



CANADIAN ASSOCIATION OF SCIENCE CENTRES
ASSOCIATION CANADIENNE DES CENTRES DE SCIENCES

Canadian Association
of Science Centres

Annual Report

2023/24

Table of Contents

02 Words from the organisation

02 From the CEO and Board Chair

04 Who we are

04 Mission & Vision

05 Core Values

06 Map

07 Impact in 2023-2024

09 CASC Team

10 Professional Development

11 2023 CASC Conference

12 Indigenous Knowledge Systems Change Initiative

12 Systems Changer in Residence

13 GenAction

14 ScienceUpFirst

15 Research

16 Statement of Financial Position

17 Sponsors and Supporters



Words from the organisation

From the CEO and Board Chair

As we look to the next 40 years, it is clear that the work of the CASC network is more important than ever to help foster critical thinking, create a skilled workforce, promote evidence-based decision-making, and cultivate a joy of learning, all towards improving the health and well being of communities, society, and the planet.

As we reflect on the past year, we are proud to report that the Canadian Association of Science Centres has continued to advance our vision for Canada to have a thriving science and innovation culture. As the largest membership-based network of science engagement organisations in Canada, collectively reaching more than 10 million people per year, our network represents a critical component of our science, technology, and innovation landscape.

This year's annual report highlights our substantial growth in the impact of our initiatives, growth in the number of members, increase in engagement opportunities for our members, and in the exponential growth of the CASC team. We have also started a deeper journey towards systems change, and understanding the levers of change at a network scale in cultivating a joy of learning, decolonizing and indigenizing STEM (science, technology, engineering, math) engagement, and working towards a more inclusive science and innovation culture of engaged citizens.

We remain grateful for the consistent commitment and leadership of our team and board of directors who live and breathe our mission of making STEM approachable, accessible, and relevant. Thank you to all of our partners, supporters, and collaborators who share in our vision and continue to support us in making a difference across Canada's science and innovation landscape. Thank you to our members who embody our mission and vision. You encourage us every day, and together we can create a better future for all.



CASC is now at the cusp of our 40th anniversary. Since our formal launch in 1985, we have been relentless in serving a diverse network of organisations that share a common goal of enriching the lives of people through STEM engagement. Increasingly, research is showing that public STEM engagement and informal learning experiences have a proven impact on changing interests, behaviours, and beliefs. As we look to the next 40 years, it is clear that the work of the CASC network is more important than ever to help foster critical thinking, create a skilled workforce, promote evidence-based decision-making, and cultivate a joy of learning, all towards improving the health and well being of communities, society, and the planet.

Looking back, we are proud of our many great accomplishments, and we look forward to a bright future.



Marianne Mader
CEO, CASC



Sandy Baumgartner
Chair, CASC Board
of Directors
CEO, Saskatchewan
Science Centre

