



STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK 2024-2027

April 1st, 2024

Accepted on May 24, 2024 at the Annual General Assembly

Preface

Established in 2011, the Alliance of Canadian Comprehensive Research Universities (ACCRU)¹ is a network that shares information, resources, and strategies to support research excellence in small and medium sized comprehensive universities across Canada.

ACCRU member Universities span all 10 provinces and the Yukon and represent 48 of the 97 Canadian universities.

This second Strategic Framework, that followed the one covering the period 2021-2024, is based on the premises of that first Plan and new input provided by the Executive and the Membership through dedicated surveys sent to both groups that help outline: 1) their perceptions of the actual status of the Alliance and 2) their priorities for the upcoming years.

The content of this Strategic Framework is based on information gathered through these surveys and on activities put forward by the Alliance over the past three years to advance its agenda and advocacy efforts while implementing new relations and partnerships with groups such as Universities Canada, U15 and Research Impact Canada to name a few.

This Strategic Framework was drafted by ACCRU Executive Director with contributions from the Executive and the Membership. The Strategic Framework was presented to the General Assembly on May 24th, 2024, for final approval.

Status of the Strategic Objectives set forward within this Strategic Framework will be monitored and reported quarterly to the Executive and annually at the Annual General Meeting.

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¹ ACCRU Members believe in *showing our respect and acknowledge the traditional Custodians of the Lands on which our universities are situated.*

Mission

ACCRU acts with a collective voice to advocate for research and researchers at small and medium-sized comprehensive universities across Canada. ACCRU is a network that shares information, resources, and strategies to support research excellence and impacts within and across its member institutions.

Vision

ACCRU contributes to an equitable, diverse, and inclusive research ecosystem in Canada where the contributions of researchers in small and medium sized universities are valued, supported, and shared to benefit society.

Values

ACCRU is a welcoming, inclusive, collaborative, and resourceful group of like-minded colleagues. ACCRU is uniquely positioned to support its members and their shared research interests. ACCRU's core values include:

1. A commitment to research **excellence**. Research excellence is not defined by size or location and is prevalent in small and medium sized comprehensive universities across Canada.
2. A commitment to **diverse research training** opportunities. Research training is important for all students, including undergraduate students across all disciplines.
3. A commitment to **community-responsive** research. Communities benefit from research when it is done in collaboration with their university partners, on issues that are important to them and when knowledge is shared with them.
4. A commitment to **equity, diversity, and inclusion** within the Canadian academic research environment. The impact of research is enhanced when equity, diversity and inclusion are authentic features of the research and scholarly activity in our universities.
5. A commitment to **knowledge sharing**. Knowledge must be mobilized and communicated to diverse audiences to realize true impact. ACCRU supports innovative knowledge mobilization, as well as open data access and publishing.
6. A commitment to **equitable research funding**. ACCRU aims to elevate the understanding of the realities, barriers, and challenges in research funding to achieve equitable funding opportunities for Canadian university researchers and increase the impact of research in Canada for the greater good.

Strategic Goal 1: Build Organizational Capacity

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES	Actions to be taken to support the Alliance's Strategic Objectives
Improve learning, information sharing and development opportunities between the members.	➤ Improve information sharing between members by various means of communication such as: ➤ Newsletter. ➤ Dedicated messages. ➤ Use of the web site.
	➤ Provide opportunities for identification and addressing the needs of ACCRU members.
	➤ Organise regular webinar sessions on topics of interest to the membership.
	➤ Enable ACCRU advisory committees to improve learning, information sharing, development opportunities and advocacy at all levels.
	➤ Establish an EDI advisory committee and promote the addition of the EDI principles and actions throughout all activities of the Alliance.

Improve operational systems to support ACCRU to accomplish its mission.	➤ Transition ACCRU to a not-for-profit organization (NPO).
	➤ Establish a financial structure including a bank account, a bookkeeping system, annual financial statements, and appropriate Income reporting to meet the requirements for an NPO.
	➤ Establish administrative procedures.
	➤ Outsource additional resources to support ACCRU's growth.
	➤ Improve communications procedures with the Executive, the Membership and external groups and organizations.
Obtain resources to operationalize the ACCRU Strategy.	➤ Review the membership fee structure to Support ACCRU operations and provide value to members.
	➤ Explore alternative funding sources.
	➤ Work in collaboration with the Québec membership to identify and reach out to French Québec universities.

Extend the Alliance's outreach to small and medium size Universities across Canada.	➤ Identify and reach out to minority francophone universities across Canada.
	➤ Establish contact with the <i>Association des collèges et des universités de la francophonie canadiennes</i> (ACUFC) representing French minority institutions outside Québec.
	➤ Identify and reach out to small and medium size English universities across Canada.
Ensure ACCRU members receive value for their membership	➤ Identify and pursue new research collaboration opportunities.
	➤ Enhance knowledge sharing opportunities.
	➤ Enhance the development of training resources.
	➤ Identify and address common challenges in research.

Strategic Goal 2. Advocate, network, and partner.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES	Actions to be taken to support the Alliance's Strategic Objectives
Improve ACCRU's communication strategy.	➤ Outsource the development of a clear and coherent strategic communication plan.
	➤ Launch the new ACCRU Website
Meet and advocate with relevant partner agencies.	➤ Increase and improve members contribution toward advocacy actions.
	➤ Contribute solutions to address inequities in Canada's research ecosystem to support excellence at member institutions.
	➤ Improve the overall advocacy efforts and efficiency of the organization by increasing contacts with key partners.
	➤ Ensure ACCRU representation on the various Government Committees having an impact on research funding and research training.
	➤ Increase metrics gathering to support advocacy actions.
	➤ Open and improve lines of communication with other research partners.

Networking and Partnerships with like-minded research organizations.	➤ Identify opportunities to strengthen research collaboration within Canada.
	➤ Identify and reach out to organisations that could be partners with the Alliance for various advocacy, training and/or information activities.
Meet, advocate, and share information with individual stakeholders.	➤ Initiate and establish communications with federal and provincial politicians based on a clear and coherent strategic communication plan.
	➤ Support members actions to enhance the visibility of research at their institutions, in their communities and in their regions.

Strategic Goal 3. Leverage the impact and excellence of research in ACCRU universities.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES	Actions to be taken to support the Alliance's Strategic Objectives
Offer students new training, learning and knowledge sharing opportunities for the engagement and training of future researchers.	➤ Organize special student sessions within the AGM to showcase specific areas of research.
	➤ Develop a Summer undergrad program to be host by member universities.
	➤ Engage research trainees in conversations on subjects that could impact them.

	➤ Identify and address common challenges in research training.
	➤ Generate students exchange and training opportunities between members.
Profile research excellence at ACCRU institutions.	➤ Profile stories of research at ACCRU institutions.
	➤ Develop an annual report format to profile research excellence and its impact.