Carleton University
Strategic Plan for Community Engagement [SP4CE]

Expanding space for
community engagement

Carleton University

Table of Contents

Carleton Journalism students participating in *Stories North* course in the Yukon, an initiative led by Kanina Holmes.

Journeying together in alignment with Indigenous community engagement

Carleton University acknowledges and respects the Algonquin Anishinaabe people, on whose unceded, unsurrendered territory the Carleton University campus is located.

Carleton launched its most recent Strategic Integrated Plan in the fall of 2020 after extensive consultations within the university and beyond. These consultations resulted in the plan's strong focus on communities and community. Since that time, many important initiatives have developed across the university to further support and strengthen this value.

In that same year, the release of the Kinàmàgawin Report represented a marked shift in Carleton's approach to conciliation with Indigenous Peoples. Whereas previous initiatives were often ad hoc within various Faculties and units, the Kinàmàgawin Report takes a wholistic view. Among the report's 41 Carleton-specific calls to action is the need for Carleton to have an Indigenous-specific community engagement process.

As Carleton is situated within the territory of the Algonquin Anishinaabeg People, it is critical that research and program initiatives occurring in partnership with Indigenous Peoples be conducted in alignment with appropriate cultural protocols. The Centre for Community Engagement has worked collaboratively with many community stakeholders and internal Carleton partners to develop this first plan for Community Engagement at Carleton. However, this is only a beginning and there is more work to do.

The development of an Indigenous-specific community engagement protocol must, and will be, part of this important strategy. This process will be Indigenous-led, and engagement will be undertaken in a culturally explicit way. Towards this end, the Centre for Indigenous Support and Community Engagement, in partnership with Indigenous communities and the Centre for Community Engagement, will begin this important work in the winter of 2023.

Journeying together, we will strengthen the foundation upon which reciprocal and mutually respectful relationships can be built. It is an exciting and inspiring time to be at Carleton.

Our story, our commitment to society

For the past 80 years, Carleton has been dedicated to engaging with communities. Indeed, in 1942, the university was built by, for and with the community to meet the needs of veterans returning from World War II to enter a new post-war economy. This deep connection to community continues to be an integral part of Carleton's story. As a public institution, it is our responsibility to generate, preserve and share knowledge, understanding that knowledge is created by and for society as a whole. Our collective effort is critical to solving our challenges and uplifting everyone. As such, Carleton is here to *Serve Ottawa and Serve the World*, a key direction for the university as defined by the Strategic Integrated Plan (SIP).

Our past and ongoing work in community engagement is truly extensive. Our engagement with communities will continue to move naturally throughout the university, with the Centre for Community Engagement aiming to help support, promote and measure these efforts in a strategic way. From the formation of the Community Based Research Network of Ottawa in 2000, to the important groundwork laid in The Oxygen of Community Report in 2009, to a campus-wide Community Engaged Pedagogy Group established in 2011, a continuous thread of dedication and enthusiasm links us all to community-engaged work at Carleton.

Not only does our Strategic Integrated Plan prominently feature community engagement, but other institution-wide plans speak to the SIP's aspirations concerning community engagement. These include the Kinàmàgawin Report; International Strategic Plan; Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan; Coordinated Accessibility Strategy and Sustainability Plan, among many other important initiatives.

Furthermore, leading up to the launch of the Strategic Integrated Plan, Carleton was one of 16 Canadian institutions invited to participate in the Canadian Pilot Cohort of the Carnegie Community Engagement Classification, a leading U.S. framework for evaluating community engagement in higher education. The cohort's mandate was to reflect on the appropriateness of the Carnegie framework within the context of Canadian community engagement. Carleton continues to take a national leadership role in developing a Canadian-based Carnegie classification.

Through the development of the Strategic Integrated Plan and participation in the Canadian Carnegie pilot, we learned more about the depth and breadth of community engagement initiatives that were happening in all areas of the university. We took this opportunity to improve our collective community engagement efforts by investing in organizational infrastructure and staffing to help support, promote and measure these activities in a strategic way. It was on this foundation that the Centre for Community Engagement was established.

With the help and support of a broad and collaborative Task Force, the Centre for Community Engagement led the development of the Strategic Plan for Community Engagement (SP4CE) in consultation with both campus and external communities. This strategy outlines priorities that will be implemented across the university as we work together to approach community engagement with intention while remaining true to our community-founded roots.

