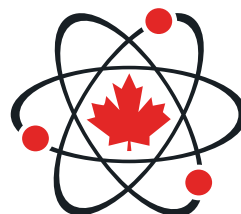


Canadian Association
of Science Centres

Strategic Plan

2024-2026

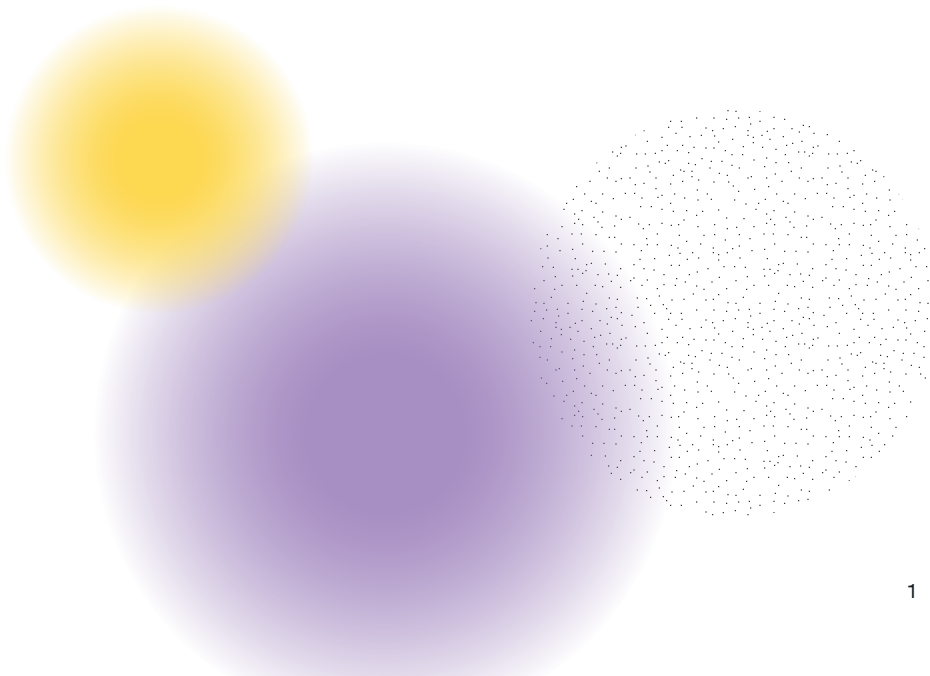


CANADIAN ASSOCIATION OF SCIENCE CENTRES
ASSOCIATION CANADIENNE DES CENTRES DE SCIENCES



Table of Contents

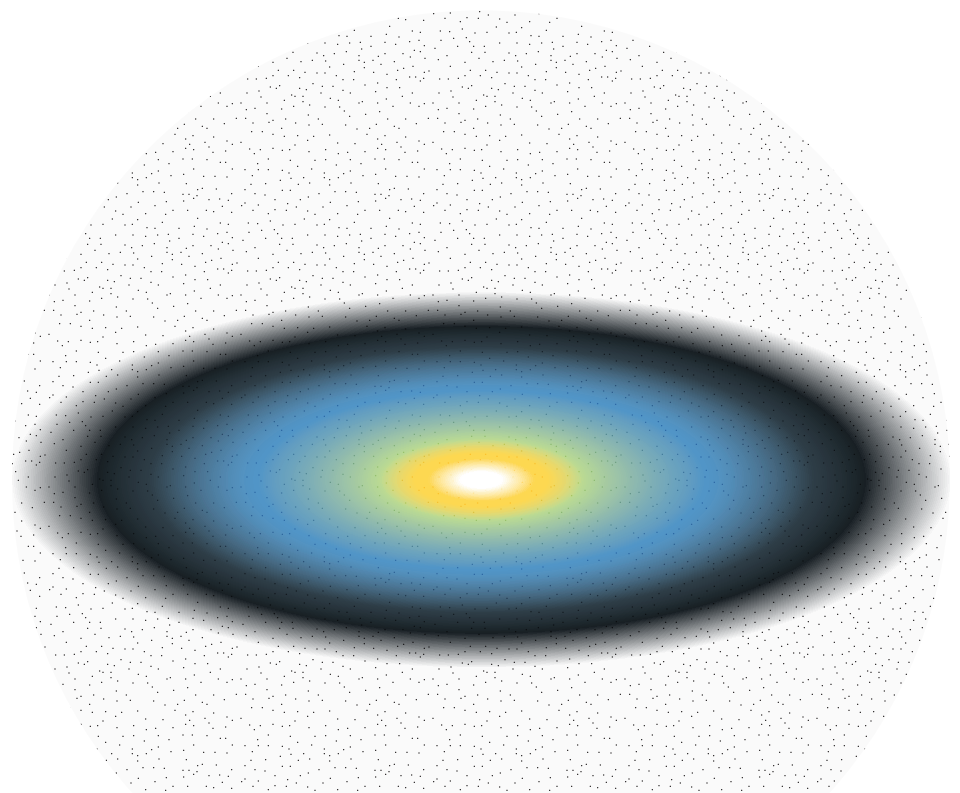
Remarks about the new plan	2
About CASC	3-4
Our Vision and Mission	5
Our Beliefs and Core Values	6-7
Our Strategic Approaches	8
Our Strategic Focus Areas for 2024-2026	9-10
1. STEM Equity:	
2. Truth & Reconciliation:	
3. Collective Social & Environmental Impact:	
4. Advocacy:	
5. Organizational Sustainability & Resiliency:	