Who we are

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

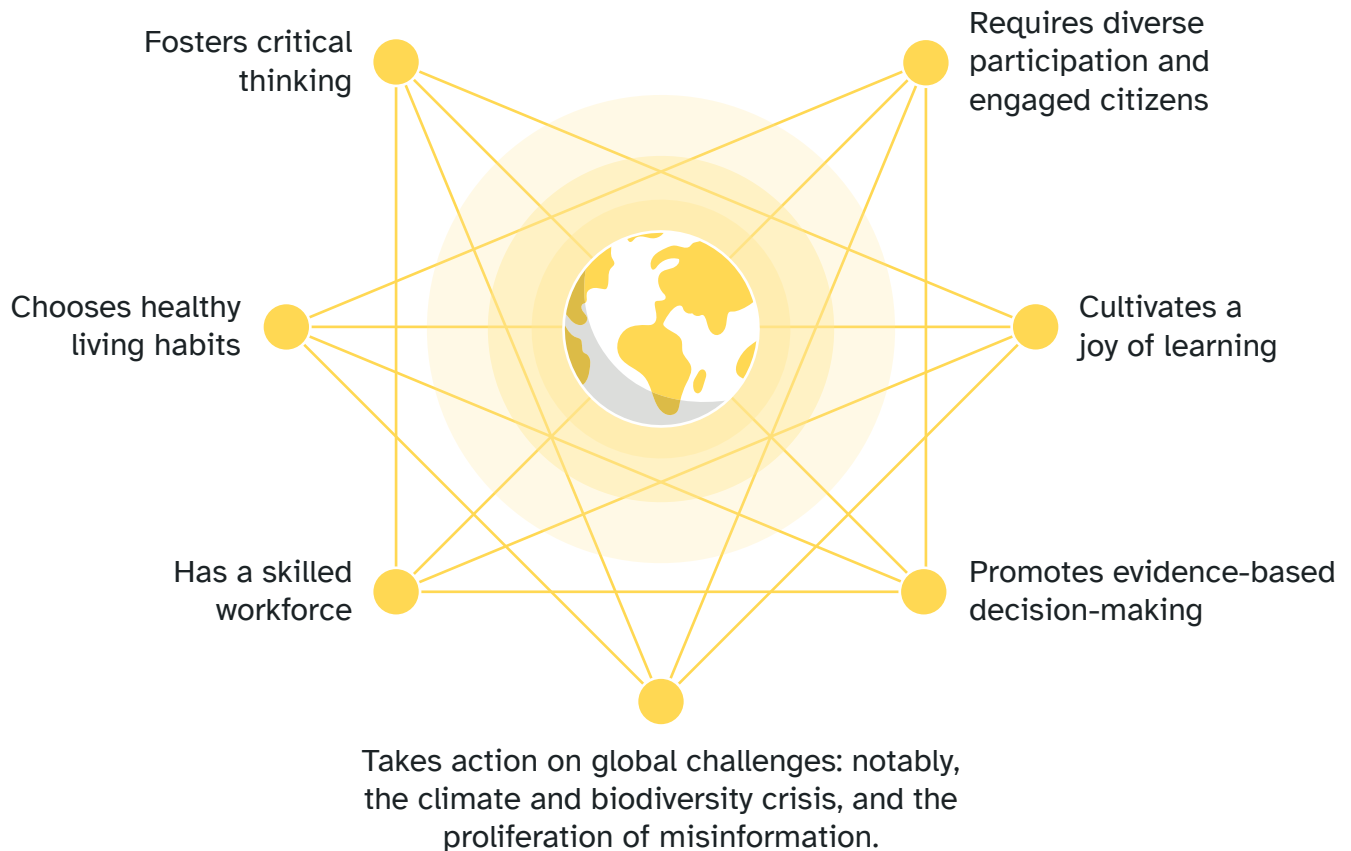
Mission:

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

Vision:

