



Research and research-creation at NSCAD have the potential to realize profound social change. The priorities set by the Research Committee of Senate are bold, political, and have the potential to dramatically transform contemporary ways of knowing, ways of being, and the lived experience. I commend the Committee for their willingness to be bold.

Dr. Ann-Barbara Graff Vice-President (Academic and Research)











Research at NSCAD University begins with intellectual and artistic inquisitiveness. Building on established success in student- and faculty-driven research and creation, we are committed to promoting and supporting nationally and internationally significant research and creative production. If we think about research with a spiral in mind, we imagine the act of seeking out with purpose in order to start again with new knowledge; it is ultimately generative. Like the clay hand-building technique of coiling to create form, we take a pliable and linear material to develop form and structure by circling back and building up successive layers. At NSCAD, research is conducted by every faculty member and student, as it is by seeking out and circling back that new ideas are articulated and tested, new materials are developed and explored, creativity and imagination are harnessed to make new.

NSCAD's Strategic Research Plan sets out the institutional priorities for research that have been established by the Research Committee of Senate, in consultation with the Divisions, and in light of the ambitions that NSCAD has for itself as the premier university of arts, craft and design in Canada. For 2019-21, NSCAD sets as its strategic research goal to increase the impact and recognition of NSCAD's research globally. At NSCAD, research is fueled by a passion to transform the world. Artists are critical and creative thinkers who question the status quo. Research at NSCAD addresses challenges, be they new and emerging or long-held and intractable. Unrestricted by disciplinary conventions, NSCAD faculty and students pursue research without borders, by questioning answers and accepted ideas.

NSCAD's research is driven by the goal to demonstrate its leadership in four distinct themes: Visual and Cultural Literacies, Sustainability and Adaptability, Material Exploration, and Art/Design Education and Pedagogy with reimagined Infrastructure underpinning those themes. We commit to supporting research centres, institutes, networks, and clusters, including those well established, emerging, or proposed, as a way to support interdisciplinary collaboration. NSCAD seeks endowed and Canada Research Chairs in each of its four priority areas to complement the high caliber of faculty and supporting infrastructures. The aim is to support emerging and established arts, craft and design faculty and artists who can mediate between digital and analogue processes, are creative innovators who problem-solve within profound constraint, and are intrepid in responding to both applied and theoretical challenges in seeing ideas to fruition. It is vital to stress the importance of the speculative, critical, studio-based, non-instrumental creative research work that contributes to the local, regional, national and global culture.

WALKING KEPE'K - CATHERINE MARTIN PHOTO: ROBERT BEAN



GLAM COLLECTIVE'S (DR. CARLA TAUNTON, DR. HEATHER IGLOLIORTE AND DR. JULIE NAGAM) MEMORY KEEPERS II VISITING ARTISTS IN THE NSCAD STUDIOS. L TO R: TSĒMĀ IGHARAS, ALBERTA ROSE W., CARRIE ALLISON, JERRY EVANS, SÉBASTIEN AUBIN, CAROLINE MONNET. PHOTO: STEPHEN BROOKBANK



Our strength is in our ability to make things, while applying our skills to use artistic, creative and design thinking methodologies in problem articulation and solving. NSCAD researchers examine and, most importantly, question the relationships between materials, processes, and the maker, as well as the critical role that they have played in world cultures.

Visual and Cultural Literacies: Reconciliation, Resurgence, Resilience

NSCAD is committed to responding to the recommendations put forward by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (TRC) in 2015 with a 10-point action plan within its 2016-20 Academic Plan. These goals are also reflected in this Strategic Research Plan to participate in a national dialogue on transformative change toward understanding, commemoration, reconciliation and resurgence. As such, our Research Plan will contribute to the mobilization of knowledge creation regarding Indigenous experience, histories, and epistemologies. This includes regional, national and international relationships between our researchers and Indigenous artists, curators, scholars and community members. We have established an undergraduate Minor in Indigenous Studies and aim to decolonize NSCAD curriculum over the next 5 years. This foregrounds innovative and socially relevant research that examines the histories of Indigenous art, material cultural and contemporary curatorial initiatives. If a subsequent nomination is approved, a **Tier 2 Canada Research Chair:** Indigenous Studio Practice would be sought. NSCAD wishes to foster and advance contemporary Indigenous practice.