This document outlines our strategy. While the Centre for Community Engagement will lead the implementation of the priorities, many actions will be driven by the university on a broader scale. We invite you to keep a copy of this strategy nearby as you consider ways in which you can make space for community engagement as we collectively seek to build and maintain reciprocal and mutually beneficial relationships with the community towards the betterment of our society.

Sincerely,

Jerry Tomberlin
Provost and Vice-President (Academic)

Catherine Khordoc
Deputy Provost (Academic Operations and Planning)

Chantal Trudel
Director, Centre for Community Engagement

President Benoit-Antoine Bacon with staff, students and community members at an open house event at CU@Kanata.

Our approach to working together

Prior to the development of the Centre, the university's Community Engagement Steering Committee developed a working definition of community engagement that emphasizes full, reciprocal relations with neighbours and a commitment to engage with communities and institutions from all sectors of society locally, nationally and globally.

The committee also developed a *Hub and Spoke* model outlining how we might work together across the university to strengthen our commitment to communities. This model illustrates that community engagement at the university is diverse, spanning both academic and service units across campus. With this approach, various parts of the university work 'back-and-forth' to systematically support each other in community-based/led work. The model serves to recognize, respect and leverage parts of the university already invested in community engaged work to provide guidance in doing this type of work well. When we set out to consult with stakeholders across Carleton about their thoughts and aspirations for community engagement, the *Hub and Spoke* helped to structure a Task Force that is broadly representative of units across campus, and also guided the consultation process.
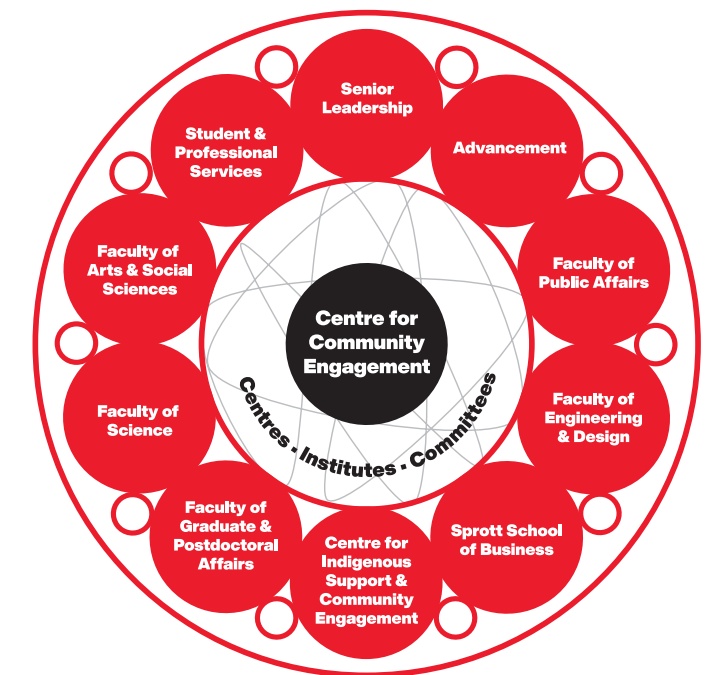
Hub and Spoke model developed by the Community Engagement Steering Committee.

Anchored in institutional aspirations

Our vision as an institution

The development and implementation of this plan builds on the work of Carleton's Strategic Integrated Plan, particularly the strategic direction: *Serve Ottawa, Serve the World*.

Our shared commitment to community engagement is also aligned with the university's aspiration statement:

Carleton University will leverage the power of higher education to be a force for good.

- ▪ We will pursue, mobilize and share knowledge in a reciprocal and responsible way.
- ▪ We will embed community engagement and partnership in our actions and culture.
- ▪ We will work to enhance the wellness of our people and our communities, and to play a leadership role in the wellness of our country and planet.

Our mission as the Centre for Community Engagement

The Centre for Community Engagement was established in 2021 with a mandate to provide appropriate infrastructure to support the community engagement priority outlined in the Strategic Integrated Plan and serve as a focal point to align this priority across the university and with partners.

The Centre's structure, design, governance and growth must focus on making the most positive impact in serving stakeholders in the community and at Carleton. The Centre can achieve this by developing strategic relations in the community and across the university to co-develop institutional initiatives, approaches, resources and evaluation techniques to support this work.

