

**Reimagine.
Innovate.
Nurture.
Celebrate.**

**Research & Scholarship Plan
2024-2030**



**MOUNT ROYAL
UNIVERSITY**
1910

Land Acknowledgement

Mount Royal University is located in the traditional territories of the Niitsitapi (Blackfoot) and the people of the Treaty 7 region in Southern Alberta, which includes the Siksika, the Piikani, the Kainai, the Tsuut'ina, and the Îyârhe Nakoda. The City of Calgary is also home to the Métis Nation.

Overview

The 2024-2030 Research and Scholarship Plan (“RS Plan”) sets Mount Royal University’s research and scholarship direction to 2030. This document expresses our commitment to scholarly inquiry and academic freedom as evidenced by the breadth of research and scholarship taking place across all faculties.

The RS Plan is a blueprint for building a scholarly community that is actively engaged in **reimagining** the learning experience, **innovating** beyond the classroom, **nurturing** a culture of curiosity, and **celebrating** success through knowledge mobilization.

How the RS Plan came to be

Led by Connie Van der Byl, Associate Vice-President, Research, Scholarship and Community Engagement, guided by the Research and Scholarship Committee (RSC) of General Faculties Council (GFC), and the Faculty Associate and Vice Deans of Research, and supported by the Office of Research, Scholarship and Community Engagement, the RS Plan is the result of extensive internal and external data analysis, as well as many conversations, consultations, and presentations within the Mount Royal community.

Data from the following sources were gathered and analyzed to inform the RS Plan:

- 2023-2030 Academic Plan Process, data collected 2022-2023.
- 2018-2023 Research and Scholarship Plan Process, data collected 2017.
- Scan of more than 50 post-secondary institute research strategies and plans.
- 20 individual interviews and 5 focus group meetings held with MRU faculty and staff.
- Feedback from Faculty Council RS Plan presentations.

The RSC has been and will continue to be integral to the development and execution of the RS Plan.

The draft RS Plan was presented at Provost Council Meetings, RSC Meetings, Faculty Council Meetings, a Deans’ Council Meeting, and a GFC Meeting. Two open house engagement sessions were held in March inviting **all members of Mount Royal University’s community** to attend, review the draft RS Plan, ask questions, and share feedback through in-person and online feedback surveys.

We thank everyone for their support and guidance in bringing the RS Plan to life.

MRU Vision

Opening Minds and Changing Lives

Opening Minds and Changing Lives reflects our dedication to providing students with a holistic and transformative education, preparing them to become lifelong learners and active global citizens.

Through their academic experiences and as members of a diverse, inclusive, and supportive community, students will be equipped with the knowledge and skills they need to develop to their full potential.

MRU Mission

To provide meaningful and engaged learning opportunities that create individual transformation and societal benefit.

We recognize that every learner who comes to Mount Royal has their own aspirations for pursuing a university education. Knowing their reasons for attending university are as unique as they are, we strive to provide all students with enriching learning opportunities that help them discover and cultivate the knowledge and skills they need to succeed and make a lasting impact on today's changing world.

MRU Values

We recognize the importance of creating a culture where community members share deeply held values. Our shared values will guide our decisions and actions as we work to fulfil our mission and vision.

- Transformation
- Belonging
- Boldness
- Inquisitiveness
- Authenticity

Learn more about Mount Royal's vision, mission, and values at mru.ca/StrategicPlan.

The Research & Scholarship Plan

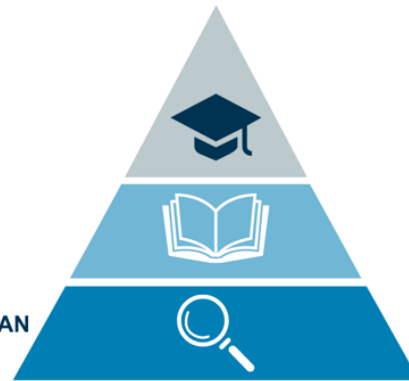
The 2024-2030 **RS Plan** is an institutional plan informed by, and developed in alignment with, Mount Royal's 2023-2030 **University Strategic Plan** and **Academic Plan**:

MRU Plans

01 THE UNIVERSITY STRATEGIC PLAN

02 THE ACADEMIC PLAN

03 THE RESEARCH & SCHOLARSHIP PLAN



The University Strategic Plan identified the **Strategic Goal for Research and Scholarship** at Mount Royal:

Goal #9: Mount Royal is recognized for impactful research and scholarship that advances knowledge, informs teaching, and promotes community engagement.

As an undergraduate university, research and scholarship have a unique role in our ability to provide students with an exceptional education. We are committed to supporting impactful research and scholarship that contributes to knowledge generation within disciplines, engages communities to help solve societal problems, informs, and enhances teaching practices, and ensures students receive an education grounded in current knowledge.

Mount Royal students can participate in faculty research opportunities usually only available to graduate students. We will invest in creating more opportunities for students to participate in cutting-edge faculty research, providing valuable experiences that will support their development of transversal skills, increase their knowledge within a field of study, and develop intellectual independence.