NSCAD has a central role to offer toward the visibility of Indigenous peoples and Indigenous art practices in the Atlantic region during this urgent period of reconciliation. Research in Indigenous studies contributes to the impact that Indigenous culture has on cultural policy in Canada. We will continue to partner with Indigenous communities as well as local and national universities to foster opportunities for Indigenous researchers and students. Research will be a vital step toward developing an equitable curriculum that acknowledges the distinct contribution that First Nations, Inuit and Métis art and culture provides to an inclusive understanding of the diverse Canadian culture.

NSCAD has identified this commitment to the TRC process, and will additionally develop a comparable action plan on regional commitments to African Nova Scotian, Acadian and Gaelic communities. The need to address the claims of African Nova Scotian communities has grown more urgent. The university has designated a proposed **Tier 1 CRC in Transatlantic Black Diasporic Art and Community Engagement**. The impact of this Chair will be profound and underscores the strengthening of research in a number of diverse, core and yet largely invisible areas within the university. There are many potential partners at the provincial government and institutional level, especially as Nova Scotia has a dedicated Ministry of African Nova Scotian Affairs, as well as within the community writ large: The Black Cultural Centre, Black Educators Association, Nova Scotia Museum, Shelburne County Museum, Nova Scotia Archives, Halifax Regional Centre for Education, who are seeking the critical mass and infrastructure to coordinate their individual efforts and realize social change.

Sustainability and Adaptability

One theme that unifies faculty research interest across disciplines is sustainability. In response to the ongoing threat of environmental degradation, NSCAD faculty are seeking new materials, methods and strategies to reduce the burden on the environment and to improve the long-term viability of populations. NSCAD's leadership in modeling economic sustainability within the cultural sector includes studies in professional practices in the arts, design management and a wide range of experiential learning experiences.

NSCAD's approach to sustainability recognizes the interrelatedness of social and natural environments, of ecological, economic, and cultural forces. Textile faculty are investigating opportunities to repurpose synthetic fibres while researching alternatives that support sustainable textiles agriculture. NSCAD envisions future research in new approaches to growing and using natural dyes and low waste garment patterning that will lead to the long-term success of manufacturing fabric and producing clothing and fashion. Our study of craft media and architecture, particularly in ceramics, embraces urban ecology, studying the modification of both exterior and interior architectural environments through high performing environmental objects. NSCAD craft research projects encourage students to engage new technologies and interdisciplinary thinking. Regional partnership will be strengthened with Indigenous environmental groups, local businesses, and mental health and healthcare communities for research into media ecology and sustainable creation. If a subsequent nomination is approved, a Tier 2 Canada Research Chair in Sustainability and Adaptability would be sought.

The institution aims to better articulate the role of cultural practices, products, and knowledges in environmental sustainability. Research by faculty and students explores cultural and individual identity through placed-based practice, public art, community engagement, and artmaking that is grounded in social experience. NSCAD recognizes that by ensuring the longevity of collective cultural knowledge, it is possible to support people's opportunities to live livable lives and fulfill their potential. This requires an innovative, interdisciplinary perspective that foregrounds the importance of addressing concerns of equity, representation, and accessibility. NSCAD's current Tier 2 Canada Research Chair in Infrastructure, Media Communications through the Institute of Departments and Organizations (IDO) is developing a centre for infrastructure studies that traces the ecological, institutional, territorial, and intersectional effects of the material systems of media and communications. It also opens up the very great potential to increase research engagement in the visualization of big data.



