



Strategic Plan for Research & Creative Works 2019-2025

Summary

Research Mission & Vision

Participation in the generation of new knowledge and creative works is one of the distinguishing features of all modern universities.

Mission

StFX is committed to the pursuit of research and creative works that contribute to academic scholarship and teaching, the discovery and dissemination of new knowledge, student experience, community and social impact, and the development of future leaders.

Vision

In undertaking these efforts, StFX will be a leader among Canada's undergraduate universities for its research and creative contributions to academic scholarship, student experience, community collaboration and social responsibility.

Strengthening Equity, Diversity and Inclusion within the StFX Academic Research Environment

A guiding principle underlying the pursuit of our research mission and vision, as well as the goals of this plan is the need to strengthen efforts related to equity, diversity and inclusion within and across the StFX academic research environment. This effort starts with increasing the awareness, sensitivity and cultural competencies of StFX faculty, staff and administration with respect to equity, diversity, and inclusion in the StFX research environment. We will also work to improve the understanding and valuing of scholarship or research that is non-traditional or unconventional, outside mainstream disciplinary norms, or focused on issues of gender, race or minority status.

Over the next five years of this plan, StFX will direct priority attention to expanding the diversity and inclusiveness of its research community by: undertaking data collection and analysis related to equity, diversity and inclusion; reviewing employment system practices; addressing and/or removing internal barriers to equity, diversity, and inclusion in academic research-related hiring, promotion, and career progression at StFX; developing employment policies in support of a more equitable academic research

environment at StFX; and strengthening professional development and training to enhance awareness, sensitivity, and cultural competencies related to equity, diversity and inclusion in the StFX academic research environment.

Goals

University research efforts comprise diverse individual and collaborative faculty research, creative and scholarly interests and activities. Some research or creative programs require specialized performance, creation, and laboratory spaces and equipment; others require access to field locations nearby or far away; many require access to specific information or archival resources. Our researchers and artists include tenured and tenure-track faculty members, librarians and archivists, staff within the Coady Institute, Extension Department and externally-funded centres such as the National Collaborating Centre for the Determinants of Health, limited-term and part-time faculty members, and professional staff. Regardless of the discipline, subject matter, and resource requirements, all research and creative works at StFX make valuable contributions to our collective knowledge and academic efforts.

The key over-riding goal for the 2019-2025 Strategic Plan for Research and Creative Works is to continue **to advance a culture of faculty success and student involvement in research and creative works at StFX.**

Over the next five-year period, the following priority goals will be pursued:

- To strengthen efforts related to equity, diversity and inclusion within and across the StFX academic research environment.
- To better support faculty researchers at all stages of their professional lifecycle with additional time and funding for research and creative works.
- To improve support for newly appointed faculty members with the establishment of their research and creative efforts.
- To strengthen efforts aimed at attracting increased external funding from granting programs, government agencies, communities, NGOs, industry and foundations for all types of research and creative works at StFX.
- To increase the number and diversity of undergraduate students involved in research and to make research a more integral part of the StFX undergraduate student experience.
- To strengthen internal and external research collaborations and to increase the profile of research through the further development of StFX research institutes and research centres.
- To strengthen research-related collaborations involving the Coady Institute, the Extension Department, and the National Collaborating Centre for the Determinants of Health, as well as deepen research-related collaborations with partners in the Maple League of Universities.
- To continue efforts aimed at increasing the profile of StFX researchers and artists, as well as supporting faculty and student research recognition, both internally and externally.
- To improve university-wide planning and support for research and creative infrastructure, equipment, and facilities, including library research resources.
- To improve the overall position of StFX relative to comparator undergraduate universities in national research rankings and retain the high ranking position of StFX on measures for quality of research as measured in national research rankings.

Proposed Actions

The following have been identified as the key issues and areas requiring attention in addressing the overall goal of advancing a culture of faculty success and student involvement in research and creative works at StFX from 2019-2025:

- Faculty Research Capacity - Time and Funding for Research and Creative Works
- Student Research Experience, Student Involvement in Research
- Profile and Recognition of Research and Creative Works; Further Development of Research Partnerships
- Resources, Tools, Infrastructure & Facilities for Research and Creative Works
- Institutional Environment for Research and Creative Works
- A series of proposed actions to address the goals outlined above follow under each of these categories and were informed by input through discussions with faculty, staff and students, as well as discussions at a 2019 Senate Workshop on Research.

Priority Areas of Research 2019-2025

While diverse programs and activities of individual faculty members are the foundation of overall StFX research and creative efforts, there are several thematic areas that represent strengths in terms of external research funding support, concentration of disciplinary and multi-disciplinary expertise, as well as research collaborations within the university and externally.

These areas tend to hold potential for the formation of research institutes or centres and tend to address broad questions or issues of regional, national or international significance. They also hold strong potential for communicating to external audiences and prospective future students about StFX and what differentiates StFX from other universities.

While the identification of thematic research priorities signals opportunities for improving research networks and undertaking efforts to raise the visibility and profile of StFX research, it does not detract from the University's commitment to, support for, or the value placed on, the full range of individual research or creative interests.

Four overarching and inter-linked research priority themes that reflect these attributes have been identified for the 2019-2025 term of this Plan:

- Public Policy, Governance & Leadership
- Climate & Environment
- Healthy Peoples and Communities
- Cultures, Societies & Development

Outcomes

While the individual strategic objectives and priorities contained in this Plan will not necessarily apply to all researchers and the circumstances of specific research programs, needs and aspirations; this does not preclude researchers from pursuing their own personal goals or from accessing internal support for research and creative works.

It is anticipated that acting on the strategic objectives and priorities in this Plan will lead to the following outcomes for StFX over the next 5 years:

- StFX will become a more equitable, diverse and inclusive academic research environment.
- Researchers at StFX will achieve greater success in advancing their individual and collective research and creative works.
- Researchers will achieve greater success in accessing funding needed for their (and their students') research and creative works.
- The number and diversity of undergraduate students involved in research will increase over time and research will become a more integral part of the StFX undergraduate student experience.
- The external (national and international) reputation of StFX (and its faculty members and students) in research and creative activity will be enhanced.
- StFX research institutes and centres will lead to greater internal and external research collaboration and will increase the visibility and profile of StFX research efforts.
- StFX's infrastructure for research and creative works will be enhanced over time.