The Academic Plan identified the **Strategic Priority for Research and Scholarship** at Mount Royal:

Strategic Priority #7: Grow research and scholarship to advance knowledge, inform teaching and curriculum, and create stronger connections with the communities we serve.

The Academic Plan also identified three **Research & Scholarship Supporting Initiatives**:

- Expand undergraduate student research opportunities to provide greater and more equitable access for students.
- Grow funded research to foster the advancement of knowledge and inform the teaching and learning experience.
- Build and strengthen research partnerships and knowledge mobilization within the community.

Mount Royal fosters a culture of scholarly inquiry for the betterment of the broader community, where undergraduate students have the unique opportunity to participate in faculty research. We take pride in the research and scholarship accomplishments of Mount Royal faculty, Canada Research Chairs, and our Institutes. We are also an **Ashoka Changemaker Campus**, recognized for our commitment to excellence in social innovation education to address local and global challenges.

We aim to grow research and scholarship at Mount Royal by increasing undergraduate student research opportunities, expanding faculty supports and growing funded research. In addition, we will strengthen our community partnerships and connections through more sponsored research, community-based research, and participatory action research projects. Through this work, we will promote the economic, cultural, and social well-being of our communities, and grow our reputation as a leading undergraduate university.

The RS Plan has been designed to support and align with other institutional plans at Mount Royal, including:

- **Equity, Diversity, Inclusion & Accessibility Plan** (*under development*)*
- **Indigenization & Decolonization Plan** (*under development*)*
- **Students Division Strategic Plan**
- **Faculty Plans**

** The Office of Equity, Diversity & Inclusion and the Office of Indigenization & Decolonization have been consulted in the development and drafting of the RS Plan and will continue to be involved in its implementation.*

Objectives

We have identified **seven objectives** to help us achieve the Research and Scholarship Goal set out in the **University Strategic Plan** and the Research and Scholarship Strategic Priority set out in the **Academic Plan**.

The objectives are guided by MRU's Values and the RS Plan is committed to:

- Transformation – Changemaking
- Belonging – Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, and Accessibility
- Boldness – Innovation
- Inquisitiveness – Scholarly Inquiry and Academic Freedom
- Authenticity – Transparency and Fairness

The phrase research and scholarship is used deliberately and somewhat interchangeably in the RS Plan to capture the full spectrum of activities that we embrace and celebrate at Mount Royal.

Research & Scholarship that Advances Knowledge

Objectives:

- Strengthen internal research and scholarship funding processes.
- Support faculty members in the successful procurement and deployment of external research funding.

Description:

Mount Royal is committed to fostering a culture of inquiry that values innovation and the pursuit of knowledge. Our faculty are answering important questions that advance knowledge in impactful ways. These objectives recognize that successful research and scholarship programs often require funding and that we must effectively enable pre and post award processes while reducing barriers.

Research & Scholarship that Informs Teaching

Objectives:

- Provide students access to the resources and support needed to successfully participate in research opportunities.
- Provide faculty members access to the resources and support needed to dedicate their time to research and scholarship that informs teaching.

Description:

Mount Royal is an undergraduate university where the student experience is at the centre of what we do. We believe that research and teaching are not an either/or proposition but rather that research and scholarship should inform teaching to the benefit of *both* students *and* the research. At Mount Royal, undergraduate students are given research opportunities both inside and outside the classroom. These objectives aim to expand those opportunities while supporting both students and faculty.

Research & Scholarship that Promotes Community Engagement

Objectives:

- Encourage and support meaningful research partnerships with community.
- Enhance the legitimacy, reputation, and stories of all faculty members and students through impact assessment and knowledge mobilization.
- Expand multi-, inter-, and trans-disciplinary work with a variety of communities in solving complex societal, economic, and environmental issues, while highlighting the activities and impact of MRU Institutes and Centres.

Description:

Research and scholarship at Mount Royal is often connected to community. *Community-engaged research is an approach to research that incorporates input from community members who are typically impacted by the research outcomes and who are involved throughout the process of creating meaningful change.* These objectives emphasize the importance of community-engaged research as well as the need to share stories of **ALL** Mount Royal research and scholarship through impact assessment and knowledge mobilization. Finally, Mount Royal University's unique approach to research and scholarship, that includes advancing knowledge, including students, and collaborating with community can lead to multi-, inter-, and trans-disciplinary work to address complex issues.