GABRIEL SOLIGO'S some clothes.
PHOTO: KATHERINE NAKASKA



THE INTERRELATEDNESS
OF SOCIAL AND NATURAL ENVIRONMENTS,
OF ECOLOGICAL, ECONOMIC, AND CULTURAL FORCES

CENTRAL TO ALL ART AND DESIGN PRACTICES ... ENGAGE CRITICALLY AND CREATIVELY





Material Exploration

Material exploration is central to all art and design practices. In fine arts, this includes the use of older and new technologies – stone cut to water jet, laser and plasma cut, vacuum forming and dye sublimation printing as well as large format plotter printing to be able to print onto all kinds of material surfaces. We also consider public art practices and immaterial practices, such as performance art and relational aesthetic and collaborative practices to be integral to this theme, especially as the critical mindset expressed through material concerns is not necessarily about product production per se but focuses on a critique of the contemporary condition.

New image and sound tools provided by digital technologies have and will continue to redefine the vocabulary and methodologies of the screen arts, the way screen arts are viewed and experienced, and ultimately, the society that has made cinema a primary vehicle of artistic expression for the last 100 years. Research activities in this module will engage critically and creatively with screen-based and computer-driven technology, and increasingly, with notions of interactivity. The focus of work in this area includes augmented reality, responsive and immersive environments, physical computing, locative media, mobile computing, critical gaming, animation, sound design, cinema and social media. Research questions explore the opportunities, limitations and cultural impact of digital technologies and contribute to shaping the tools that societies will use in the future. Projects in this area use and develop these new media technologies in co-evolution with their creative application. By way of example, the jewellery and metalsmithing curriculum integrates digital fabrication methodologies, advancing design capabilities and iterative responses toward a range of outcomes in metal, alternate materials and synthetic media. Students become well-equipped to work alongside industry, demonstrating responsible and creative approaches to design, manufacture and promotion of products within jewellery and beyond.

MILLING FROLIC. PHOTO: ELIOT WRIGHT NSCAD is a leader in craft practices and scholarship. Today's craft-media practices encourage interdisciplinary research as much as they interrogate discipline-based conventions, and thus ultimately revealing the complexity of conceptual production with material expression in contemporary arts. NSCAD supports research in the modern craft movement as allied with domestic and personal objects, while also supporting contemporary practices that expand knowledge through innovative links between design and architecture. This research is in sync with the evolving structures, discourse and socio-cultural responsiveness of fine art practices, which creates new opportunities for designers, architects, manufacturers and entrepreneurial enterprises that operate directly with consumers.

A new research cluster (NODes: Network of Digital Fabrication Studios) between jewellery and metalsmithing, textiles and fashion, ceramics, and 3-dimensional design is currently in development under a newly recognized Dr. Sandra Alfoldy Craft Institute. NSCAD is pursuing a number of other initiatives to advance this research cluster including the nomination of a Tier 2 Canada Research Chair in Material **Exploration.** The Institute offers individuals and organizations the opportunity to work with NSCAD faculty, staff and students to harness a growing appetite for innovative thinking by serving as both a home for the creativity that currently exists within the university, and a nexus for new regional, national and international partnerships. Research activities use and develop new technologies along with traditional and adapted materials and applications in order to further the design and fabrication of contemporary art, artifacts, and products for a wide range of uses. We will increase NSCAD's research engagement as 'makers' through increased exploration of new methods of production such as rapid prototyping. Activities include the application of computer-assisted design and manufacturing technologies, the development of digital visualization and handling technologies, and the customization of design and fabrication methodologies. The digital translation of the imagination to material form is resulting in a re-imagination of production methods and scales and a merging of craft and industry methodologies where neither are necessarily privileged. Research in this area is expected to create new academic partnerships as well as industrial, commercial affiliations, and academic partnerships with the COVE and Dalhousie Emera ideaHUB. The Graduate Student Research Assistantships (fine and media arts) are very much embedded in this form of open exploration.

