

## STRATEGIC RESEARCH PLAN SUMMARY 2022-27

This foundation plan *Transforming Learning through Knowledge Creation* establishes the priority goals, objectives and strategies for Scholarship, Research and Creative Activity (SRCA) at Vancouver Island University (VIU) over the 2022-27 timeframe. Where our 2017-22 plan focused on building a culture of SRCA, this plan aims to expand access to opportunities for those who wish to engage in SRCA and continue to build individual and institutional capacity for inclusive excellence.

### 1. CONTEXT FOR SCHOLARSHIP, RESEARCH AND CREATIVE ACTIVITY

VIU's Strategic Plan: *People, Place, Potential* commits to grow to be the region's hub for research and expertise. VIU's Academic Plan: *Weaving our Journey Together* aligns with our commitment to access with a goal to increase the number of VIU students who will have an opportunity to engage in research. As a comprehensive teaching university, VIU utilizes the expanded definition of scholarship and research that classifies 4 types of scholarship as per Ernest Boyer<sup>1</sup>: 1) the *scholarship of discovery*, which includes original research that advances knowledge; 2) the *scholarship of integration*, which includes synthesis of information across disciplines, across topics within a discipline or across time; 3) the *scholarship of application*, which involves the application of disciplinary expertise with results that can be shared externally; and 4) the *scholarship of teaching and learning*, which allows for public sharing and the opportunity for application and evaluation by others. The *scholarship of engagement*, often regarded as the fifth type, refers to the use of scholarship to understand and solve pressing social, civic and ethical problems.

### 2. SRCA STRENGTHS AND FOCUS AREAS

**Health, resilience and well-being** focuses on human and environmental health with the aim of improving the adaptive capacity of humans and systems. Contributions of VIU employees and students over the past five years have resulted in innovative health initiatives, impactful health outcomes and mutually beneficial partnerships with Island Health, the Ministry of Health and numerous community partners.

**Integrated sciences, technology and environment** focuses on new approaches to sustainability, climate change and the environment. In the past decade, VIU researchers have pursued bold and impactful work to measure progress on the sustainable development goals, measure chemical pollutants in air and water systems, identify impacts of thermal changes on fish and shellfish, and monitor changes in coastal snowpack and forest cover. These contributions have resulted in VIU being recognized within the region, Canada and beyond.

**Resilience of island, coastal and rural regions** VIU is located in an island and coastal region comprised of mostly rural communities where shifts in globalization, climate change, demographics, and population migration have presented opportunities and challenges, pressuring the region to adapt. This theme captures VIU studies that profile the realities, adaptive responses and challenges of people, communities and organizations in island, coastal and rural regions. The outputs have been critical to inform regional planning, management and development decisions while contributing to the growing literature on resilience in numerous disciplines.

<sup>1</sup> Boyer, E.L. (1990) *Scholarship reconsidered: Priorities of the Professoriate*, Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching.

**Innovation, entrepreneurship and social change** examines changes in the business and management models used across sectors as well as the associated outcomes of innovation and social change. Knowledge outputs have resulted in improved practices in non-academic settings and contributed to the literature.

**Cultural, heritage and creative expression** explores the ways cultures use, or have used, literary, political, social, and artistic forms of creative expression. Exploration occurs through the examination of texts and images, the restoration and presentation of works of art, the critical evaluation of historical and modern culture, the study of past human activity, and the creation of knowledge through art and performance.

**Equity, diversity and social justice** As a values-based institution, VIU is committed to respect and diversity, and to promoting respectful, informed discourse about reciprocity and reconciliation as identified by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada Calls to Action.

**Teaching and learning** VIU has developed expertise in innovative teaching and learning practices. This inquiry has practical value in that it enhances the learning experiences of students, while enabling faculty to continuously reflect upon and improve their teaching practices, obtain evidence of their impact on student learning and make informed decisions for enhancing learning experiences. Faculty inquiry and reflection also has scholarly value to external audiences when it is shared beyond the University.

**3. PATHWAY TO EXCELLENCE**

The pathway to excellence in SRCA at VIU will be facilitated by using a life-cycle framework (Figure 1) whereby actions are taken by VIU at all stages of the research process to support the development of talented individuals and clusters and to celebrate learning achievements internally and externally.