Remarks about the new plan

This strategy is an opportunity to reaffirm our core values and put trust in our strengths as a Canadian community of science engagement organisations that can work towards systems change. Our members play an essential role in cultivating a joy of learning, enriching the lives of people across Canada, and working towards a more inclusive science and innovation culture of engaged citizens. This strategy sets out how we can best meet these responsibilities.



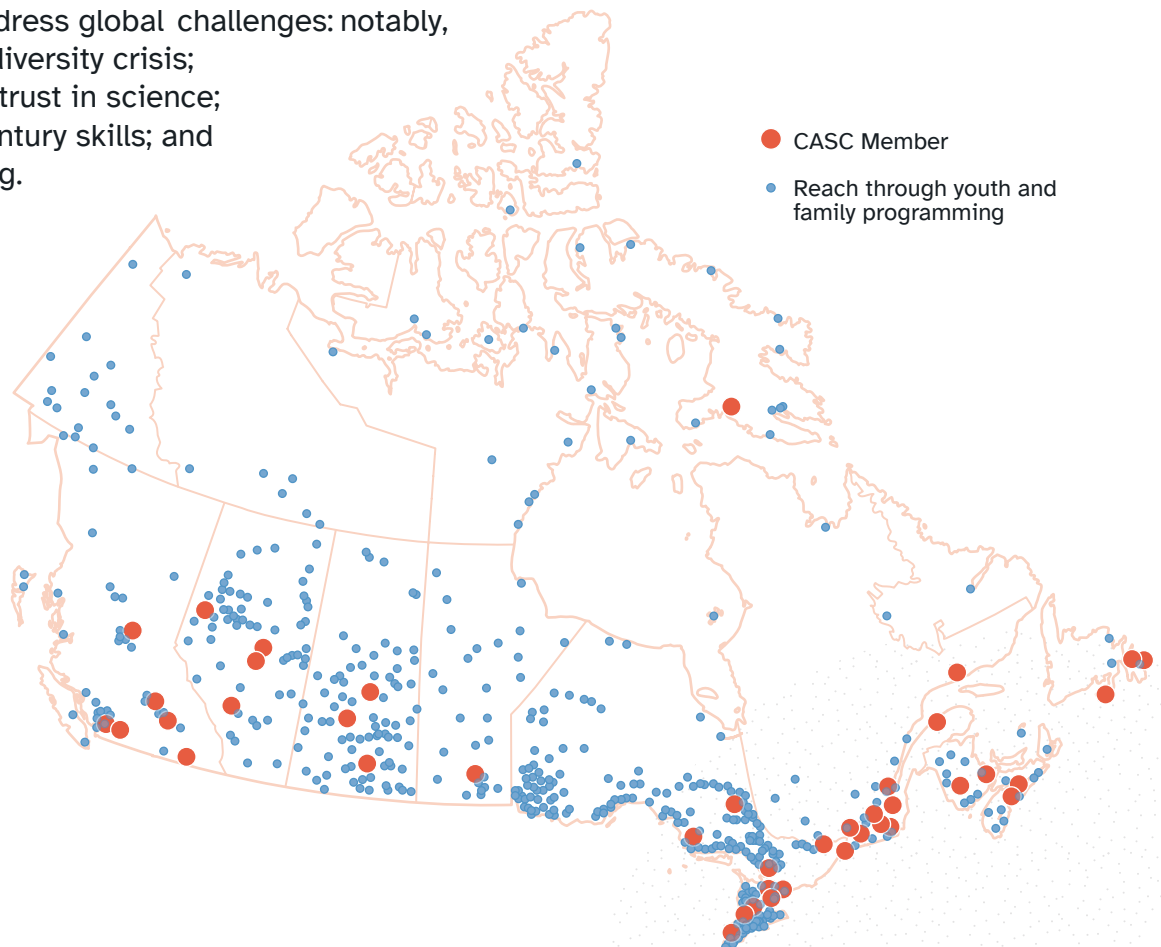
About CASC

CASC connects, inspires, and empowers science engagement organisations and professionals, extending the reach and strengthening the impact of their work.

The Canadian Association of Science Centres (CASC) is a network of trusted organizations that represent a critical component of our science, technology, and innovation landscape in Canada. CASC is the largest membership-based network of science engagement organizations in Canada, collectively reaching more than 10 million citizens per year. We bring together more than 70 organizations committed to a thriving science and innovation culture within Canada.

