

Université Sainte-Anne - Collège de l'Acadie

Strategic Research Plan

for the

Canadian Foundation for Innovation *and the*

Canada Research Chairs Program

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1. Context for the Strategic Research Plan

Université Sainte-Anne – Collège de l'Acadie (amalgamated in January, 2003) is the only French-language postsecondary institution in Nova Scotia, with a distance education network that includes six francophone communities in Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island.

Our vision is to be the institution of choice for Acadians and francophones of the Maritimes, while remaining open and accessible to students from around the world.

Our mission is to improve the quality of life in Maritime Acadian and francophone communities by providing higher education, research innovation, continuing education and training.

In addition to providing education and training to full-time and part-time students, both at our Church Point campus and through the distance education networks, we are mandated to partner with governments, agencies and other post-secondary and educational institutions to develop and deliver programs and research that are needed by our communities.

L'Université Sainte-Anne – Collège de l'Acadie is building for a knowledge-based economy now.

2. Core Objectives

a) Partnering to Expand and Consolidate Research Strengths

The foremost objective of this strategic research plan is to expand and consolidate the historical leadership of our institution in the domain of Acadian Studies, by becoming a key player in the construction of research networks in partnership with researchers in Québec, Louisiana, France, Belgium, and New Brunswick, and by establishing stronger links with other minority francophone communities across Canada.

b) Developing Research Capacities and Potentials

Another important objective is to reinforce our research capacities in a few key areas, closely related to our mission and mandate, where our researchers are already active, where the potential for world-class research has been clearly demonstrated, and where we are well-placed to contribute to research networks designed to address questions identified as priorities for our communities (for example, factors affecting health services delivery to francophone minority communities).

c) Expanding and Improving Research Tools and Infrastructures

It is our objective to expand and improve our research tools and infrastructures including the library, particularly with respect to the library's capacity to support data base searches; the science labs, which need to be modernized; the videoconferencing system; the language labs, and the campus computer network.

Foremost among our research infrastructures is the Centre acadien, an archival repository conforming to the highest standards of the academic archival profession, with an important collection of documents, sound recordings, and photographs, including over 10,000 books, 1350 microfilms, and 41 archival collections or fonds. The Centre Acadien is an international centre for genealogical research and academic research in Acadian Studies. We plan to expand the Centre and improve its capacities with the addition of an oral literature laboratory, with the equipment and the staff to digitize our collection.

The university encourages research initiatives and excellence within the faculty by providing course relief for active researchers and by funding research projects internally.

3. Applying the Objectives in Four Target Domains

a) Acadian Studies

Researchers at our university are already world leaders in the domain of Acadian Studies, in several disciplines including history, archaeology, ethnology, education, popular culture, literature, and theatre. Significant research infrastructure is in place, including the library and the Centre Acadien, as noted above. The university is also

home to *Port Acadie: Revue interdisciplinaire en études acadiennes* / *An Interdisciplinary Review in Acadian Studies*, which is the only peer-reviewed academic journal in the world that is dedicated to research about and for the Acadian communities and international Acadian Diaspora.

We plan to build on our strength in Acadian Studies through the establishment of a **Tier 1 Canada Research Chair**. The Chair will enable international research links, at the same time that it will give us a more international profile; and it will enable us to enlarge, improve and develop our archival collections, to maximise their potential as research tools. With the Chair we plan to apply for non-partnership funding through the **Canadian Foundation for Innovation** to build and staff an oral literature laboratory.

The university and the community as a whole will benefit from this significant opportunity to carry out ground-breaking, fundamental research into Acadian history and culture, past and present, and to interpret the research in international, pan-Canadian frameworks where we believe it will have a significant impact.

b) French Language Teaching

Université Sainte-Anne – Collège de l'Acadie will continue to develop significant expertise in the domain of French language teaching, in two sub-domains: teaching French as a second language to adults, and teaching French, and teaching in French, in francophone minority communities.

We have an established expertise in teaching French as a second language, to adults. Our French Immersion Program is one of the best in the world, and we have already provided research material to researchers from other universities who are working in this field. We will develop our own research capacities in this area by future hiring in the French Language Department

Teaching French as a mother tongue in minority francophone communities is a critical research area for the survival and growth of francophone minority communities everywhere. The constitutional right to education in French cannot by itself provide educational programs and strategies to be implemented in the 31 francophone school boards and councils across Canada, and the schools they represent. Our university has

existing research strength in this area, in the Education Department, which has recently launched a Masters of Education program. The university proposes to support research in this critical domain through graduate student training, future faculty hiring, networking, seminars and invited speakers.

c) Distance Education

Before the fusion, Collège de l'Acadie made important innovations in the delivery of distance education to rural and minority francophone communities. Today, research into positive peripheral impacts of distance technologies is ongoing at our institution, both in the Education Department and in the Social Sciences. This key area in which we are already profoundly implanted will continue to be a priority for Université Sainte-Anne – Collège de l'Acadie, and we will support the development of current initiatives and remain open to future opportunities to further our research contributions in the domain of distance education.

d) Health

There is a clearly identified need for research on health services delivery in francophone minority and rural communities. Through our participation in the *Consortium national de formation en santé* we are already involved in the construction of research networks to carry out the necessary research programs in and for our communities. This research will be developed through future faculty hiring, by the support of current initiatives for joint program delivery in the health sciences, and by programme development such as the current implementation of the advanced ambulance paramedic certification.

4. Planning, Approval and Evaluation Process

This plan has been drafted by the Dean of Arts and Sciences in collaboration with the University Research Committee, under the direction of the Vice-President of Teaching and Research. It will be endorsed by the University Senate, and circulated to the Department Chairs for information. Annual evaluation will be carried out by the University Research Committee and submitted to the University Senate. Any funding received from the Canada Research Chairs Program and the Canadian Foundation for Innovation will be subject to the evaluation procedures of those funding bodies, which will be strictly followed.