

McGill Institute for the Study of Canada Strategic Priorities 2024/25–2025/26

Strategic Priorities and Key Initiatives

Mirroring the structure of its 2021-2024 Strategic Plan, MISC has three strategic priorities for the 2024-2025 and 2025-2026 academic years. Focused on enriching Canadian society, these priorities will guide our programs and activities as we continue to work towards our vision of fostering a broader and deeper understanding of Canada.

1. Public Outreach and Engagement

Produce programming and convene events that offer meaningful conversations about Canada.

The ability to engage audiences within and beyond McGill to explore important Canadian topics remains a key element of MISC's value proposition. Rethinking traditional approaches and formats will allow the Institute to welcome more people into these conversations, while building its reputation nationally and internationally. MISC will seek to build a larger community by consolidating two key initiatives.

- **Conversations:** MISC's new and exciting public outreach series *Conversations*: Sponsored by Charles Bronfman was officially announced in late October 2022. The inaugural event titled, *The Threat to Civility and the Fight for Liberal Democracy*, took place on April 8, 2024 and attracted an audience of about 600 people, excluding the many online viewers. The event was also recorded by the CBC and will air on the radio show *Ideas* hosted by Nahlah Ayed. In 2024-2025 and 2025-2026, MISC will organize one *Conversation* per year, during the winter term. Efforts are needed to further increase the scope and profile of the series while improving its relationship to MISC's overall mission and other ongoing activities.
- **Digital Audience:** As part of an audience building strategy, MISC will develop a clear and detailed communications strategy (2024-2025), to implement (2025-2026) and increase its online and social media presence.

Issues to Resolve: strengthening the relationship between the *Conversations* and MISC's other activities, including course offerings and its other public events. In addition, improving the Institute's media and social media profile to effectively promote and diffuse public outreach content.

2. Undergraduate Teaching

Assess and promote MISC's undergraduate programs.

MISC benefits from excellent students but additional efforts are needed to stimulate enrolment and create a synergy between existing undergraduate programs. This will be achieved through two initiatives.

- Promote the Minor and Major in Canadian Studies – Increase the profile and student awareness towards our undergraduate programs, especially the Major in Canadian Studies through the development of a systematic online and offline campaign.
- Space for Growth – A foundational element of MISC's value proposition is the ability to bring people together. Having space that is fit for purpose matters a great deal. Currently MISC is slated to become part of McGill's Royal Vic Project and efforts will be made to make sure the development of this project reflects the Institute's needs and priorities. Simultaneously, because the Royal Vic Project will only be completed in 2028, shorter term options will be explored to maximize the use of the Institute's current space and to explore alternative locations.

Issues to Resolve: Increasing enrolment in the Major in Canada Studies remains a challenge due to the limited visibility of the program, which will be addressed through a concerted campaign. In addition, space remains a significant concern and a potential barrier that could impede MISC's evolution.

3. Research and Scholarship

Strengthen the focus on scholarship and interdisciplinary research about Canada.

Establishing research and scholarship more prominently as a key priority for MISC will ensure continuity. This will be achieved through three initiatives.

- Develop the MISC Book Series – A joint venture between McGill-Queen’s University Press and MISC, the “Canadian Essentials” book series was officially launched in spring 2023, with the publication of its first two titles. Develop a plan to increase the profile of the series while recruiting a diverse body of authors willing to contribute timely manuscripts in issues important to Canadians.
- MISC Research Fellows – MISC fellows participate in the life of the Institute, and contribute towards research, public events and administration. They also help guide its academic programming. Over the next two academic years, directly engage the MISC Research Fellows in the Institute’s teaching.
- Expand the Yearly Graduate Workshop – Launching in 2021, the MISC Graduate Workshop has now become an annual event. Support interdisciplinary exchange and advance graduate students’ progress in their research, this workshop is currently not open to the public and participation has focused primarily on McGill students. Over the two following years, find ways to expand the audience and the participant base on the MISC Graduate Workshop.

Issues to Resolve: There is still more work to do to integrate research and scholarship into public events and undergraduate teaching, notably through the work of the “Canadian Essentials” book series and the involvement of the MISC Research Fellows. This will enable MISC to more fully leverage and promote this important work.

High-Level Two-Year Plan

	2024 -25	2025-26
Public Outreach & Engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expand the reach of the Conversations series Develop a written digital engagement plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assess the Conversations series and plan for adjustments based on the lessons drawn Implement the new digital engagement plan
Undergraduate Teaching	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote the Major in Canadian Studies more systematically. Work to maximize MISC office space use, especially on days that staff work from home 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evaluate the performance of our undergraduate programs Assess the position of MISC in relationship to Royal Vic Project.
Research & Scholarship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Appoint new MISC Research Fellows Expand and promote book series Secure visiting scholars for 2025-26 Expand graduate student workshop to include a public component Foster a better integration of research into teaching and public outreach 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Appoint new MISC Research Fellows Evaluate impact of MISC book series Secure visiting scholars for 2026-27 Expand annual graduate student workshop to include non-McGill students Evaluate integration of research into teaching and public outreach