

President's Priorities: *the path to a bold, sustainable NSCAD*



More than ever, now is the time to chart a bold, sustainable path for NSCAD University. When NSCAD's Board of Governors Chair Bill Barker asked me to step back into the president's role for the 2025–2026 academic year, I recognized the urgent need to help stabilize the school's finances and operations. I also saw the emerging opportunity to lead NSCAD on a path to a culture of quality in everything we do to support our students' creative success.

I believe my diverse NSCAD experiences — as a student, alumnus, president, and professor — uniquely position me to better understand our students' creative journeys, to help align our ambitions with our resources, and to guide the university throughout its current presidential search. The successful candidate for this critical role will be immediately charged with leading the way to a bold, sustainable future rooted in creativity, innovation, community, and the storied NSCAD DNA.

The **President's Priorities and Actions Path** below will pave the way for NSCAD's next leader to mobilize support for our students, modernize our learning spaces, and strengthen our impact as a principal centre for education and research in visual culture in North America.

Facility-related needs are embedded throughout these priorities with a near-term focus on improving safety and accessibility across our existing properties to ensure our students and faculty can thrive. Campus reunification remains our long-term goal and we're revisiting previous and emerging options to make that enduring dream a reality to strengthen our community, enhance collaboration, and let NSCAD's creative spirit run wild.

Throughout our journey, we will continue to seek the support of our alumni, donors, faculty, staff, partners, and friends to help shape the future of art and design education in Canada within a university that is inclusive, innovative, and deeply connected to the communities it serves.

Let's move forward — boldly, creatively, and together.

David B. Smith (BFA 1992)
Interim President



Increase enrollments to a realistic and sustainable level

- Improve recruitment outreach to discover students who will thrive at NSCAD
- Implement stronger marketing and storytelling to raise NSCAD's profile
- Make education more accessible to students through increased scholarships, bursaries and financial assistance
- Improve student retention by supporting academic journeys, programs aligned with demand, and flexible learning pathways
- Invest in faculty and their research as well as instructors and technical staff to sustain student success

Strengthen student success through modernized teaching and learning equipment and spaces

- Identify and prioritize areas for investments in academic programs that can be supported by fundraising
- Expand and integrate digital assets to support current and new (e.g. animation, design, illustration) program delivery
- Ensure access to the latest production equipment, specialty tools, 'smart' classrooms and studios, and faculty and student training to support hands-on experimentation, collaboration and innovation

Build government confidence in and financial support for NSCAD's operations and future

- Align initiatives required as part of the NS Advanced Education bilateral agreement with provincial priorities
- Develop a business case for new, short-term funding to mitigate deficits and help drive enrollment and program growth
- Collaborate with provincial/federal governments and strategic partners on long-term capital planning for campus infrastructure

Accelerate philanthropy and donor relations to realize the action items within these priorities

- Translate the need for scholarships, bursaries, awards, research/creation, facilities, equipment and better access into compelling opportunities for donor investment
- Optimize budget and staffing for our Office of Philanthropy