

Research/Research-Creation Plan

Short version with temporary layout – June 2026

The Université du Québec en Abitibi-Témiscamingue (UQAT) Research/Research-Creation Plan draws upon the extensive consultations that took place within the scope of producing the 2025-2030 Strategic Plan as well as upon a goal-oriented process carried out with professors, graduate and postgraduate students, and research staff in fall 2025. Aligned with the 2025-2030 Strategic Plan, the Research/Research-Creation Plan defines UQAT's scientific orientations and systematizes their implementation. It seeks to assert the Université's position, to better raise awareness of its distinctive strengths, and to support the dissemination of its research within the university network.

Consultations identified three major findings:

- Research is an essential driver for dissemination, scientific credibility, and regional development.
- Higher visibility of research work, projects, and their benefits is needed, in order to sustain the Université's attractiveness as an employer, recruitment, and recognition.
- Increased institutional support is expected in order to simplify processes, support training, provide guidance to new professors, and improve the experience for students and researchers.

Based on these findings, this plan turns the institutional orientations into **10 specific objectives**, aligned with the five orientations in the 2025-2030 Strategic Plan:

1. Increase student participation in research by promoting diversity and international collaboration and openness;
2. Strengthen financial support and equitable access to scholarships and research opportunities;
3. Improve the effectiveness of research support services and of institutional support;
4. Increase continuing education and professional autonomy for research staff and researchers;
5. Enhance applied and collaborative research in health;
6. Support a cross-sector network for innovation in health and wellbeing;
7. Support research led with and by Indigenous communities for the purposes of co-construction and respect of various knowledges;
8. Highlight and support environmental and sustainability initiatives to increase their visibility, and to facilitate collaboration between units and institutions;
9. Encourage interdisciplinary research and innovative partnerships, in order to allow emergence of sustainable solutions to environmental challenges;
10. Increase the value and benefits that society sees from environmental and territorial research.

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The Plan provides an operational approach, structured around measurable actions, key stakeholders, and indicators that allow for careful monitoring and continual adjustment.

Priority Research Fields

The priority research fields are broken down into five areas of excellence, based on recognized UQAT strengths, and into three emerging strategic areas. They reflect UQAT's distinctive scientific identity: interdisciplinary research, territorial presence, partnerships with communities, a holistic approach to health, expertise in the north, and collaboration with Indigenous communities.

Areas of Excellence

I - Environmental innovations and responsible mining practices

Research conducted out within the scope of this area develops sustainable solutions to reduce the environmental footprint of industrial activities (mining activities in particular). It combines engineering, environmental, geosciences, smart technology, and social sciences expertise to improve resource management, waste recovery, and environmental efficiency. The goal is to support a transition towards cleaner, more effective, and more responsible industrial practices.

II - Boreal ecosystems, forest management, and environmental resilience

Research projects aim to understand the operation of boreal ecosystems and to support their resilience in response to natural, human, and climate-related disruptions. This work combines paleoecology, forest ecology, aquatic ecology, and the social sciences to inform the sustainable development and conservation of habitats. Projects will apply strategies based on natural processes, tailored to territorial realities.

III - Health, wellbeing, and social justice

This area includes the study of social, environmental, and territorial determinants of health in order to reduce inequality and improve wellbeing. Projects focus on mental health, chronic illnesses, addictions, vulnerability, and trajectories of care through the combination of social work, psychoeducation, art therapy, and the "one health" approach. The goal is to support practices and policies that are more accessible, inclusive and tailored to the needs of communities.

IV - Education, training, and teaching innovation

Research projects focus on initial and continuing education, teaching innovation, and on the adaptation of educational practices to regional and northern realities. They address contextualized curricula, digital education, AI, didactics, and inclusive practices that foster success. These projects will contribute to the redesign of teaching models and to the improvement of quality and equity in education.

V - Indigenous studies and territorial transformation

This area relies on long-term partnerships with Indigenous communities in order to support research for, by, and with Indigenous communities. It focuses on governance, Indigenous knowledge, holistic health, language rights, and territorial dynamics. The goal is to foster self-determination and the sustainable development of more equitable, resilient, and inclusive territories.

Emerging areas

I - Digital creation and media studies

This area highlights UQAT's emerging excellence in digital creation, video games, media arts, and cultural studies. Research work explores the connections between art, technology, and society, including research-creation, immersive practices, and digital mediation, reinforcing UQAT's role as a creative hub, by way of its cultural and industrial partnerships.