Performance at *Music & Beyond's 2022 Summer Music Festival*. Event venue Carleton Dominion-Chalmers Centre under the direction of Mara Brown. Photo by AK Photography.
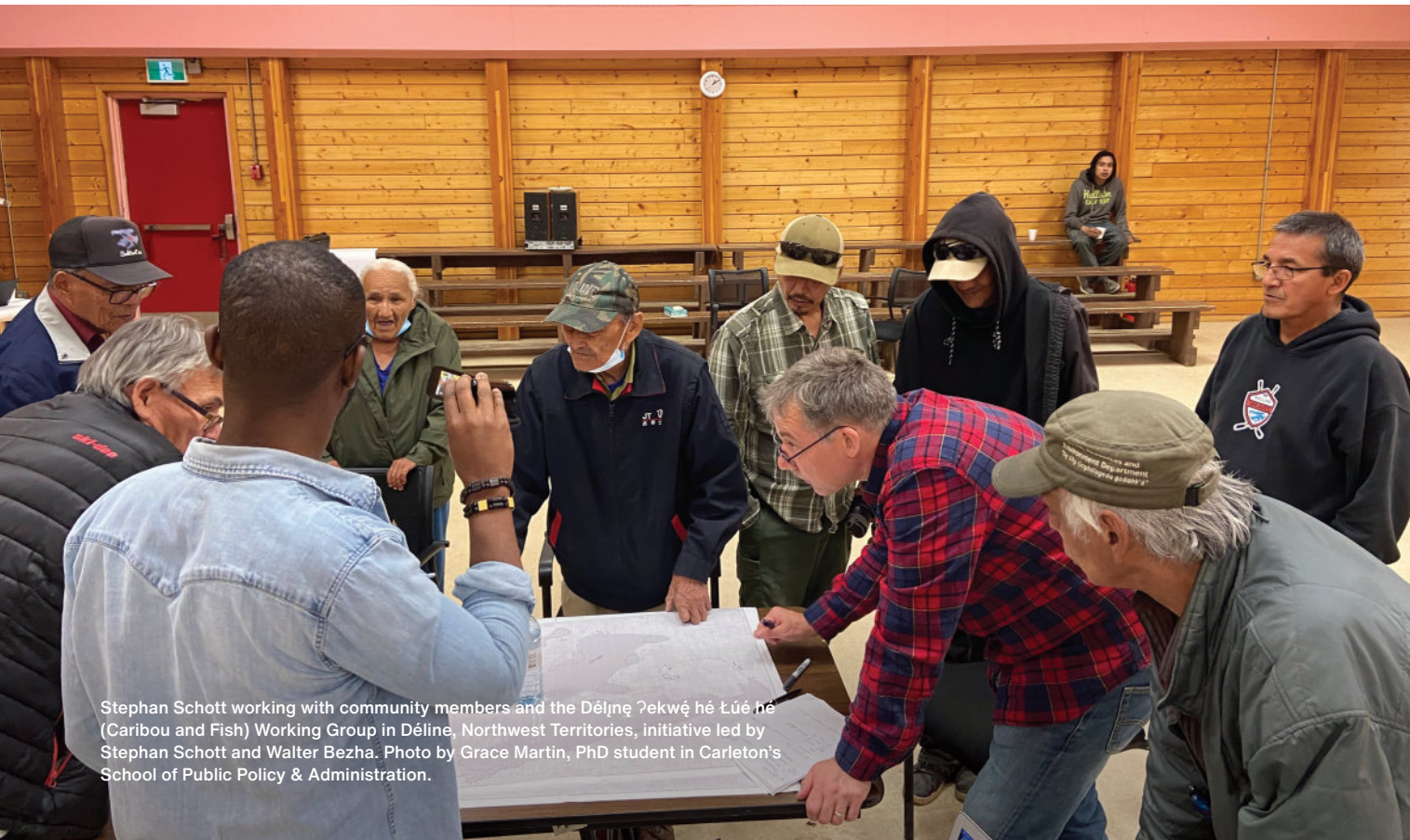
Stephan Schott working with community members and the Délı̨nę Ɂekwę́ hé Łué hé (Caribou and Fish) Working Group in Délı̨ne, Northwest Territories, initiative led by Stephan Schott and Walter Bezha. Photo by Grace Martin, PhD student in Carleton's School of Public Policy & Administration.