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

A thriving science and innovation culture across Canada



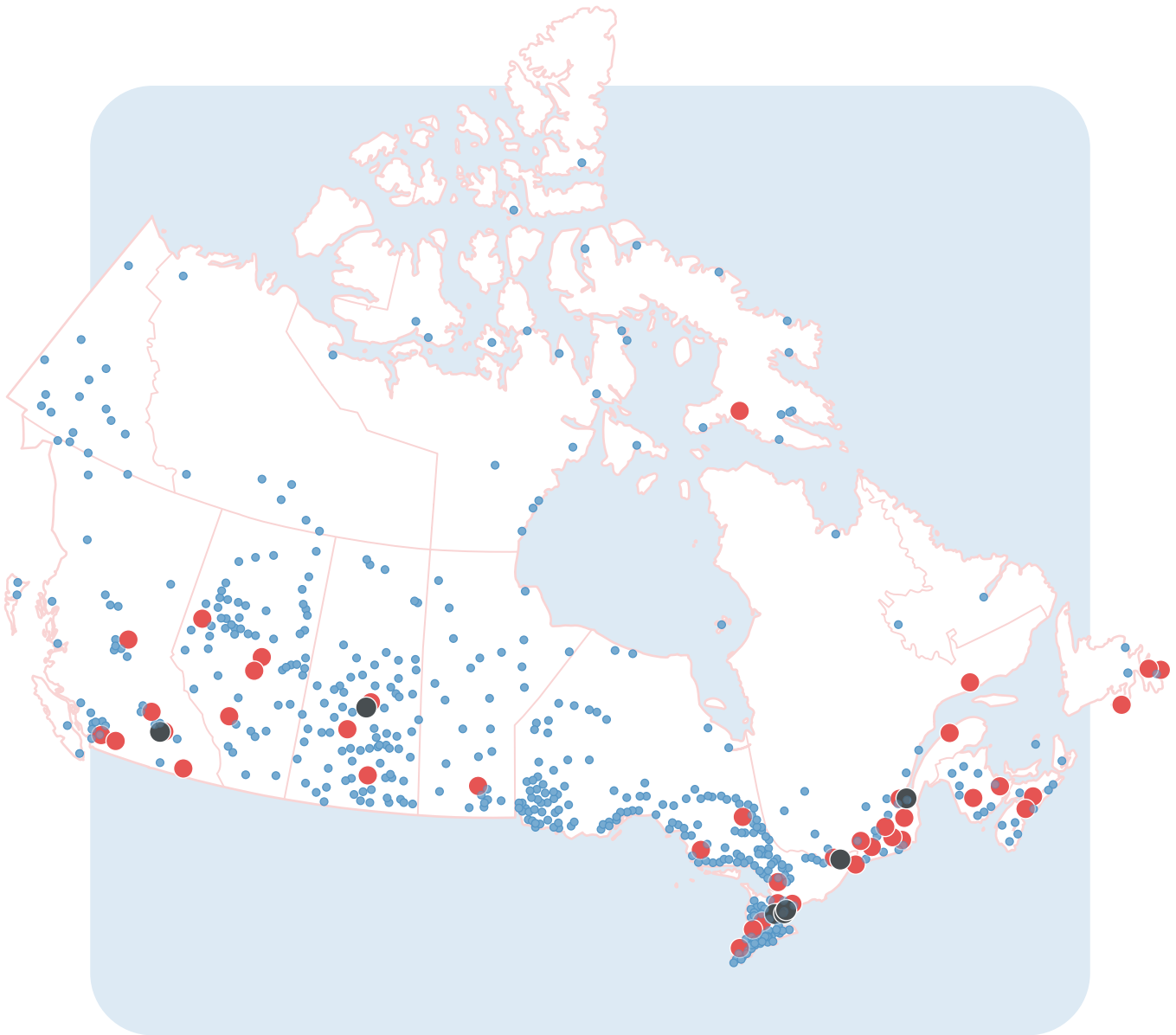
Core Values

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



Map of CASC members and reach

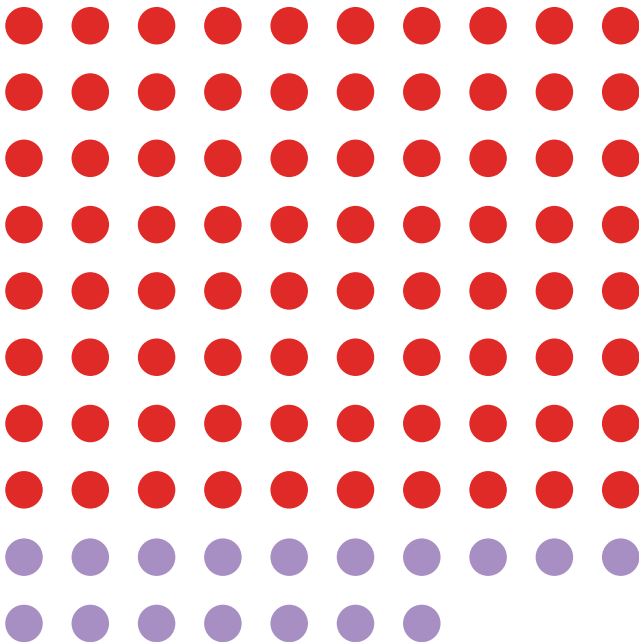
- New CASC Member in 2023/24
- CASC Member
- Reach through youth and family programming



Impact in 2023-2024

The CASC Network experienced tremendous growth in 2023-2024 with the onboarding of 15 new science centre/museum and affiliate members:

97 CASC members total



80

Science Centre/Museum and
Affiliate Members

17

Individual members, including
honorary life members



Over 10,000,000

people reached collectively across
the network, each year

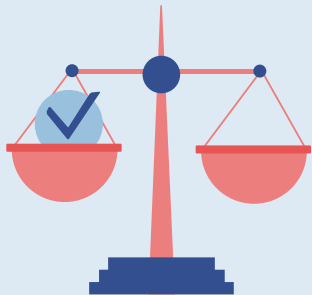
The work of our members



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



Connects science and society



Breaks down barriers for structurally marginalized groups

Actively addresses Truth & Reconciliation recommendations



Collaborates to tackle global and local challenges

CASC Team

The CASC team has grown to a staff of 16, situated from coast to coast across:

