



# Teliaq ta'n Teluek

## Summary of Strategic Research & Innovation Plan 2026–2031

Read the full university plan [here](#).

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### *Ksikeltaqn: What We Value*

StFX's Strategic Research Plan 2025–2031 will continue to cultivate the research ecosystem reflected in the Research and Creative Works Plan from 2018–2025. This past plan's strategic principles have enabled high-quality, impactful, and ethically grounded research and work in creative fields. These principles will continue to guide future research by integrating research with teaching and student mentorship, valuing diverse forms of scholarship and creative works, and advancing a more equitable, diverse, inclusive, and accessible world through the community-based and collaborative research that helps StFX to shape public trust and create innovation that benefits society as a whole. To ground us in these existing principles as we move forward in a good way together, we invoke the Mi'kmaq word *ksikeltaqn*, meaning something held dear, as a valued and protected thing. What we value and hold dear drives our research for the better and helps us remain accountable to the communities we serve.

We will let our principles and core values of integrity, dignity, truth, and respect for all — shaped by our university motto, *Teliaq ta'n Teluek* — guide our research initiatives over the next five years. We're also compelled to respond to the need for a more just, sustainable, and equitable future through creative innovation to address the challenges posed by rapidly advancing technology, a changing climate, and the need to think critically about the world around us. Adhering to our values will help us navigate these changes and develop the next generation of leaders who will tackle these issues and those to come.

### **Vision:**

Research excellence rooted in community

### **Purpose:**

Growing innovation for the common good, where research excellence serves society and improves the lives of Nova Scotians, Canadians, and the global community through meaningful change and impactful work.



## Values:

**Integrity**—our moral compass in research excellence, which compels us to be honest, ethical, and truthful, and upholds academic freedom in all our work

**Creativity**—our incentive for making new things and solving big problems, which challenges us to leave the world around us better than we found it

**Innovation**—our desire to produce novel solutions with tangible societal and economic benefits, which leads us to produce excellent research with practical impact

**Sustainability**—our responsibility to prioritize long-term well-being over short-term results, which helps us keep our environments and communities healthy

**Respect**—our motivating force in building community trust, which ensures that our research is truly collaborative and in service of the public good

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## ***Kjijitaqn Naskwa'tatultiek: Sharing Our Knowledge Evenly***

StFX has four strategic research areas around which we share our knowledge evenly (*kjijitaqn naskwa'tatultiek*), working together across disciplines and with different approaches to solve problems and make good decisions for the future. These strategic areas help us by cultivating and caretaking the relationships and good things we have already made here together. As we drive research creativity and innovation, we remember who we are doing this work for and we think ahead to how we might look after seven generations of beings on this land and in these waters. Our four strategic research areas will inform how we will deploy Canada Foundation for Innovation (CFI) support and future Tier 1 and Tier 2 CRC allocations, and how we prioritize our internal research funding strategically. We believe StFX is uniquely positioned to share our knowledge evenly, bundled together, across these four priority areas:

### **1. Healthy Lives for Stronger Communities**

StFX is a leader in interdisciplinary health research, advancing well-being through community-engaged research, equity-focussed initiatives and policies, and evidence-based solutions that strengthen people, communities, and all living things, in line with our Coady Institute's leadership in "a full and abundant life for all." The Victor & Mona Dahdaleh Institute for Health Innovation will lead much of this work as the new home for the Interdisciplinary Health Program, Human Kinetics, Human



Nutrition, Psychology, and the federal National Collaborating Centre for the Social Determinants of Health, in partnership with the Government of Nova Scotia. The Rankin School of Nursing, one of the most well-established nursing programs in Canada, is a national leader in the study of community health, health inequities, and the interdisciplinary intersection of health systems and the social determinants of health.

## **2. Climate-Resilient Futures**

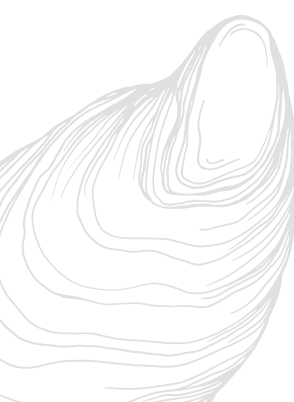
Responding to the urgent need for climate action, StFX's research innovation champions climate justice and environmental and community resilience in the building of sustainable futures. By combining science with the study and generation of policy, quantitative and qualitative data collection and interpretation, sustainable approaches to rural lifeways, and Indigenous knowledge between STEM (science, technology, education, math) and SSHA (social sciences, humanities, arts)-based research, StFX supports thriving communities and ecosystems in a changing world. Our interdisciplinary environmental research is grounded in our core science, education, economics, and policy disciplines and in the Schwartz School of Business to advance necessary solutions through computation, estimation and reasoning, and industry-relevant practical applications of the latest technology, producing influential leaders in climate work.