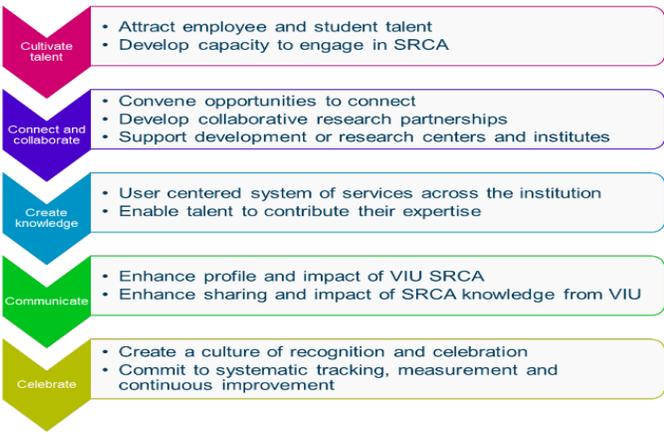


Figure 1: Lifecycle framework to developing inclusive SRCA excellence

Table 1- Goals, Objectives and Strategies

People - Goal 1: Cultivate talent among employees and students to enable engagement in SRCA	
Objectives	Strategies
1.1 Attract employee and student talent to contribute VIU expertise to society.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SRCA, HR, and Marketing will elevate the profile and impact of VIU’s SRCA activity.</li> <li>• SRCA and Advancement secure resources for new research and innovation chairs</li> <li>• SRCA and HR collaborate to create tools and resources to support employee recruitment.</li> <li>• SRCA will host an annual new employee orientation to SRCA each September.</li> <li>• Marketing and Deans to review websites and develop templates to better profile faculty.</li> </ul>

1.2 Develop capacity to engage in SRCA among employees and students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• recent guidance from Min Advn. Ed. Re. labour relations guidelines on research reviewed</li> <li>• HR and Deans will review the formula for faculty mentorship of student SRCA.</li> <li>• SRCA to launch EDGE, a researcher development program and review internal funding.</li> <li>• SRCA to conduct a review of internal funding for employees and students to engage in SRCA</li> <li>• Deans will identify annual priorities to support Faculty goals related to SRCA.</li> </ul>
<b>Place - Goal 2: Connect and collaborate to co-create knowledge outputs</b>	
2.1 Opportunities collaborative projects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The SRCA Office will convene 8-10 events for Faculty and students to share SRCA projects.</li> </ul>
2.2 Develop collaborative research partnerships and networks within VIU and externally	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SRCA and the Office of Community Partnerships will identify and connect potential partners.</li> <li>• Advancement and SRCA fundraise to maintain the RIF to leverage regional VIU expertise</li> <li>• SRCA and Communications to profile a min. of 10 SRCA partnerships via media platforms.</li> <li>• SRCA to track and measure the impact of partnered research projects.</li> <li>• SRCA and OIEE will provide resources for partnering with Indigenous communities.</li> <li>• International Ed. and SRCA will identify international engagement &amp; needs of employees.</li> </ul>
2.3 Support research centers and institutes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Deans and AVP SRCA to promote and support proposals for research centers and institutes.</li> <li>• Existing centers and institutes will develop proposals for Senate approval by Dec 2023.</li> <li>• Directors of centers and institutes will develop annual reports and share with Senate.</li> <li>• SRCA and Communications will profile the work of VIU research centers and institutes.</li> </ul>
<b>Potential - Goal 3: Create knowledge, applications, innovation and works</b>	
3.1 Ensure supports and a user centered system of services for SRCA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SRCA will share insights from the “What we heard report” with HR, Finance, IT, Communications and Facilities to commit to more efficient systems/supports for SRCA.</li> <li>• SRCA will initiate a taskforce to improve efficiencies in services and supports for SRCA.</li> <li>• SRCA will provide opportunities for annual feedback on institutional services and supports.</li> </ul>
3.2 Enable VIU talent to create knowledge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SRCA and OUPA to compile annual reports from Faculty Activity Reports (where permission is granted) to identify and highlight VIU’s SRCA impacts to society.</li> </ul>
<b>Potential - Goal 4: Communicate SRCA outputs into the public realm</b>	
4.1 Enhance the profile and impact of VIU employee and student SRCA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SRCA and Communications to develop a research communications strategy by March 2023.</li> <li>• Office of Community Engagement and SRCA to encourage and support knowledge mobilization (KM) events by September 2023.</li> <li>• Deans to encourage and support speaker series events and other knowledge mobilization.</li> </ul>
4.2 Enhance the sharing and impact of SRCA knowledge created at VIU	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SRCA, the Library and IT will publish VIU’s Data Management Strategy by March 2023.</li> <li>• SRCA will review existing resources and identify best practices in KM.</li> <li>• SRCA will develop modules for the EDGE program on KM and research data management.</li> <li>• The Writing Centre and SRCA will collaborate to host an annual writing retreat.</li> <li>• The Library and SRCA will collaborate to enable open-access publication.</li> <li>• SRCA and the Library will develop a dashboard to monitor the impact of VIU publications.</li> </ul>
<b>Potential - Goal 5: Celebrate and commit to continuous improvement</b>	
5.1 Create a culture of recognition and celebration of SRCA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Deans will identify and support recognition and celebration of SRCA activities each year.</li> <li>• SRCA and Advancement will increase student awards at CREATE 10% annually.</li> <li>• SRCA and Communications will release an annual Research and Creative Activity report.</li> <li>• SRCA will host an annual recognition event for internal award recipients each year.</li> </ul>
5.2 Commit to systematic tracking and improvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SRCA and the Office of Institutional Planning will design a dashboard for SRCA.</li> <li>• SRCA to provide opportunities for annual feedback on institutional services and supports.</li> <li>• SRCA and Deans to conduct annual meetings with Research Chairs and Tri-agency grantees.</li> </ul>