We are a diverse network. Our members include not only science centres, zoos, and science, natural history, and technology museums, but also outreach and research organizations, as well as companies and nonprofit organizations that offer commercial products and services that support informal science learning environments.

All share the common goal of enriching the lives of people through STEM (science, technology, engineering, math) engagement, equipping us as a society to work together to tackle the broader challenges we face. Our network advances social change by learning together, aligning, and integrating our actions to achieve systems-level change. CASC members are essential in national goals to address global challenges: notably, the climate and biodiversity crisis; misinformation and trust in science; STEM equity; 21st-century skills; and health and well-being.



The work of our members



Supports the joy of lifelong STEM learning (i.e., cultivates the joy of learning science throughout their lives)



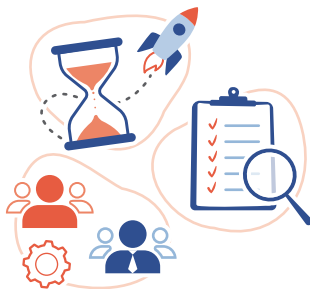
Connects science & society



Breaks down barriers for structurally marginalized groups



Actively addresses Truth & Reconciliation recommendations



Collaborates to tackle global and local challenges

Our vision:

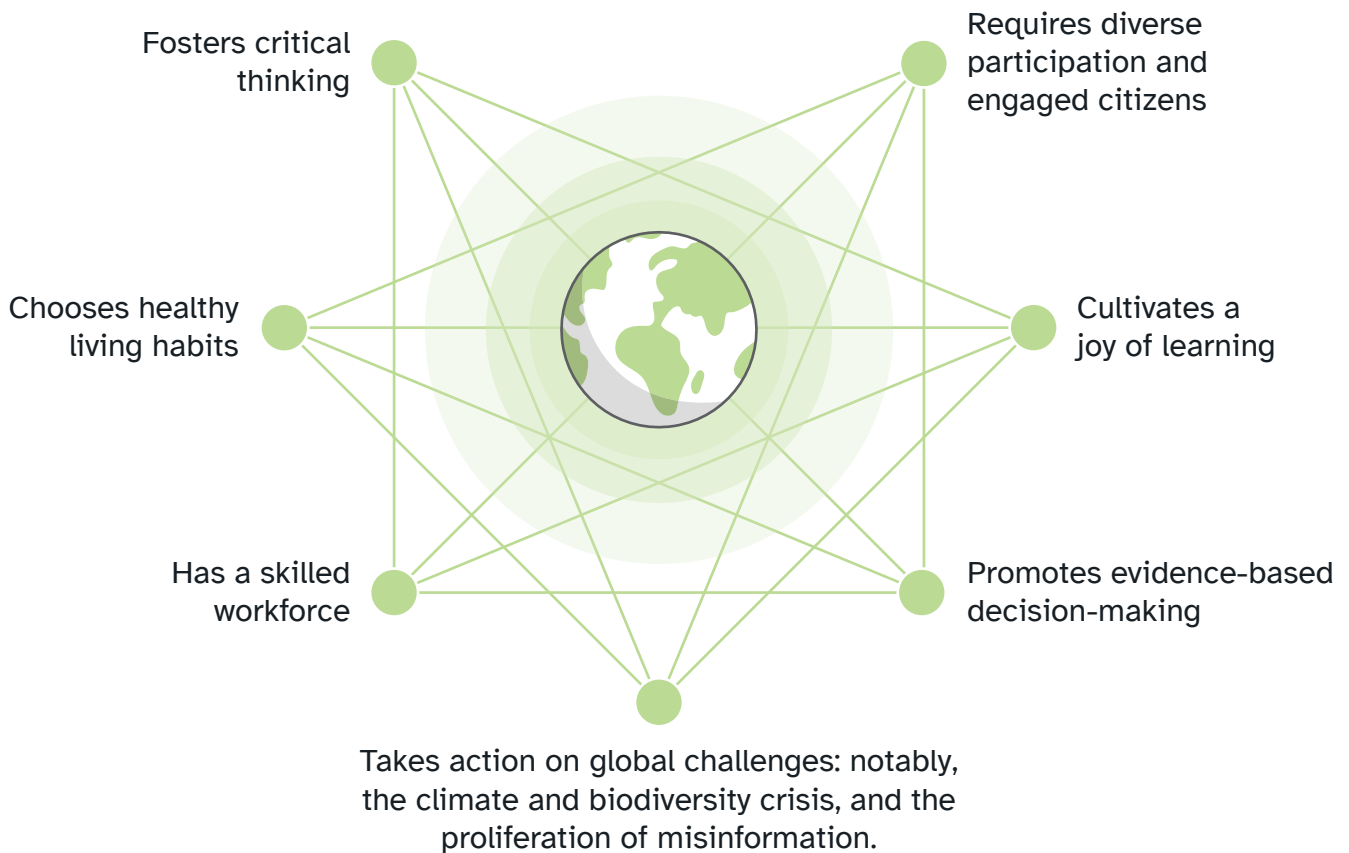
Canada has a thriving science and innovation culture of engaged citizens.