How we got here

The Centre for Community Engagement along with the SP4CE Task Force engaged in a robust consultation process, designed to illicit a variety of perspectives to inform the plan. Developing SP4CE involved consultation on 'what makes sense' to support community members and people across Carleton to connect. In 2021-22 we held internal consultations with approximately 600 people (students, staff and faculty) at Carleton across the *Hub and Spoke* to hear people's experiences and ideas related to community engagement. These internal consultations helped us develop a better sense of what is going on in our 'own house', before holding consultations more broadly.

We then reached out to over 150 community members locally and abroad and were able to hold consultation sessions with over 40 community members. Participants shared their perspectives on Carleton as an institution engaged in the community and their aspirations for where the university can strengthen its commitment in this area. Participants were assured anonymity during these discussions so they could speak freely. The people who participated in these external consultations represented diverse backgrounds and sectors including public service (government, healthcare, education, research institutes, community centres, recreation and leisure), non-governmental organizations, industry, as well as Carleton alumni and retirees.

Hearing from these stakeholders — internal and external to Carleton — led to over 300,000 words of notes which we carefully studied and integrated in the development of SP4CE. This is just the beginning of our consultations, as there are more voices that need to be brought to the table. These diverse perspectives helped us identify key priorities and ways of working together more intentionally, collaboratively and strategically. A commitment to developing these conditions will help shape more reciprocal relationships in our work, better benefit communities and lead to greater societal relevance and impact.

Defining priorities from what we heard

During our consultations, we heard a variety of thoughts on where we currently are in terms of community engagement, what is most important, and what we need to do to better support this area. Several priorities emerged, articulated by the following thematic statements that represent the voices of the people who participated in these consultations.

Foster and maintain existing relationships, while building new ones for positive impact.

"It's important to be a good neighbour."

"It's important to spend time getting to know the people and organizations involved to understand their needs and interests."

"Strategic relationships, if well structured, can greatly benefit our collective projects, programs and initiatives."

"We can co-develop approaches and resources to support community engagement across our organizations and communities."

Develop systems and services to support our relationships.

"Carleton shows leadership in providing access to benefit community members, but can sometimes appear sporadic, siloed, rigid and inaccessible."

"We need to acknowledge inequities in working together, and how the interests of community members can be easily overlooked, especially those facing more barriers."

"People are struggling with capacity and timelines for community engagement. We can benefit from more streamlined, systematic support to address the organic and complex nature of community engagement."

"Where can we enter? Who can we partner with and how can we engage? There are so many moving parts and groups involved, but once we're 'in', it's fine. Carleton's personal, physical and digital presence in communities is important to engagement."

"We need to develop comprehensive ways, mediums and measures to assess the value and impact of our collaborations."

Focus on creative and innovative community engagement that is sustainable.

"One-size fits all or cookie-cutter approaches risk people being left out or behind."

"Exploring innovative ways to engage our communities could happen through diverse mediums, unexpected places and spaces."

"Collectively, we can take even more leadership in addressing complex challenges impacting communities which require comprehensive, robust engagement strategies."

"Carleton's work in social innovation can encourage directions that go beyond philanthropic models, towards transformational change for the community."

Improve communications across communities to support connection.

"I find communication with individuals or groups at Carleton can be inconsistent - sometimes excellent, sometimes sporadic or not as responsive as I would like."

"I find I don't always know what Carleton is doing with communities or what value Carleton might bring to my organization or the community I work with."

"I sometimes struggle to maintain good communication channels with community members."

"I don't have a good sense of what is going on in the community, and more specifically, what is of interest or concern to them."

Provide greater recognition of collective efforts that exemplify community engagement.

"Students are critical to community engagement and should be acknowledged for their role in developing reciprocal relations and meaningful results."

"We need to acknowledge the critical role and efforts of groups and individuals championing community engagement in the community and across the university."

"It's important to recognize the efforts involved in long-term commitments needed for complex areas of development."

"Carleton is more than just a place for teaching, learning and research — community engagement is an undervalued pillar that supports the others."

As we move into discussing these priorities in more detail, we've laid out a university-wide plan where various stakeholders across Carleton will be involved. This will be complemented by more targeted initiatives led by the Centre for Community Engagement. Some of these initiatives are already underway, some will start tomorrow, while other initiatives will start more organically and further out, in a way that can be sustainably supported. Short-term activities are already in motion or are 'in sight' of being realized — they are discrete initiatives or tasks that can be feasibly accomplished over the next two years. Medium-to-long term activities are more complex and will require effort and time to move forward. Depending on the specific initiative, medium-term activities require an investment of three to five years, while more involved, longer-term investments could take up to 10 years to full completion.