#### 4. DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

This plan emerged after a consultative process between Sep 2021 to Feb 2022 with input from approx. 560 people, including the Deans of each Faculty, Faculty, Students, Members of President’s Council and a Steering Committee.

## APPENDIX 1 - RESEARCH AND INNOVATION CHAIRS

Table 1- Research and innovation chairs by type and research focus area.

CHAIR TYPE	CHAIR TITLE	RESEARCH DISCIPLINE	GRANTING AGENCY	RESEARCH STRENGTH AND FOCUS AREAS
CRC Tier 2	Shellfish Health and Genomics	Genetics, breeding and environmental adaptation	NSERC	Integrated sciences and environment Resilience of island, coastal & rural regions
CRC Tier 2	Human Dimensions of Sustainability and Resilience	Forestry, agriculture, GIS	SSHRC	Health, resilience and wellbeing Innovation, entrepreneurship and social change
CRC Tier 2	Historical Dimensions of Women's Health	Canadian history, women's health, gender history, feminist health activism	SSHRC	Equity, diversity and social justice (EDI) Cultural, heritage and creative expression
CRC Tier 2	Community-Based Research	Education, Indigenous knowledge	SSHRC	Teaching and Learning Equity, diversity and social justice (EDI)
BC Regional Innovation Chair (BCRIC)	Aboriginal Early Childhood Development (AECD)	Childhood development, education, Indigenous knowledge	BC Innovation Council	Teaching and Learning Equity, diversity and social justice (EDI)
BC Regional Innovation Chair (BCRIC)	Tourism and Sustainable Rural Development	Economic development, sustainability, tourism management	BC Innovation Council	Resilience of island, coastal & rural regions Innovation, entrepreneurship and social change
Health Research BC Health Prof. Investigator		psychedelic-assisted therapy	Health Research BC	Health, resilience and well-being EDI
Health Research BC Scholar		brain injury, neuroscience, intimate partner violence	Health Research BC	Health, resilience and well-being EDI
Health Research BC Scholar		Physical Rehab., Aging, Foot-ankle stability	Health Research BC	Health, resilience and well-being
Health Research BC Scholar		Mental health services, Equity, Indigenous health	Health Research BC	Health, resilience and well-being
Jarislowsky Chair	Trust and Political Leadership	Democracy, Public trust	Jarislowsky Foundation	Innovation, entrepreneurship and social change

**BCRIC in AECD** strengthens the local and cultural relevance of education for AECD practitioners, and develops innovative, high quality, community-based programs to positively influence the holistic development of Aboriginal children, families, and communities. The collaboration between VIU, First Nation communities and Aboriginal organizations and agencies holds great promise to positively influence the health of families in Aboriginal communities.

