Strategic Research Plan

2020-2021 to 2022-2023

Royal Roads University acknowledges that the campus is located on the traditional lands of the Xwsepsum (Esquimalt) and Lekwungen (Songhees) ancestors and families who have lived here for thousands of years. This land has been part of the fabric of the life of Indigenous communities long before Hatley Castle was built, and it will be long into the future. It is with gratitude that we now learn and work here, where the past, present and future of Indigenous and non Indigenous students, faculty and staff come together.

Hay'sxw'qa si'em!

FINAL

Inspiring people with the courage to change the world

Royal Roads research seeks to contribute to positive change in individuals' lives, communities and societies. Our research is intentionally designed to directly benefit the communities in which we live, work and play, be they local, national, or international. Royal Roads research aims to inspire action and address real-world challenges such as those in education, technology, information, the natural world, and social systems as we prepare for a disruptive future. Our research is primarily inter- and trans-disciplinary, which by their nature are collaborative. Partnerships with those that may be impacted by, or use the research are critical. Research undertaken at Royal Roads knows no borders and seeks to inform both local and global contexts. Royal Roads recognizes the importance of, and need for, decolonization in terms of research – research areas, research design, research participation, access to research, and research dissemination – and is committed to practices of decolonization in research. We are committed to removing barriers for equity-seeking groups with regard to both their inclusion in the conduct and leadership of research and access to research. Our research is designed to be shared and to be developed with practitioners who may benefit from the findings and results. Research is integral to and inextricably linked with our learning and teaching model – research informs learning and teaching, and our teaching and learning is explored through research. In addition, research informs the university's operations, our practice, and how we live and work at the university. We move forward with a spirit of inquiry, and a quest for knowledge and insight with a commitment to action.

Statement on equity, diversity and inclusion

Royal Roads commits to conducting quality research, which takes relevant diverse perspectives into account throughout the research process (Bear & Wooley, 2011; Lightfoote et al., 2014; Leung et al., 2008; NSERC, 2017; Parker, Pelletier & Croft, 2015). "When equity, diversity and inclusion considerations and practices are integral to research participation, to the research itself, and to research training and learning environments, research excellence, innovation and creativity are heightened across all disciplines, fields of study and stages of career development" (Government of Canada, 2019, para. 13). Ensuring inclusivity and integrating diversity into research data collection and dissemination is imperative. Our research serves the global community, uncovering and addressing systemic issues related to equity, diversity and inclusion that create barriers for members of equity-seeking groups.

Purpose

The 3-year Strategic Research Plan (SRP) presented here can be viewed as a guiding and directional document. As a university wide plan, it calls for commitment, support and action from all areas of the university including, but not limited to senior management, deans, faculty, research services, the library, marketing, communications, computer services, and student services. It is meant to be a starting point to build a vigorous research climate and culture within Royal Roads and to guide the development of specific areas of focus as we move into the future. The SRP is meant to be dynamic, continuously evolving as new challenges and information emerge. It builds on and flows from Royal Roads' vision "Inspiring people with the courage to change the world". The SRP also flows from and builds on Goal 2 of the new strategic vision, *Learning for Life: 2045 and beyond*.

Background and context

In 2003, RRU developed a Strategic Research Plan Summary as required by the Canada Research Chairs (CRC) Secretariat and Canada Foundation for Innovation (CFI) funding. The summary was updated in 2006 and included two research themes: learning and innovation, and sustainable societies and communities. Since then, RRU's strategic research plan summary has been updated regularly. In 2010, RRU's research themes were reviewed through a series of open consultations and three themes were confirmed: thriving organizations; innovative learning; and sustainable communities, livelihoods and the environment. The university's Learning and Teaching Model (LTM) was refreshed in 2018 and included research as an essential, integrated element of the model, now the Learning, Teaching and Research Model (LTRM). With changes in organizational structure in 2018, the appointment of a Vice President, Research & International in 2018, a new President in 2019, and a new Vice President Academic & Provost in 2020, the university undertook a consultative process beginning in 2019 to develop this Strategic Research Plan.

Goals, objectives and actions

The Strategic Research Plan includes four goals: advance, enable and support quality research; expand the visibility, reach, and impact of RRU research; identify and focus on priority challenge areas for research at Royal Roads; and expand opportunities to conduct research into learning and teaching at Royal Roads University. Each goal, objectives and specific actions are provided below.

Goal 1 – Advance, enable and support quality research

Objective 1.1 Develop a statement and description of RRU research.

Action Finalize and publish a statement and description of the nature and scope of research conducted at RRU that includes our description of quality research.

Objective 1.2 Support and promote a vigorous research culture and climate that promotes equity, diversity and inclusion and creates research relevant to diverse audiences throughout Royal Roads.

Action Create a shared understanding of the importance and value of Royal Roads' research.

Objective 1.3 Enhance research effectiveness.

Action Drawing on resources such as Theory of Change, and using the criteria of relevance, credibility, legitimacy, and effectiveness (see https://academic.oup.com/rev/article/25/1/1/2362728), assess current processes used to determine effectiveness of research at Royal Roads.

Action Identify strategies and resources that enhance research effectiveness.

Objective 1.4 Increase support for faculty research.

Action Conduct a gap analysis of faculty research support (training, financial, admin, networks or organizational structures) to develop recommendations to address identified needs and challenges.

Action Identify ways to support and encourage diverse research partnerships.

Action Identify ways to incorporate equity, diversity and inclusivity best practices in research design.

Objective 1.5 Support student research and the recruitment of strong student researchers.

