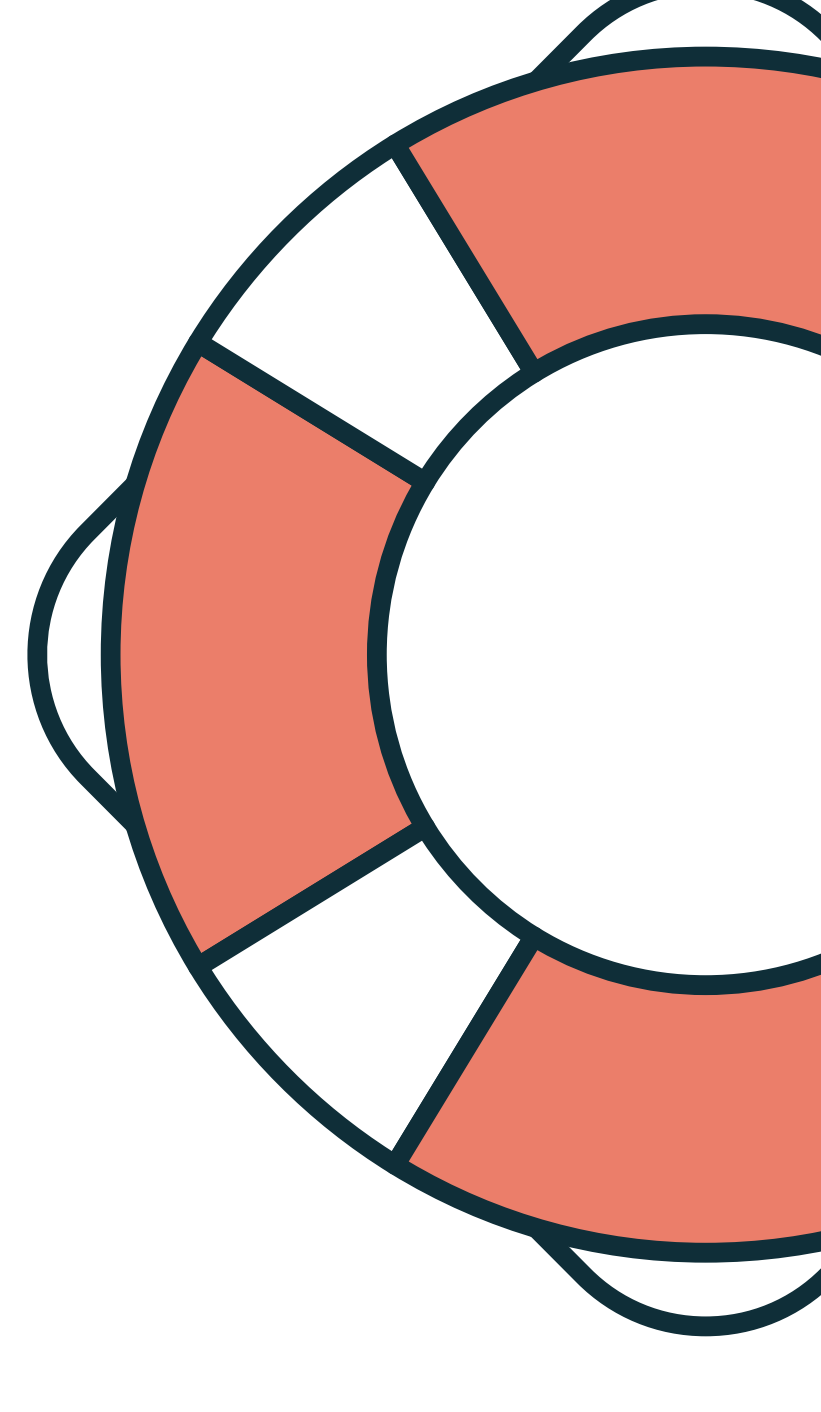


# Regional Public Universities: Navigating Challenges



Even more than other higher-ed institutions, regional public universities are increasingly struggling with enrollment and funding challenges, in part due to growing competition from private colleges, public flagships, and their fellow regionals.

A recent *Chronicle* survey of administrators emphasizes these challenges — but also finds optimism about the future.



## Perception Problems



Nearly **7 in 10**

say the American public and state and federal lawmakers don't understand the value of regional public universities.

## Resource Restrictions



Nearly **7 in 10**

say they don't have the resources to support their strategic visions.