This is a dynamic plan — what we present here today is a roadmap for the next two years, while leaving space for what will naturally evolve over the years to come. Many great initiatives are already taking place, and we herein provide more intentional and strategic approaches towards advancing our commitment to community engagement.

Students supporting Campus to Community Day at the Ottawa Mission, an initiative led by the Student Experience Office.

Priority one: Foster and maintain existing relationships, while building new ones for positive impact

Objectives

- Explore Carleton's neighbourhood and community at large beyond the borders of our campus.
- Look at ways to further open the campus to connect with neighbours.
- Provide resources on best- or promising practices to building relations.
- Partner with organizations that have expertise in community engagement towards developing strategies, tools and resources that can be broadly shared.
- Co-develop and operationalize formal agreements to benefit and protect communities at large, as well as the organizations and stakeholders involved.

University-wide initiatives

Short-Term

- Foster a climate where students feel motivated and supported in taking ownership of community engagement.
- Support students in connecting with communities, fostering a mindset of citizenship.
- Connect international students with the Canadian context outside of the university.
- Co-develop intergenerational opportunities for Carleton to engage with communities.
- Enhance reciprocal participation of Carleton and community members in each other's activities and organizations.
- Invite diverse community members to sit on advisory boards or committees for academic planning, research and service.
- Formally acknowledge common agendas, goals and values when working with the community.
- Co-create and collaborate on research questions with community members.
- Increase the number of campus events that invite and engage local community members.
- Provide a variety of space types for people to gather on and off campus.

Medium-to-Long Term

- Create opportunities for more consistent, everyday interactions and acts of reciprocity.
- Invest in more long-term community engagement projects.
- Tailor approaches to engage diverse communities and stakeholders involved in collaboration.
- Increase formal research collaborations with community partners on grants.
- Engage alumni and retirees more actively at the unit level to participate in student activities, mentorship and career development.
- Further develop Carleton's relationship with various levels of government.
- Increase partnerships with industry focused on large-scale positive social impact.
- Increase the number of strategic alliances with national institutions.
- Develop/host more national and international events that engage community members.

Centre-led activities

Short-Term

- Develop a cross-functional governance structure within the university to support university-wide partnerships.
- Make promising practices a prominent part of the Centre's website.
- Host events to share current work.

Medium-to-Long Term

- Identify opportunities to connect with communities currently not working with Carleton.
- Introduce the Carleton community to opportunities for engaging with communities.
- Contribute to the building of strategic relationships with all levels of government.
- Identify space on campus where community members can come and interact with the Carleton community.

Industrial Design and Business students working with villagers at a sand dam in Kimokoua, Tanzania, an initiative led by Stephen Field and Troy Anderson.

Carleton PhD student Grace Martin working with George Kenny (local collaborator and fisher) in Déline, Northwest Territories, an initiative led by Stephan Schott and Walter Bezha. Photo by Johann Strube, Postdoctoral Fellow in Carleton's School of Public Policy & Administration.

Priority two: Develop systems and services to support our relationships

Objectives

- Work strategically together to better understand and address diverse perspectives of communities.
- Expand and diversify Carleton's presence in communities to foster reciprocity and reduce burdens related to community engagement.
- Research and map all community engagement related services offered at Carleton to make the system more transparent and accessible.
- Expand the role of the Centre for Community Engagement in making relevant services more transparent and accessible.
- Develop a comprehensive 'front door' service that systematically matches and connects community members to Carleton and builds on existing initiatives, such as the Hub for Good.
- Establish a process to assess value, reciprocity and impact through iterative evaluation.
- Conduct research to strengthen and benchmark community engagement at Carleton.

University-wide initiatives

Short-Term

- Provide resources to make the university's structure easier to understand within and beyond the university.
- Encourage uptake of internal accessibility resources to better support all members of society.
- Develop and pilot a cohesive, digital access point where all placement and volunteer requirements can be completed.
- Expand student-focused community engagement programs and coursework.
- Co-develop training guides and modules required for student placements with community members.

Medium/Long-Term

- Regularly reflect upon relevant population statistics to better understand our communities.
- Develop strategies towards more holistic accessible 'touchpoints' to accommodate the diverse needs and preferences within communities (e.g. virtual and physical access, plain language, transportation).

