

Strategic Research Plan 2021-2026 Summary
Canadian Mennonite University
(Passed at CMU Senate on 2021-06-16)

Institutional Context

Canadian Mennonite University (CMU) is an Anabaptist Christian university offering academic programs in the arts, humanities, sciences, and business. Located in Winnipeg and chartered in 1998 by the Province of Manitoba, CMU was granted membership in the Association of Universities and Colleges in Canada (AUCC, now Universities Canada) in 2008. The university is guided by four commitments: educating for peace and justice; learning through thinking and doing; extending generous hospitality with radical dialogue; and modeling invitational community.

CMU's Strategic Research Plan (SRP) outlines a path for research growth at CMU over the next five years, from 2021-2026. CMU's SRP acts a gathering place for research at the institution, helping the institution to connect and present its research agendas, rather than a boundary excluding any particular research agenda. Because the SRP functions to connect research across a wide variety of individuals' work, and across disciplinary and departmental identities, this document names ethical, ideational, and procedural aspects of research that characterize CMU as institution, rather than focusing on particular disciplines or on any particular individuals' research agendas.

CMU's Research Distinctives: Community, Students, Interdisciplinarity, Teaching, Justice
CMU is a community-owned, community-rooted institution; a student-centered, academically challenging institution; and a deeply interdisciplinary institution with faculty interests cutting across disciplines. CMU is also a university in which teaching is understood as a genuine intellectual intervention, rooted in and comprising an arena of research. Finally, as a Mennonite- and Mennonite-Brethren-affiliated institution, CMU is oriented towards building justice, peace, and meaningful, welcoming community.

CMU's research strategy builds on these distinctive qualities as a university and aims to contribute as a research institution through the following research priority areas:

- The work of **memory, story, reflection, and performance in community and land**, rooted in the widely varied ways that CMU faculty have sought to engage and be engaged by the imaginations of the congregations, constituencies, communities and lands that relate to CMU;
- **Community-based research**, emerging from real relationships, in which research is developed with community partners for the flourishing of their communities;
- **Training undergraduate student researchers**, by providing widely available opportunities for undergraduate students to gain research experience and make contributions to research;

- **Interdisciplinary research**, rooted in a shared intellectual culture (not tactical partnerships) in which new questions emerge and can be addressed from complementary and different perspectives;
- Teacher research on **university pedagogy and curricula**, rooted in the significant work of CMU faculty in novel, innovative, and excellent teaching;
- Publicly-facing research focused on **social and environmental justice**, including peacebuilding and advocacy for vulnerable and marginalized populations.

SRP Action Plan

Five key action areas to move CMU's research environment forward are:

1. Increasing research leadership and staffing
2. Fostering internal research incentives
3. Meeting upcoming Tri-Council standards and requirements
4. Growing research partnerships and collaborations
5. Expanding granting capacity related to infrastructure and program

Research Growth at CMU

This SRP's action plan aims to significantly build Tri-Council and other funded research, and to enable both externally funded research more broadly and the CRC's flagship projects to flourish at CMU. The first CRC at CMU will develop a robust research program that will help set the stage for future CRCs at CMU, and that will build research capacity across the institution. CMU will also engage with the Canada Foundation for Innovation Program. CMU plans to engage with CFI to bolster research at CMU both during the tenancy of the CRC and beyond. (As the particulars around CFI engagement will involve planning related to CMU's CRC nominee, the process for which is not yet complete, details around CFI use are not yet known and will be addressed in a future revision of this Plan.)

Equity, diversity, and inclusion are of paramount importance to CMU and to the CRC and CFI programs. CMU will explicitly prioritize a candidate from one or more of the four EDI priority areas for its first CRC nomination, underscoring the institution's commitment to creating a more equitable academic environment. CMU is initiating campus-wide EDI planning over the next two years that will meet both EDI requirements of the Tri-Council agencies and consider equity needs specific to our institution.