II - Environmentally responsible agriculture and territorial agrifood systems

Research conducted in this area supports sustainable, resilient farming adapted to northern and rural realities. Research work focuses on soil health, biodiversity, environmentally responsible production, and food security in partnership with agricultural and Indigenous communities. The work seeks to foster local resources, diversify practices, and reinforce regional food self-sufficiency.

III - Hydrogeology and the integrated management of groundwater

In this area, research is intended to protect and sustainably manage groundwater essential to northern regions, eskers, and to the mining sector. Research work focuses on the replenishment and quality of aquifers, and on the modelling of those aquifers, supported by state-of-the-art laboratories and regional partnerships. They bolster UQAT's leadership in hydrogeology and support the responsible management of this vital resource.

The UQAT Approach to Gender Representation in CRC Programs

UQAT is fully compliant with the targets of the Canada Research Chairs program, and maintains an active strategy to:

- Encourage the equal representation of genders at all stages of appointment;
- Ensure fair, transparent, and widely circulated allocation processes;
- Attract individuals from underrepresented groups, specifically through support, mentoring, and equal access to funding.

Calls for applications are open, widely circulated, and based on an approach that balances areas of excellence, institutional needs, and commitments to equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI). The

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Office of the Vice-President for Research and Creation monitors progress in accordance with the requirements of the CRC program.

Areas targeted for allocation of Canada Research Chairs and for Canada Foundation for Innovation (CFI) support

In December 2025, UQAT had six Chairs available, two Tier 1 (Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada [NSERC]) and four Tier 2 (three NSERC and one at the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada [SSHRC]) broken down as follows:

Priority field	Tier 1 Chair	Tier 2 Chair
Environmental innovations and responsible mining practices	2 (NSERC)	2 (NSERC)
Boreal ecosystems, forest management, and environmental resilience		1 (NSERC)
Indigenous studies and territorial transformation		1 (SSHRC)

Over the 2026-2031 period, each of these Chairs will be set to expire. One may be renewed, while the others will be subject to replacement. In the coming years, UQAT will continue to take into account the relative importance of each research area, and of the emerging sectors it wishes to develop further in such a way as to maintain a strategic balance when allocating available Chairs. UQAT will continue to use CFI funds, and those of the Fondation de l'UQAT (FUQAT) to support Chair development, infrastructure, and recruitment.

Support for Research Development and Training in the Above Fields

UQAT supports the development of research and training in its priority fields through reliance on specialized teaching and research infrastructure, including specialized laboratories in the mining and hydrogeological sectors, a mobile laboratory, a teaching and research forest, and agroecological facilities. These capabilities are enhanced by close partnerships grounded in communities; Indigenous communities, municipalities, community organizations, and mining and forestry industries, in particular. The Université also supports these areas through specialized training programs at the graduate and postgraduate levels, through increased institutional support of emerging researchers, as well as by networking people from health, environmental, and agroecological sectors. The emerging fields defined in the Plan will be provided focused support intended to foster their formalization and growth, through strategic investment in equipment, through support to partnership and intersectoral research, as well as through mentorship and supportive measures geared towards professors in the early career stage.

Inter-institutional and Intersectoral Collaborations

UQAT relies on an active and diverse network of collaborations, bringing together institutions in the Université du Québec network, regional and national research centres, Indigenous communities, and partners in the mining, forestry, agricultural, educational, cultural, and health sectors. At the provincial and federal levels, these collaborations are embedded in formalizing strategic networks. They are an essential driver for supporting the development and outreach of Indigenous studies, and mining, environmental, regional health, and digital creation transitions.

Monitoring, Evaluation, and Achievement of Goals

The Research/Research-Creation Plan incorporates a formalized monitoring and evaluation mechanism that allows for continuous assessment regarding achievement of established goals. The mechanism is based on indicators linked to each specific objective as well as on a tracking table that outlines anticipated actions, stakeholders responsible for them, and expected benefits. This mechanism is supported by a continuous review process ensured by the Office of the Vice-President for Research and Creation as well as by the research and creation committee, in partnership with units, services, and partners. Selected indicators focus specifically on student participation in research, access to funding, quality of institutional support, and scientific activity in the priority fields, as well as on the benefits of research for communities and partners.

A Framework for Action and Change

This UQAT Research/Research-Creation Plan builds on the long-standing areas of excellence while expanding three emerging areas that have strong potential. Formalized, operational, and grounded in the realities of the territory, the framework is based on transparent governance, an approach based on equity, and on close collaboration with regional communities and partners. This updated framework supports scientific growth, the training of the next generation, UQAT's ability to attract employees, as well as the national and international reach of its distinctive strengths.