- Reduce work barriers associated with community engagement to enable more focus on community work itself.
- Identify barriers to university service offerings for marginalized communities in order to increase accessibility.
- Co-develop strategies to better align community engagement activities to accommodate the needs of community and academic schedules.
- Consider how to establish roles for community outreach to consistently support Carleton-community relationships.
- Identify and address barriers that prevent implementation of findings/outcomes in community settings.

Centre-led activities

Short-Term

- Support the implementation of community engagement initiatives outlined in the SIP and other strategic plans across the university.
- Form a Carleton Hub and Spoke advisory board to oversee the implementation of SP4CE.
- Create working groups to implement the SP4CE priorities.
- Co-develop methodologies to measure the impact of community-facing work.
- Develop orientation and education resources for students, faculty and staff to learn about basic principles of community engagement, promising practices and community engagement support at Carleton.

Medium/Long Term

- Continually revisit and renew SP4CE with partners to incorporate emerging knowledge and practice.
- Examine constraints placed on students working in communities for potential difficulties and barriers to reduce complexity and provide good working conditions.
- Benchmark community engagement practices and planning against relevant institutions to support growth within and across academic communities.

Carleton Industrial Design student working with resident of Bruyère Saint Louis Residence on designs to support people with cognitive decline, initiative led by Chantal Trudel, Bruyère Research Institute, Ontario Centres for Learning, Research and Innovation in Long-Term Care.

Sprott Business students working with pupils at JV Clark School in Mayo, Yukon, an initiative led by Troy Anderson.

Sprott Business student working with villagers in Longido, Tanzania, an initiative led by Stephen Field and Troy Anderson.

Priority three: Focus on creative and innovative community engagement that is sustainable

Objectives

- Develop a living portfolio of ideas to support more tailored engagement strategies.
- Develop more creative outcomes from our collective work that move beyond traditional mediums and better respond to short/long-term needs.
- Leverage campus and community spaces in novel, unexpected ways to connect, teach, learn and showcase our work.
- Continue to address Sustainable Development Goals by exploring new and innovative approaches with communities.
- Engage in 'futures thinking' and planning to sustain communities during emergency events.

University-wide initiatives

Short-Term

- Support a community engagement mindset across the generations that respects the knowledge of Elders and fosters connections with youth.
- Investigate novel ways to further foster student careers in the community and the value of community engaged careers.
- Engage with community members in unexpected places to support interesting and memorable experiences.

Medium/Long-Term

- Encourage a mindset that meaningful careers begin at the onset of the university experience.
- Engage community members to share new, alternative paths related to students' field of study.
- Empower students to act and engage with the community in different ways, outside of the classroom.
- Acknowledge and expand community engaged learning opportunities that go beyond traditional academic domains.
- Re-examine the traditional course structure of the university to develop more sustained engagements with community-based initiatives.
- Develop a stronger equitable Carleton presence in the region (e.g. Eastern Ottawa, rural areas in Eastern Ontario).

- Highlight and support Carleton's interdisciplinary and collaborative strengths to tackle complex problems.
- Continue to engage with challenging or higher-risk initiatives to support community engagement in ways that have not been explored to date.

Centre-led activities

Short-Term

- Support the mobilization of knowledge by members of Carleton and the broader community.
- Gather and provide resources to encourage creative and useful outcomes (moving beyond reports) that can better respond to community interests and needs.

Medium/Long-Term

- Work with community partners locally and abroad to map key community-based initiatives to create better awareness of potential and possibility.
- Bring Carleton's experience in community engagement to broader, cross-organizational field building strategies focused on addressing Sustainable Development Goals.
- Collaborate with other post-secondary Community Engagement Centres on national and international opportunities.

Visitors at *Maura Doyle: the Vessel, that with fugitive Articulation answer'd, how deep is your love*, an exhibition curated by Heather Anderson and presented at Carleton University Art Gallery, summer 2016. Photo by Justin Wonnacott.

People enjoying Carleton's *Annual Biology Butterfly Show*, an initiative led by Ed Bruggink, Let's Talk Science and the Department of Biology.