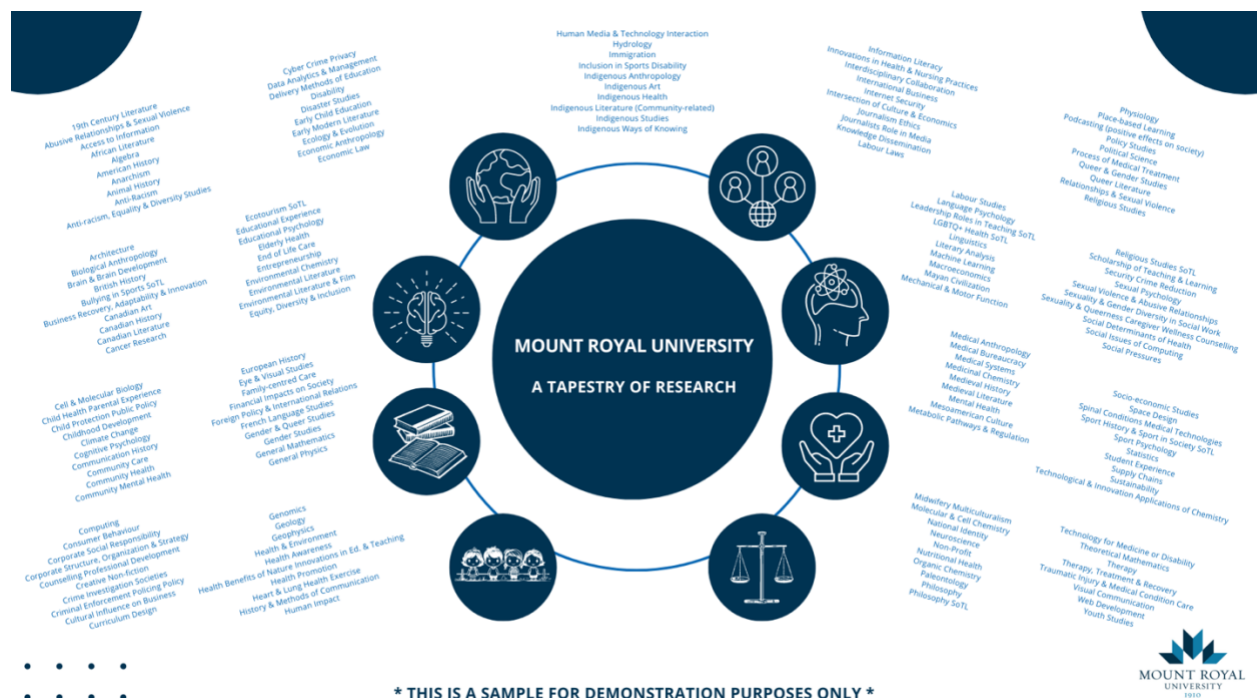
Research Excellence

The strategic direction for research and scholarship at Mount Royal is focused on fostering a culture of scholarly inquiry on campus for the betterment of the broader community.

Research is about breaking boundaries, testing the limits of knowledge, applying expertise for a greater good, and changing the world around us for the better. Research is inherently connected to change, as a researcher shapes the future through their work. Every researcher is a Changemaker, and as a Changemaker campus, Mount Royal is dedicated to celebrating research excellence and how our students and faculty contribute.

Tapestry of Research

Mount Royal will continue to support, share, and celebrate the diversity of research work conducted by all faculty and students. The image below is a snapshot in time designed to showcase a sample of the vast number of research projects underway across campus at the time this plan was created. At Mount Royal we are proud of research and scholarship activity that is broad in breadth of scope and meaningful in impact.



Existing Research & Scholarship Themes

The following themes align with existing research and scholarship strengths in Mount Royal's current faculties, institutes, and centres. This broad categorization is purposeful, reflecting the breadth of research and scholarship activity underway at Mount Royal:

- Business and Communications
- Health and Wellness
- Science and Technology
- Society, Culture, and the Arts
- Scholarship of Teaching and Learning
- Sustainability

Research & Scholarship Focus and Direction

At Mount Royal, we take pride in faculty's research and scholarship accomplishments, such as securing external funding, particularly through Tri-Agency funding, Canada Research Chairs, as well as foundations, industry, and associations. We aim to build on these successes, knowing the research and scholarship of faculty are essential to our provision of a transformative education. The direction for research excellence at Mount Royal is founded on:

- Undergraduate Research
- Community-Engaged Research
- Changemaking
- Knowledge Mobilization and Research Impact

Moving Ahead

Implementation

Annual implementation plans will be created to set detailed actions, metrics, timelines, resourcing, and accountabilities that support the objectives outlined in the RS Plan. While working groups and committees may be established to help implement some of the actions in the RS Plan, the success of the plan will also depend on the level of funding and resources, as well as the collaboration and support of all members of the research and scholarship community.

Measures

We are committed to annually reporting on selected quantitative and qualitative measures to show our progress toward achieving our seven objectives and highlight the impact these achievements are having on research and scholarship and the broader community. Existing sources of data will be drawn upon and new methods of data collection will be explored, where needed.

Reporting

The Office of Research, Scholarship and Community Engagement will work with the Office of the Provost to develop an annual reporting process to share our progress toward the research and scholarship goal in the University Strategic Plan, the research and scholarship strategic priority in the Academic Plan, and the objectives in the RS Plan. **The Research and Scholarship Committee (RSC) of General Faculties Council (GFC) will be updated on implementation plan progress through monthly discussions and an annual review. GFC will be briefed at meetings via the RSC Chair Report.**

A Living Plan

While the RS Plan sets Mount Royal's research and scholarship direction to 2030, we recognize that external factors, such as government funding and societal changes, can positively or negatively affect implementation and progress toward achieving our goals. This plan and its supporting measures will be reviewed on a regular basis and, if necessary, amendments may be made to reflect such changes.