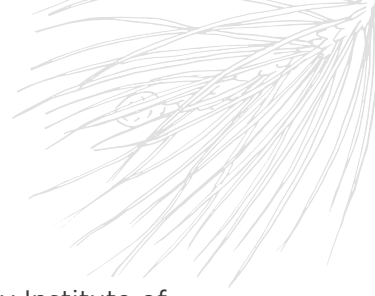
## **3. Stories in Motion**

StFX researchers tell stories that impact the everyday lives of those around us, using everything from archival research, classical philosophy, sound technology, cultural analysis, mixed-media art practice, creative writing, photography, animation, filmmaking, theatrical and musical performance. Knowledge mobilization and outreach in multiple languages and mediums also help researchers tell stories about our oceans, our lab experiments, and our pedagogy in culturally relevant ways that speak to people in their own communities about things that matter to them. Our research enhances our capacity to tell stories in relevant and accessible ways in everyday settings. As we share our knowledge in the community, we also learn from the communities we serve locally and globally, with our longstanding community partners such as Antigonish Jazz Fest, Theatre Antigonish, The Antigonish Review, L'Arche, and Antigonish Culture Alive.

## **4. Just Policy & Governance**

Our university produces the next generation of leaders, from Prime Ministers and Premiers to community organizers, legal and policy experts, and educators in all





areas of expertise. Exemplified in work led by the Brian Mulroney Institute of Government and the Deveau Institute for Indigenous Governance and Social Justice, our evidence-informed research on decision making at all levels of government and community work strengthens democracy, promotes equity and accountability, and deepens understanding between decision makers and citizens. Political leadership needs many critical thinkers at the table, bringing with them the best research in social and economic policy, political and anthropological science, ethics and education to advance robust, responsive, and relevant legal, pedagogical, and governance frameworks.

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### ***Weji-Tetapuategemk: Strive to Do What is Right***

Our research community is abundant with knowledge, energy, and ideas to help teach our students and prepare them to become leaders worldwide. As we do so, we will ensure that our researchers mentor the next generation in the principles of equity, diversity, inclusion, and accessibility (EDIA), and strive to do what is right across our research projects, as well as in funding, recruitment, retention, learning, and evaluation. We draw on our existing StFX policies and action plans in this work, enhanced by the CRC EDIA program, which has helped our institution launch the President’s Action Committee on Anti-Racism (PACAR), our campus Accessibility Plan, and our Employment Equity Policy.

As we continually strive to do what is right at StFX, we employ the principle of “nothing about us without us” in our research activities, meaning that we will be of service to community and community-led in our research projects and approaches. We will strive to use community-based participatory action research principles when relevant, especially with 2SLGBTQIA+ communities in which sexual and gender identities may overlap across a range of privileges and marginalizations. Striving to do what is right also means that StFX is committed to addressing unintended cognitive and systems biases in research. We will use frameworks and tools provided by the Declaration on Research Assessment (DORA), of which StFX is a recent signatory, and uphold the First Nation Health Authority’s Free, Prior, and Informed Consent (FPIC) and Cultural Safety and Humility Standard. These commitments ensure research practices respect cultural autonomy and amplify voices in ways that uphold dignity and inclusion.

StFX’s Indigenous-led and Indigenous-partnered research will be supported in alignment with Indigenous data sovereignty and Tri-Council principles and



informed by the CARE Principles for Indigenous Data Governance, and, where relevant, Mi'kmaw Ethics Watch (MEW), to ensure meaningful engagement and relationship-building occurs between our researchers and communities. We follow the MEW principle that Mi'kmaw knowledge “is not free for the taking,” to ensure that our research is done in a good way and in alignment with Mi'kmaq sovereignty.

StFX's Black-led and Black-partnered research will be supported through our institutional accountability in the signing of the Scarborough Charter and guided by the Research, Evaluation, Data Collection, and Ethics (REDE) Protocol for Black Populations in Canada, as we close the UN Declaration of the Decade for People of African Descent (2015–2025). We are committed to supporting Black humanity and the safeguarding of Black life and community well-being in this work and in all our research activities, paying particular attention to our province's 52 historical African Nova Scotian communities as we do.

StFX is committed to learning as we grow our research ecosystem, approaching this learning with humility and in partnership with the communities we serve.