Our mission:

We connect a national science engagement community that cultivates a joy of learning by making STEM (science, technology, engineering, math) approachable, accessible, and relevant.

CASC's ultimate goal is to have a thriving science and innovation culture of engaged citizens across Canada that is diverse, inclusive, equitable, and accessible. Increasingly, research is showing that public STEM (science, technology, engineering, math) engagement and informal learning experiences have a proven impact on changing interests, behaviours, and beliefs.

A thriving science and innovation culture across Canada



Our Beliefs

Beliefs are our assumptions about the world and influence CASC's values.

STEM engagement is fun!

Done well, STEM engagement manifests as a joy of learning and is a two-way process. It can be varied in creative approaches, including informal education, public participation, community engagement, and communications.

Lifelong public STEM engagement is essential.

The work of the CASC community is critical to improving STEM equity, promoting critical thinking, and supporting people to take action on issues that impact their daily lives.

There are many ways of knowing.

Our work is informed by inclusive approaches that value knowledge gained from Indigenous and Western research methods, as well as the inherent need for multi- and interdisciplinary, mission-driven research to help address pressing social, technological, economic, and health challenges.

Diverse participation and representation are non-negotiable.

"Nothing about us without us". We ensure that no policy, initiative, or program is implemented without the direct participation of members of the group(s) affected by it.

Collaboration is essential to tackle global challenges.

No one organization can solve climate change, biodiversity loss, and the proliferation of misinformation. Diverse perspectives and organizations are needed for effective solutions and to foster collective impact.

Data-driven approaches support innovation and learning.

Intentionally gaining new insights and different ideas through the use of data and analytics. We maximize our impact by using data to help prioritize, adapt, and be nimble.

Our Core Values

Core values are the deeply ingrained principles that guide all of CASC’s actions to achieve our core purpose for Canada to have a thriving science and innovation culture of engaged citizens. Our core values are visible in every

aspect of the organization - from operations, programs, and communications to internal policies and processes. CASC’s values serve as our cultural cornerstones. They are never compromised, either for convenience or short-term economic gain.



Our Strategic Approaches

The CASC network advances social change by being a supporter, connector, and champion for our members, extending the reach and strengthening the impact of their work.

Being a Supporter

Strengthen members & their capacity

- Provide professional development opportunities that help our members reach their full potential and help them advance their impact.
- Support research that will benefit members.
- Support all sizes and types of science engagement organizations
- Respect member perspectives and engage with priorities that matter to members.

Being a Connector

Ecosystem building and strategic partnerships to connect STEM & society

- Establishing CASC as 'go to' network for public knowledge mobilization within the national research ecosystem.
- Provide enjoyable online and offline opportunities for connection among our network, community groups, and other disciplines and sectors.
- Facilitate communities of practice for members to share, inspire each other, and cooperate on impactful topics.