"INSECTARIUM: MICRO-THEATRE" 2016, DR. CHRISTOPHER MARK KALTENBACH. PHOTO: STEVE FARMER





A NEXUS FOR NEW REGIONAL, NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL PARTNERSHIPS



NSCAD UNIVERSITY



Art and Design Pedagogy and Education

The recent development of the new Master of Arts in Art Education (MAED) will position NSCAD as a key contributor to regional, national, and international conversations about the importance of the arts in society. The three stream options—community-based practice, applied pedagogy in art education, and museum and curatorial—will addresses national and regional imperatives for approaches that offer inclusive and nuanced understandings of the role that art plays in society. For example, courses aim to foreground the knowledge and creative contributions of Black Nova Scotian and Indigenous communities. The research focus is on the creation of mobilizing work that takes up issues of creative resilience and resistance for health and well-being, cultural healing and reconciliation, environmental awareness, and so on. Dr. April Mandrona's research focuses on the intersections between community art education, social justice, and self-determination (i.e., in racialized, geographically isolated, under-resourced communities). This has culminated in expertise that spans art and visual studies, childhood studies, education, ethics, sociocultural relations, and geopolitics and that inform the development of responsive art practices, policy, and curricula.

If a subsequent nomination is approved, a **Tier 2 Canada Research Chair: Art and/or Design Education** would be sought.

TEXTILE PROJECT AT HALIFAX CENTRAL LIBRARY PHOTO: ELIOT WRIGHT





Infrastructure Priorities

Library + Digital Archive

Materials Archive, Archive (Black Histories, Sound+Art Archive),
 NSCAD Press Editions

Labs + Institutes

- Art Education Collaboratory; Art + Reconciliation Project
- Tier 1 Institute on the Study of Canadian Slavery and its Legacies
- Craft Institute
- Tier 2 IOI
- NODeS: Network of Digital Fabrication Studios

Infrastructure

NSCAD's Strategic Research Plan acknowledges the dynamic and changing technological environment where research and creation occur, and also recognizes the infrastructure needed to facilitate this type of research within our institution. Research infrastructure is identified within NSCAD's Strategic Research Plan in order to foreground efforts to prioritize access, dynamic facilities for research, as well as studio and lab support for the adapting needs of research. We need state-of-theart digital and fabrication technology, and contemporary approaches to conventional materials and media in craft and the visual arts. The goal of prioritizing infrastructure at NSCAD will be to grow the institutions Tri-Council research and funding capabilities; increase collaboration and partnerships with a larger community of academic, professional, business, government, and social organizations; and highlight the value of NSCAD's research by engaging a wider community through an enhanced online presence, databases, discoverable archives, and public outreach initiatives. At the forefront of this investment is the University Library.