## Biggest Challenges

Asked to identify the biggest challenges they face, the top four answers were:



## Signs of Strength



**53%**

say they agree at least somewhat that their institution has a good plan to improve its finances.



**55%**

say they're optimistic about their institution's future financial and enrollment prospects.



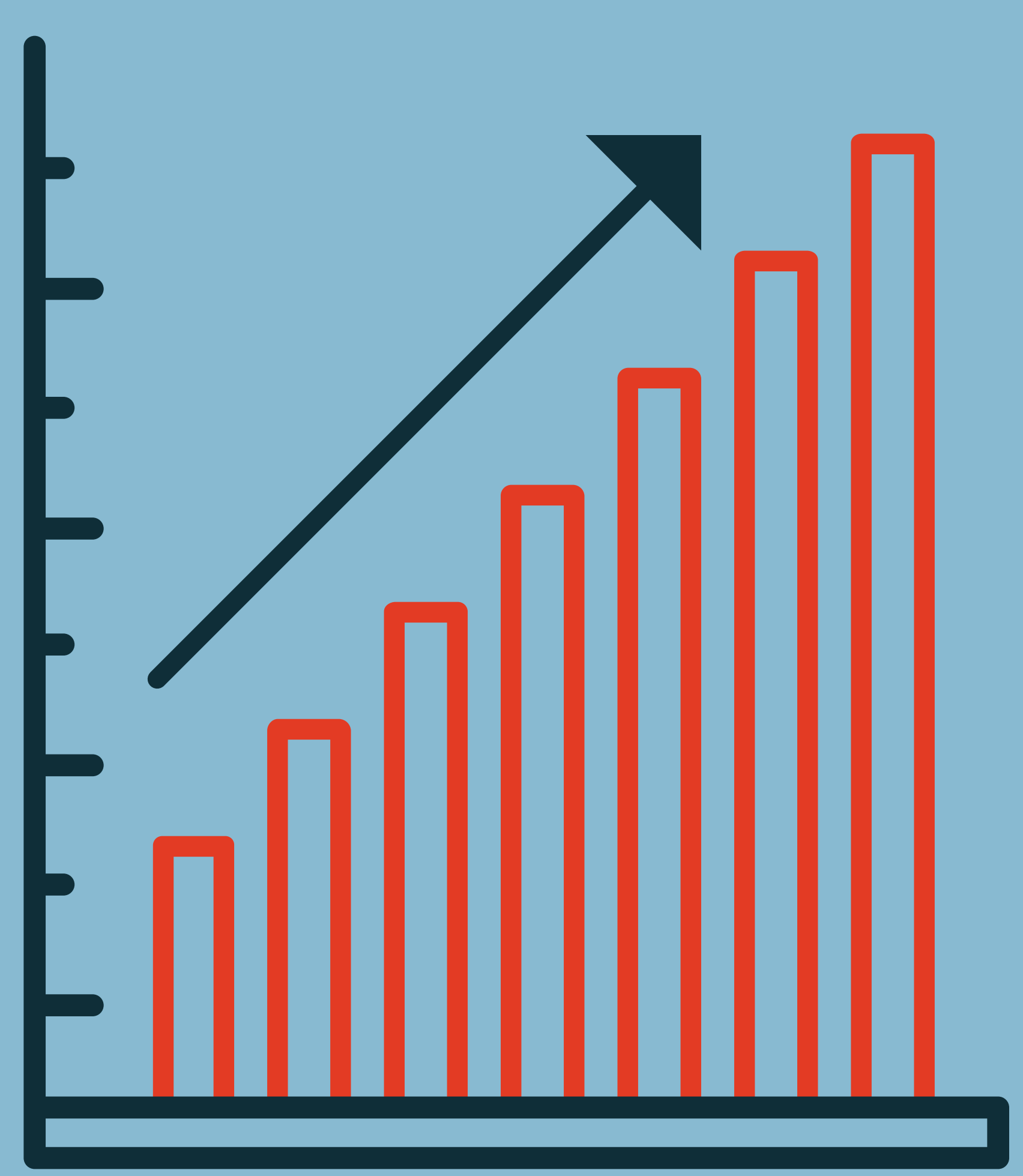
**66%**

say they agree at least somewhat that their institution has a good plan to retain students.