Being a Champion

Represent Canadian public STEM engagement sector

- Build national initiatives that work towards systems change
- Biggest fan and supporter of our members, amplifying their work on a national stage and showcasing how the network is making a positive difference.
- Foster solidarity among members of our network and across the broader public engagement sector.

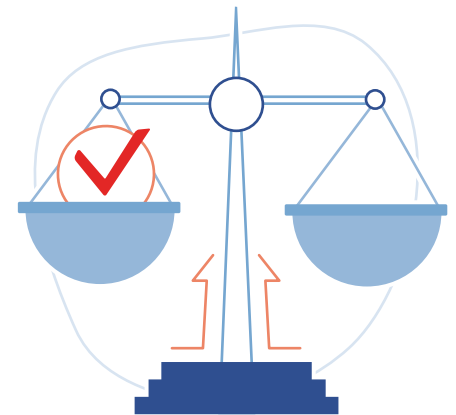
Our Strategic Focus Areas for 2024-2026

The following strategic areas have been identified through listening sessions with our Board of Directors and our membership as key areas of focus. We will use our strategic approaches to be a supporter, connector, and champion to achieve impact in these areas.

1

STEM Equity: Advancing diversity, inclusion, equity, and accessibility (DIEA) across the CASC network

- CASC supports action across our membership to **break down systemic barriers within STEM engagement** related to race, sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression, and differing abilities.
- CASC delivers **inclusive and accessible events** that reflect a diversity of perspectives and identities from across our sector and country.
- CASC recognizes and shares progress and successes from across our membership towards DIEA goals.



2

Truth & Reconciliation: Meaningfully embedding reconciliation in all aspects of CASC's work

- CASC **reexamines and adapts our processes** in consultation with Indigenous partners to support reconciliation across our organization.
- CASC collaborates with Indigenous organizations, Knowledge Keepers, and Elders on **programs and initiatives that advance truth and reconciliation** across the CASC network in an emergent process, guided by the knowledge that emerges during relationship-building processes.
- CASC continues learning and sharing with membership **how to be better treaty people**, respecting Indigenous people and their rights to self-determination and territorial title.



Our Strategic Focus Areas for 2024-2026

3

Collective Social & Environmental Impact:

Stimulate cooperation to address Global Challenges

- **Climate & Biodiversity Crisis:** CASC develops and delivers collective impact-driven initiatives with our network that engage the public on climate change and biodiversity loss, incorporating civic action and a justice lens.
- **Tackling Misinformation:** CASC expands upon the successful ScienceUpFirst initiative that tackles science misinformation, to foster a community of engagement bringing together diverse voices from research, civic society, science communication, and policymakers – a community where people can enjoy learning, that inspires, challenges, and encourages thinking, curiosity, and conversation.
- **Bridging science and society:** CASC supports public engagement models among science communicators and public engagement professionals, scientists, policymakers, and the public so that all can be part of ongoing, productive discussions and community-building.



4

Advocacy: Towards a national public STEM engagement strategy

- CASC is a **national voice and champion** for the Canadian science engagement community. CASC amplifies, advocates for, and raises the visibility of our member's local and collective impact on a national stage.
- CASC **advocates for STEM communication and public engagement** as a core component of Canada's research ecosystem.
- CASC promotes the **development of public policies** that are informed by scientific understandings and community values through inclusive dialogue among scientists, policymakers, and the public.



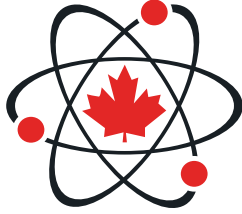
5

Organizational Sustainability & Resiliency:

Adapt to a changed and changing world

- CASC is **environmentally and financially sustainable** in the long term.
- CASC is an **employer of choice** and is a **welcoming and inclusive** workplace. Staff members come to work as their best professional and arrive home as their best individual.
- CASC's digital systems are **efficient and secure**.





CANADIAN ASSOCIATION OF SCIENCE CENTRES
ASSOCIATION CANADIENNE DES CENTRES DE SCIENCES

Strategic Plan

2024-2026

Contact us

100 Ramsey Lake Road
Sudbury ON P3E 5S9
T: (705) 522-6825 F: (705) 522-1677
E: info@casc-accs.com

Visit us

canadiansciencecentres.ca

Follow us