ALBERTA ROSE W. CREATING A CHANDELIER IN THE NSCAD STUDIO USING BEADED AND LAZER CUT DROPLETS. PHOTO: STEPHEN BROOKBANK

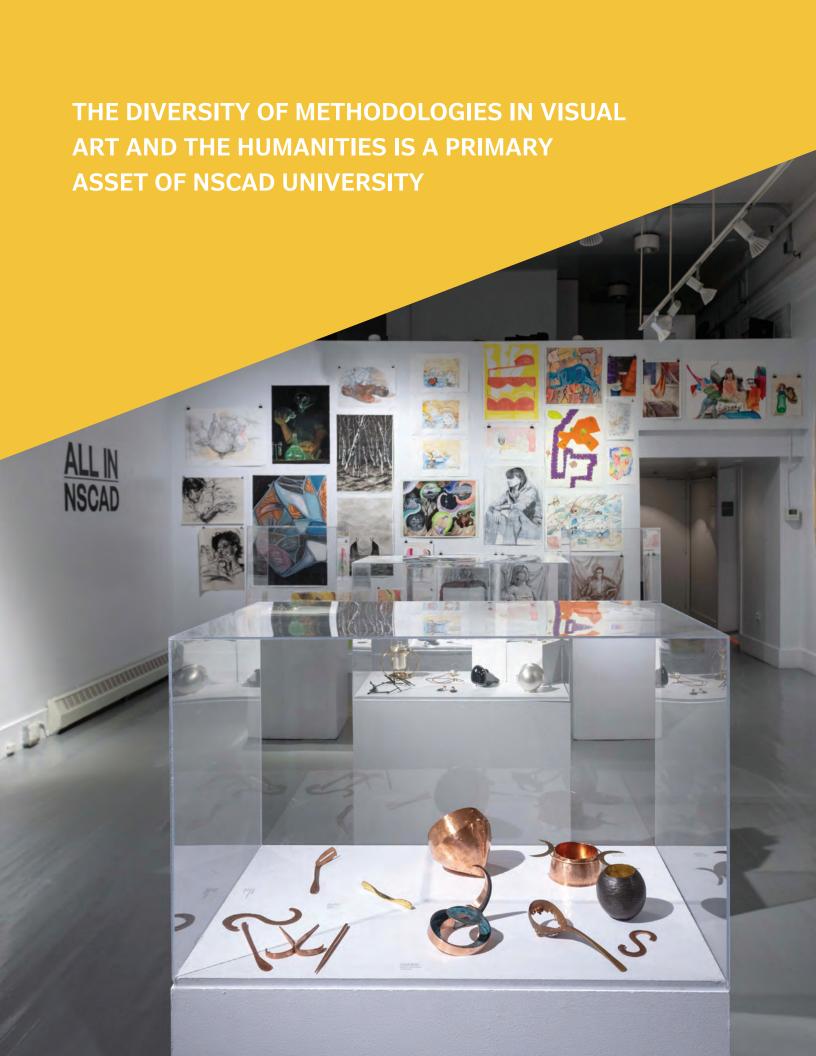
NSCAD University Library

NSCAD's Library is Atlantic Canada's largest academic resource centre dedicated to supporting research and creative practice in the areas of fine arts, craft, design, and art history. The Library houses and provides circulating and reference access to a collection of over 30,000 print and media resources including serials, books, DVD's, and exhibition catalogues on site, in addition to over 10,000 online journals and streaming media resources available through subscription databases. The Library also includes the visual resources collection (VRC) space which is home to NSCAD's special collections. The VRC includes one of North America's largest printed matter collections, and a growing amount of print and audio/visual archives. A large amount of archive and scholarly material has been digitized and added to NSCAD's Institutional Repository, an open digital space that exists to preserve and provide access to digital surrogates of analogue and born digital archival and scholarly collections. The NSCAD Library, librarians, and library technicians are contributing members of regional, national, and international library initiatives, consortiums, and societies including the Novanet Consortium of Libraries (a consortium that links all Nova Scotia libraries, allowing materials to be discoverable and accessible throughout the province), Council of Atlantic University Libraries (CAUL), Canadian Research Knowledge Network (CRKN), International Federation of Library Associations (IFLA), and the Art Libraries Society of North America (ARLIS).

With current experience digitizing and providing access to unique archival and scholarly collections in various formats, the NSCAD Library is well positioned to support advanced research. Over the past ten years the Library has digitized a large amount of archival and scholarly material including print, audio/visual, and image collections and made them internationally accessible via NSCAD's Institutional Repository which is part of the Islandora Network of Institutional Repositories in Atlantic Canada (CAIRN). Digitizing and description of archival and scholarly collections in unique formats is now a regular part of the Library's ongoing activities and support existing and proposed Canada Research Chair areas of study. In this capacity, the Library and its experienced staff are well positioned to contribute to the creation of a research institute that has the goal of locating, documenting, collating, digitizing, and providing access to data and resources for the study of Canadian and related sites of slavery, among other projects. Furthermore, the Library has a long history mentoring, training, and providing valuable work opportunities for NSCAD students, young librarians, archivists, museum professionals, and artists through collaborative student programs including year-round student assistantships, practicum placements for Dalhousie University Information Management graduate students, and summer jobs and internships through the Young Canada Works in Heritage programs. The NSCAD Library's experience and commitment to disseminating information management skills and developing novel approaches to digitization, accessibility and discoverability have allowed us to establish it as a priority area of research infrastructure investment.