Priority four: Improve communications across communities to support connection

Objectives

- Develop a strategic communications plan focused on community engagement.
- Enhance the visibility of community voices within Carleton's stories and across platforms.
- Increase the mobilization of community-based/led stories at Carleton to better support reciprocity.
- Bring attention to what's going on in Carleton's neighbourhood.
- Provide guidance to community members on various ways of connecting to Carleton.
- Provide guidance to Carleton students, faculty and staff on promising practices for communicating with diverse communities.
- Enhance the reputation of the university through community engagement.

University-wide initiatives

Short-Term

- Acknowledge and clearly communicate Carleton's broader definition of community engagement.
- Develop and share stories that highlight Carleton-community relationships that result in positive impact.
- Develop a communication strategy to build awareness of Carleton's *Hub for Good*.
- Consider the impact of how we name things and use acronyms to enhance a shared understanding of who we are and what we do.

Medium/Long-Term

- Increase the holistic promotion of community-based/led teaching, learning and research opportunities.
- Continue to support work that raises awareness about Indigenous initiatives at Carleton.
- Strategically highlight Carleton's engagement with marginalized groups.
- Monitor the communication of Carleton's engagement to ensure balance and inclusion of all communities.
- Cross-promote research, teaching and learning initiatives with community partners.

- Identify grassroot communication channels within communities as part of strategic communications.
- Explore options for reducing language barriers to engage diverse communities.
- Archive community-based stories for public access.
- Conduct regular digital audits to remove outdated information to communicate clearly.
- Work with Ottawa community stakeholders to continually reveal and communicate the immense, diverse and undiscovered value that the capital region offers.
- Regularly channel Carleton's ongoing work towards Sustainable Development Goals for communities to readily see as well as opportunities to participate.

Centre-led activities

Short-Term

- Develop a community engagement-focused communications strategy informed by research.

Medium/Long-Term

- Provide communications training on reaching target audiences.

Priority five: Provide greater recognition of collective efforts that exemplify community engagement

Objectives

- Appropriately recognize community partners on a day-to-day basis and more formally, in ways that respond to their values.
- Formally recognize the contributions of stakeholders at Carleton through awards, funding, advancement and gestures of appreciation.
- Celebrate our collective progress and impact through various activities and channels.

University-wide initiatives

Short-Term

- Adapt existing recognition programs to acknowledge students, faculty, staff and community members for exemplary community engagement work.
- Illuminate the benefits of actively including community members in pedagogy and research.
- Appropriately compensate community members who are invited to participate in pedagogy and research.
- Strengthen the university's relationship with the education sector through community engagement initiatives.

Medium/Long-Term

- Increase awareness of the value of less 'tangible' results and impact from engaging with communities (e.g., building trust, learning from failure, effective/ineffective workplans).
- Emphasize the value of community members participating in the university's academic programs.
- Seek out funding opportunities that champion community engagement.
- Consider community engagement as a formal component of tenure and promotion unit standards and the potential of 'non-traditional results or impact' from this form of education.

Centre-led activities

Short-Term

- Canvas ongoing community engagement work at Carleton to identify and share exemplary work.
- Create events and calls for leaders in community engagement partnerships to showcase their work in public dissemination.
- Develop resources to help educate people on appropriate compensation for community members who enhance teaching, learning and research, and university members contributing to community-based/led work.
- Share the details of our strategic planning process to support other organizations interested in community engagement.

Medium/Long-Term

- Support the development of strategies and programs for allocating awards for exemplary community engagement work.
- Develop and share guides to help ensure collaborators recognize each other in knowledge mobilization.
- Engage disciplines and community members not traditionally known or recognized for community engagement and bring attention to their contribution.
- Develop resources for units who are considering acknowledging community engagement in their tenure and promotion standards.

Where do we go from here?

Our next steps involve forming a university-wide advisory group strengthened by community representation to oversee the implementation of the priorities outlined in this strategy. Working groups will be instrumental in carrying out university-wide and Centre-led activities to address our priorities in the short- and longer-term.

SP4CE has room to grow and change. We will be revisiting this plan regularly with community members and groups across campus to explore its potential within their existing work, with special attention to developing new areas where we could launch and facilitate community engagement initiatives.

Students, postdoctoral fellows and Stephan Schott working with local hunters and guides in Taloyoak, Nunavut, initiative led by Stephan Schott, Louis Bernatchez, Dylan Fraser and J-S Moore. Photo by Johann Strube, Postdoctoral Fellow in Carleton's School of Public Policy & Administration.

Acknowledgement and thanks