**BCRIC in Tourism and Sustainable Rural Development** supports the sustainable development of tourism in BC's rural communities through collaboration with industry, community and government. This chair leads a comprehensive research program aimed at enhancing the resilience of rural tourism communities in British Columbia, Canada by undertaking multiple projects to explore the adaptive capacity of various rural tourism communities and implement strategies to bolster their resilience in the face of changing dynamics and challenges.

**CRC in Shellfish Health and Genomics** focuses on expanding the knowledge base in invertebrate immunology by identifying new immune pathways in the oyster. Focused on BC, this research examines the response of the Pacific oyster to two climate-change exacerbated threats: ocean acidification and Vibrio bacteria. An expected outcome is a selective-breeding program to future-proof the Canadian shellfish industry.

**CRC in Community-Engaged Research** focuses on collaborative, creative and cross-cultural youth-led community research. In the first term, the objective is to stimulate culturally responsive learning through youth-led public art projects involving literacies and participatory visual methodologies, such as theatre, mural painting, spoken word poetry, hip-hop music, and digital storytelling.

**CRC in Human Dimensions of Sustainability and Resilience** aims to clarify the extent and nature of reforestation and related wildfires around the world and improve our understanding of the nature of global forest change by developing new Earth observations that link local and regional agrarian and forestry trends. The CRC also advances new theoretical models of forest recovery and wildfires, satellite datasets and enhanced research networks. Ultimately, this research will help mitigate climate change by suggesting new techniques to restore forests and prevent wildfires.

**CRC in the Historical Dimensions of Women's Health** explores the history of women's pain in modern Canada by examining 20<sup>th</sup> century birth cultures, while building collaborations in the study of gendered medical violence and exploring the history of women's pain across the life cycle with the ultimate goal of improving women's encounters with the Canadian health care system. Recent work focuses on pelvic health, including all too often feminized, invisible, and chronic experiences of pelvic pain, and gendered experiences of bodily discomfort throughout the lifecycle, broadening Canadian understandings of the history of "women's health" beyond a traditional focus on reproduction.

**Health Research BC Health Professional Investigator** focuses on resilience and psychedelic-assisted therapies. With the support of like-intentioned others and provincial and national grant support, the HPI spearheads a community of practice to facilitate resilience: Roots to Thrive (RTT) and a psychedelic-assisted therapy program: RTT-KAT (Roots to Thrive + ketamine-assisted therapy).

**Health Research BC Scholar in Brain Injury** focuses on the effects, underlying pathophysiological mechanisms, biomarkers, and treatments of traumatic brain injury (TBI) and related conditions. This Scholar supports a community of practice critically important to VIU community partners and seeks to positively impact vulnerable populations, including victims of intimate partner violence, struggling with trauma and the related challenges due to socially structured inequalities.

**Health Research BC Scholar in Physical Rehabilitation** examines foot-ankle stability (FASt) solutions for lifelong mobility. This work will help researchers and clinicians fundamentally understand the importance of the foot and ankle to movements that are important for mobility (e.g., walking) and use this knowledge to create digital health solutions and assistive technologies aimed at maintaining mobility throughout the lifecycle.

**Health Research BC Scholar in Systems Change for Marginalized Communities** advances the Walk With Me program developed to combat stigma and create change in relation to the toxic drug poisoning crisis. This team works with Vancouver Island communities and within Island Health acute care facilities, to better understand the ways in which the drug poisoning crisis is impacting communities and systems. Through deep listening, peer engagement and leadership, and collaborative design, the team has developed recommendations designed to close service gaps, reduce stigma and develop relevant solutions.

**Jarislowsky Chair in Trust and Political Leadership** works in partnership with four other Jarislowsky Chairs in Trust and Political Leadership at universities in Nova Scotia, Quebec, Ontario, and Alberta. The long-term goal of this network of five endowed chairs is to develop educational programming and training for future leaders. The programming will focus on trust and ethical practice in governance and political leadership. This Chair will use the prominence and resources associated with the position to make substantive, positive contributions to how democracy is understood and practiced in Canada.