The Anna Leonowens Gallery is a primary location within the university for research and creation visibility and student participation and experiential learning through exhibitions, public lecture series, artist residencies and curatorial internships. The mandate of the Anna has expanded over the last year to become an important adjunct to the development of the Learning Commons within the university.

The public significance and visibility that above research activities provide to the university is significant in activating community engagement in research. In addition to current events such as Research Hangouts and symposium days where research takes centre stage, NSCAD aims to strengthen how we integrate internships, practica, workstudy, and exchanges into program offerings. In addition, NSCAD aims to offer increased paid student assistantships and research experience. The interdisciplinary explorations and partnerships that occur at NSCAD through investigations in conventional and emerging technology are relative to creative and imaginative innovation in the 21st century and are substantial to the identity and future of Canadian culture.

NSCAD has a pivotal and advantageous position as a leader in post-secondary research and creation of arts and culture in this region. NSCAD makes recognized contributions to university research in Atlantic Canada within national and global contexts. The diversity of methodologies in visual art and the humanities is a primary asset of NSCAD University. The vibrant diversity includes multi-disciplinary, interdisciplinary, transdisciplinary, and anti-disciplinary methodologies with investigations that are pervasive to practice-based research in art, craft and design, with effects in the health, wellness, innovation and cultural sustainability sectors that are have substantial impact. With the support of the Office of Academic Affairs and Research Services and other university-wide administrative offices, NSCAD faculty, students, and staff are engaged in a range of individual and collaborative projects relevant to the research modules identified below.