Action Conduct a gap analysis to identify student expectations, needs and challenges with regard to research; develop recommendations and necessary resources (training, financial, networks, organizational structures) that address identified needs and challenges.

Objective 1.6 Foster engagement in Royal Roads' research with associate faculty.

Action Identify strategies to support the engagement of associate faculty in research at Royal Roads.

Objective 1.7 Improve the quality of faculty research grant proposals.

Action Identify strategies and resources to strengthen the quality of faculty research grant proposals.

Objective 1.8 Increase capacity in digital research methods across RRU.

Action Provide access to and support for essential research software to faculty, students and associate faculty.

Action Provide training in digital methods appropriate for faculty and associate faculty to research to increase capacity as advisors.

Goal 2 – Expand the visibility, reach, and impact of RRU research

Objective 2.1 Assess the impact and reach of Royal Roads' research.

Action Gather data regarding research outputs, outcomes and impact of RRU research (faculty and student/alumni).

Action Identify gaps in the reach of RRU research

Objective 2.2 Identify strategies to develop research skills for students.

Action Gather data on current research methodology and methods courses across all programs and asses and identify commonalities and differences.

Action Identify resources to improve the quality of student research proposals.

Action Identify training needs and resources to develop research skills for RRU students (e.g., research questions, theoretical frameworks, methodology, methods, outcomes, impact).

Objective 2.3 Adopt a university wide strategy on research data management and open scholarship.

Action Develop and implement policies regarding open scholarship.

Action Develop resources to support publication of faculty works online with print on demand.

Objective 2.4 Showcase Royal Roads faculty, student, alumni, staff and associate faculty research to highlight the importance, value, reach and impact of our research.

Action Gather narratives and other evidence to demonstrate the importance, value, reach and impact of research conducted at RRU.

Action Develop and implement a communication plan to show the importance, value, reach and impact of RRU research (e.g., for media, for public/prospect engagement, within disciplines, for policy makers, governments [municipal, provincial, federal], for communities, not-for-profit organizations, other stakeholders, and the general public).

Action Feature RRU research throughout the RRU website and marketing materials.

Action Develop individual plans for scholarly communication and knowledge mobilization with faculty members that include strategies for reach and impact.

Goal 3 – Identify and focus on priority challenges for research at Royal Roads

Objective 3.1 Identify current and select future research theme areas for Royal Roads University research.

Action Complete a mapping exercise to gather and analyze information on theme/priority challenges.

Objective 3.2 Build leadership and capacity in themes/priority challenge areas.

Action Identify resources, structures, processes and strategies to promote capacity in prioritized themes/priority challenges.

Action Identify resources, structures, processes and strategies to promote collaboration and leverage capacity through research centres, institutes and labs (e.g., Cascade Institute; Resilience by Design Lab).

Goal 4 – Expand opportunities to conduct research into learning and teaching at Royal Roads University

Objective 4.1 Establish a learning futures group/lab/cluster.

Action Test models for groups/labs/clusters using the learning futures group/lab/cluster as a pilot.

Action Explore and recommend evidence informed teaching and learning innovations to consider at the program and institutional level.

Action Recommend resources to implement, evaluate, and iterate proposed innovations.

Action Support research using digital and innovative methods.

Objective 4.2 Improve the way we conceptualize and communicate the Learning, Teaching and Research Model (LTRM) internally (for more coherence) and externally (to attract students, faculty and partners).

Action Report on the current impact of RRU research on teaching at RRU.

Action Develop strategies to integrate/link RRU research and teaching at RRU.

Action Support and encourage research focused on teaching and learning at RRU using the LTRM as a lens.

References

Bear, J. B., & Woolley, A. W. (2011). The role of gender in team collaboration and performance. Interdisciplinary science reviews, 36(2), 146-153.

Cheruvelil, K.S., Soranno, P.A., Weathers, K.C., Hanson, P.C., Goring, S.J., Filstrup, C.T., & Read, E.K. (2014). Creating and maintaining high-performing collaborative research teams: The importance of diversity and interpersonal skills. *Front Ecol Environ, 12*(1), 31-38. doi: 10.1890/13001.

Dale, A. & Newman, L. (2007). Homophily and agency: creating effective sustainable development networks. *Environment, Development and Sustainability, 9*:79-90

Government of Canada 2019, Dimensions: equity, diversity and inclusion Canada, accessed October 20, 2020, http://www.nserc-crsng.gc.ca/NSERC-CRSNG/EDI-EDI/Dimensions-Charter_Dimensions-Charte_eng.asp

Lambert, J. (2016). Cultural diversity as a mechanism for innovation: Workplace diversity and the absorptive capacity framework. *Journal of Organizational Culture, Communications and Conflict, 20*(1), 68.

Leung, A. K. Y., Maddux, W. W., Galinsky, A. D., & Chiu, C. Y. (2008). Multicultural experience enhances creativity: The when and how. American psychologist, 63(3), 169.

Lightfoote, J. B. et al. (2014). Improving diversity, inclusion, and representation in radiology and radiation oncology part 1: why these matter. Journal of the American College of Radiology : JACR, 11(7), 673-80.

Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada (NSERC). (2017). NSERC's framework on equity, diversity and inclusion. Retrieved from http://www.nserc-crsng.gc.ca/NSERC-CRSNG/EDI-EDI/index_eng.asp

Parker, R., Pelletier, J., & Croft, C. (2015). WWEST's gender diversity in STEM: A briefing on women in science and engineering. Blurb, San Francisco, CA. Retrieved from http://www.blurb.ca/books/6803988-wwest-s-gender-diversity-in-stem