## Opportunities for Growth

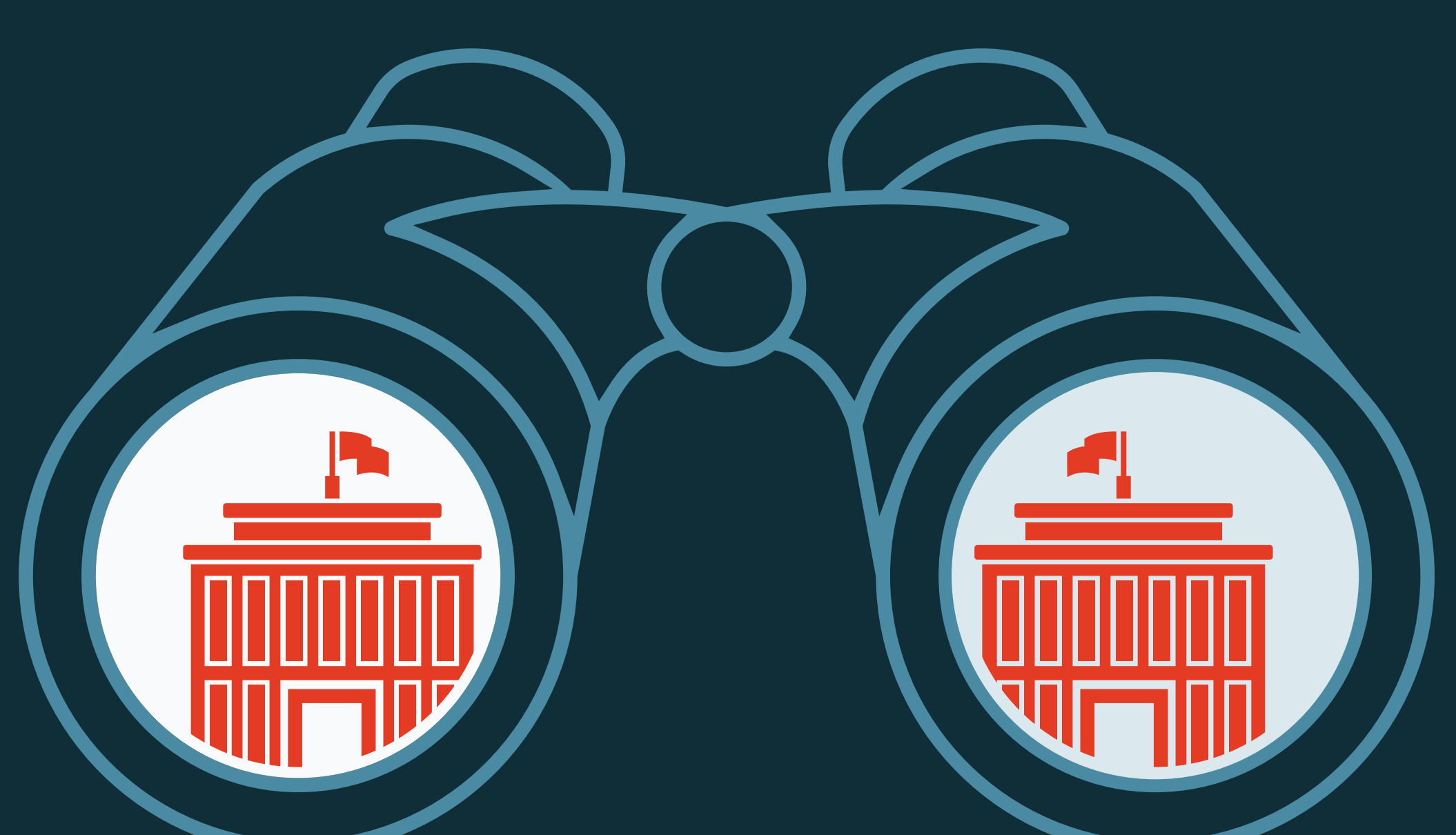
Asked where they saw opportunities to grow revenue at their institutions, the top three answers were:

- 1 Expanding online programs**
- 2 Expanding graduate programs**
- 3 Expanding work-force preparation and technical programs**



## What's Ahead?

Without an influx of funding or decreased competition, regional public universities will likely face more consolidations, cutbacks, and even closures. Yet many regionals will find ways to be resilient, adapting as they have in the past and finding new equilibriums at which to operate, including by focusing on core strengths like work-force development and service to their communities.



Source: A *Chronicle* survey, conducted with support from Academic Partnerships, of 404 administrators at regional public universities across the nation in October 2023.

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