NSCAD: ALL IN, ORGANIZED BY CONNOR MACKINNON. PHOTO: SÉAMUS GALLAGHER

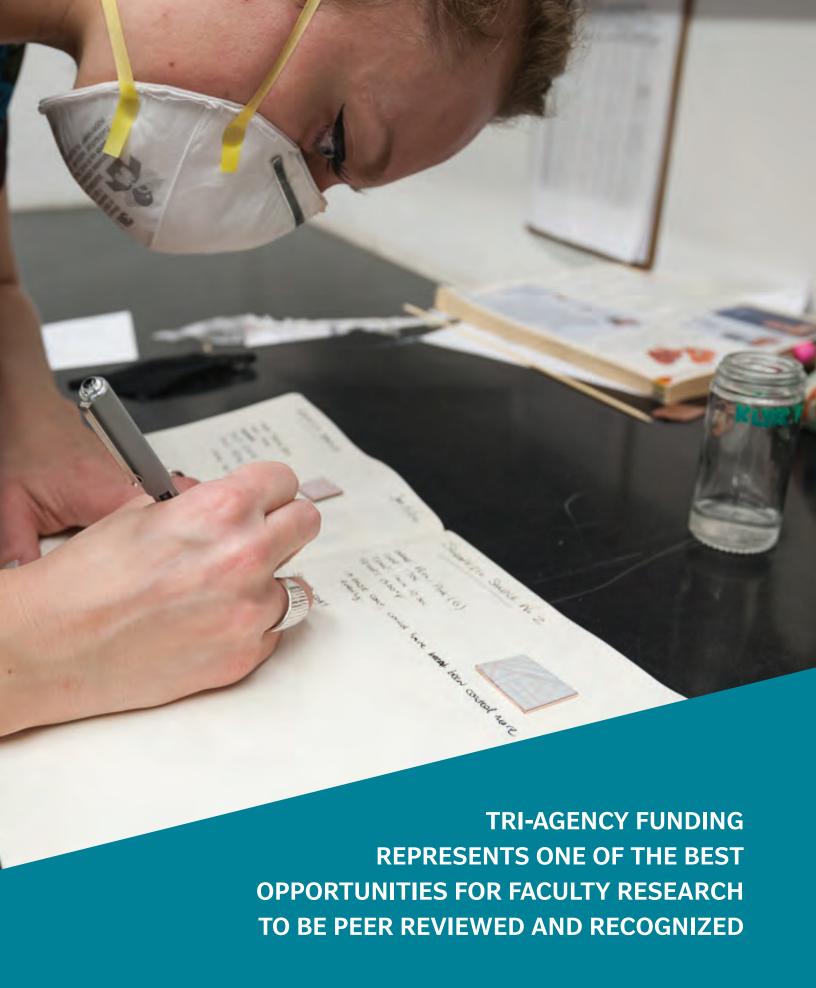
Research Support and Funding

The Office of Academic Affairs and Research (OAAR) is dedicated to assisting faculty and research partners in planning and preparing successful research endeavours by providing a framework of institutional support. Since 2015, OAAR has undertaken initiatives to increase applications for research grants and success rates in applications by providing a supportive network that includes project development, grant writing, administration, identifying relevant funding opportunities and assisting with partnership development. Future investment in the Research Office will continue to focus on increasing Tri-Agency application and success rates. Tri-Agency funding represents one of the best opportunities for faculty research to be peer reviewed and recognized; it represents an effective opportunity for leveraging; and, for new faculty, success in Tri-Agency competitions represents a high achievement and one that affords them the opportunity to demonstrate the realization of potential.

Although NSCAD has benefitted from two Canada Research Chair (CRC) allocations—and at the time of writing, we are proposing a third CRC, the institution's first Tier 1—the need to establish additional CRC and endowed research chairs in strategic areas of research and creation development is imperative to the research profile and productivity of the university. The CRC program has provided NSCAD with essential opportunities to develop and expand on research initiatives and infrastructure that would not be forthcoming through more common funding opportunities. Extended and additional funding for infrastructure through the Canadian Foundation for Innovation and other funders is key to expanding research facilities, spaces for creations, tool development and technological innovation associated with the artistic exploration and the cultural industries.

NSCAD subscribes to the Tri-Agency Framework for Responsible Conduct of Research (2016). The Tri-Agencies — the Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR), the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada (NSERC), the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC) — are a major source of research funding for post-secondary institutions in Canada. NSCAD University's Strategic Research Plan 2019–22 starts by acknowledging the cultural and economic significance of research-creation methodologies, partnerships that expand the cultural mandate of researchers, producers and institutions, support for Indigenous culture, and the desire for excellence and visibility for Canadian culture on a global scale. NSCAD will continue to provide internal research grants to faculty through SSHRC Grants to Small Universities. NSCAD became eligible for support from NSERC in the 2016-19 Strategic Research Plan. Going forward, NSCAD needs to encourage NSERC funded researchers to seize the opportunity of Discovery Grants and to advocate within NSERC for their distinctive contribution to the natural sciences and engineeringbased disciplines. NSCAD also encourages and supports all faculty seeking individual funding opportunities (creation and production) through the Canada Council for the Arts and Arts Nova Scotia and will continue to advocate for the Canada Council to partner with the Tri-Agency in order to ensure that faculty receive recognition for their funding and the university receives full benefits through the Research Support Fund.





AN INCLUSIVE CAMPUS IS AN ENVIRONMENT WHERE EVERY MEMBER IS A VALUED CONTRIBUTOR





Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI)

An inclusive campus is an environment where every member is a valued contributor. It is a campus that encourages diverse perspectives and recognizes that it is through diversity that creativity and innovation can flourish. Fostering a culture of inclusion is a process that begins with acknowledging the diversity among us and the fact that some members of our community experience barriers to education, employment, and full participation due to systemic factors. An institution that is committed to fostering a culture of inclusion continually designs, reviews and rebuilds structures (policies, programs, practices) that are inclusive, equitable, and accessible to all, thereby reducing the necessity for accommodation and remediation.

As a part of its strategic planning exercises, NSCAD University has unanimously approved its Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Action Plan (December 2018) through both Senate and the Board of Governors. An integral part of the EDI involves university research and the ways in which faculty appointments and the working environments respond to and reflect the broad diversity of the community. In this Strategic Research Plan 2019-21, we commit to work to three objectives as set out in the Action Plan.

Objective 1: Meet or exceed CRC program institutional targets for all four designated groups (women, persons with disabilities, Indigenous peoples, and visible minorities) by December 2019

Objective 2: Demonstrate the value of diversity, inclusion, and equity throughout the management, implementation, and promotion of the university's CRC program

Objective 3: Make the campus environment more inclusive

GRADE 8 LEARNERS GATHERED IN THE STELLENBOSCH UNIVERSITY ART GALLERY FOR THE OPENING OF THEIR EXHIBITION. PHOTO: DAVID B. SMITH

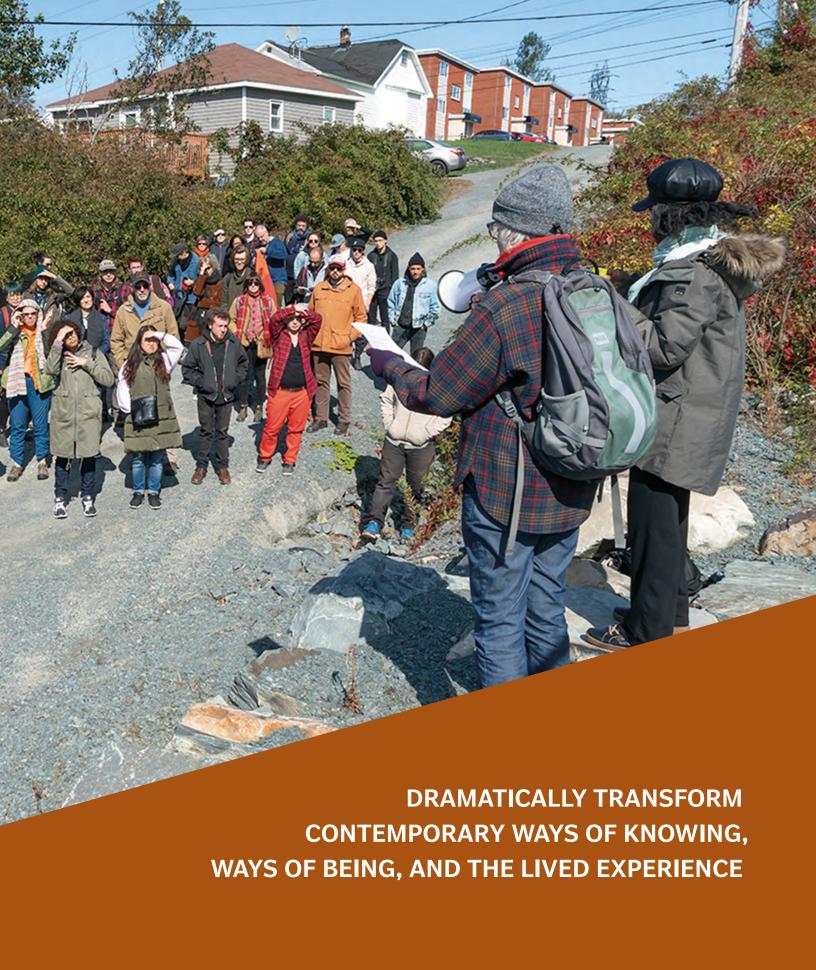
Measuring Success

Indicators of our research impact and evolution will be seen by an increase in:

- Government sponsored grants and contracts
- Graduate student enrollment and participation in faculty research projects
- Integration of undergraduate students into research
- Cross-faculty collaborations
- Awareness of research activities at NSCAD
- Collaborations with other institutions
- Reciprocal community engagement activities
- Industry contribution and collaboration, including MITACS awards
- Measurable social and economic impact
- Exhibitions; publications; community engagements; collaborations; new pedagogy

WALKING KEPE'K - OPENING REMARKS PHOTO: ROBERT BEAN





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