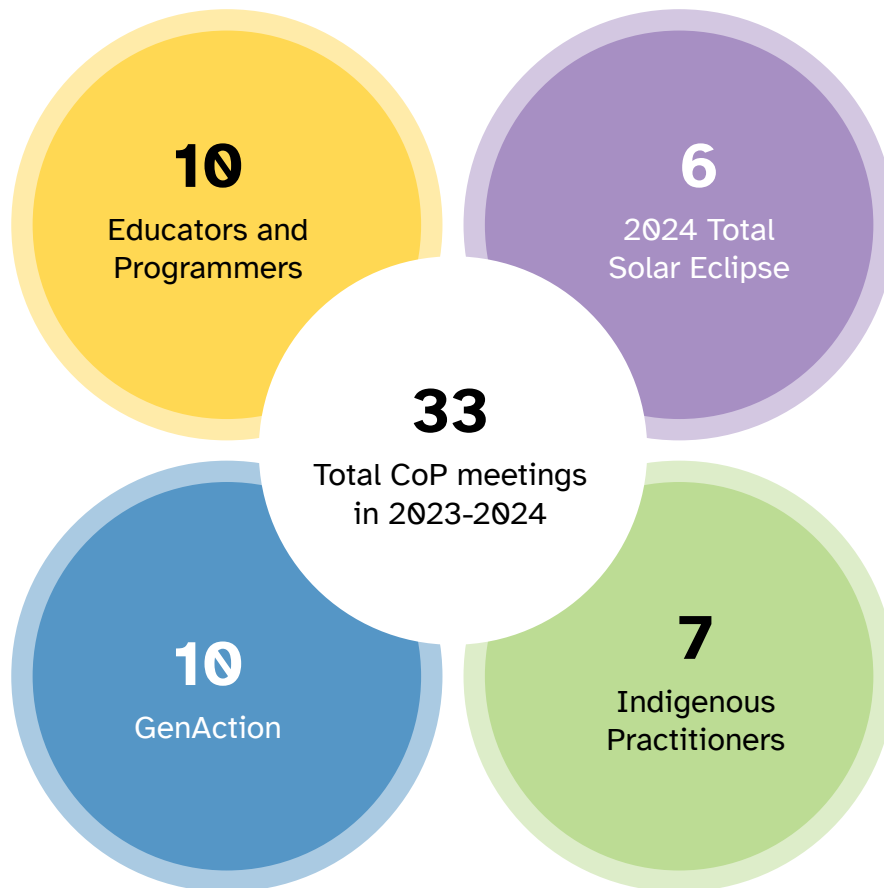
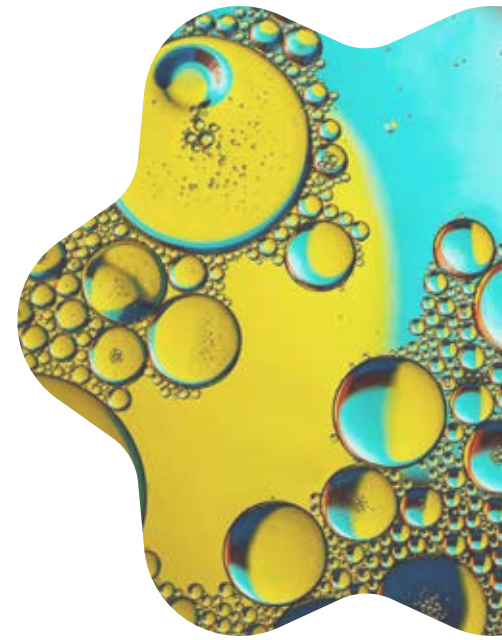
- Nova Scotia, the traditional and unceded territory of the Mi'kmaq People near Kijipuktuk (Halifax) within Mi'mkma'ki
- Quebec, the unceded traditional territory of the Kenien'kehà:ka (Mohawk) Nation, the custodian of the land and waters of Tiohtià:ke (Montréal)
- Ontario, from the traditional territory of the Mississaugas of the Credit, the Anishnabeg, the Chippewa, the Haudenosaunee, the Wendat, the Anishinaabe Algonquin, the Erie, Neutral
- Saskatchewan, home to the Saulteaux, Cree, Dakota, Lakota, and Nakota peoples, as well as the homeland of the Métis
- Alberta, the traditional territory of the Siksikaitsitapi (the Blackfoot confederacy) of the Kainai (Blood), the Piikani, the Siksika and the Ampskaapi'piikani peoples
- British Columbia, the traditional unceded territories of the Semiahmoo First Nations, the Musqueam, Squamish Nation, sleil-Waututh Nation, and Coast Salish Peoples



Professional Development

Communities of Practice

The intent of a community of practice is to build out a shared body of knowledge through regular interactions. A community of practice is a group of people who share a common concern, a set of problems, or an interest in a topic and who come together to fulfill both individual and group goals. Communities of practice often focus on sharing best practices and resources, and creating new knowledge to advance a domain of professional practice. Interaction on an ongoing basis is an important part of this. Many communities of practice rely on community building activities including face-to-face and online meetings, webinars, discussion forums, and group activities.



2023 CASC Conference

The 2023 CASC Conference took place from Tuesday, May 16 to Thursday, May 18, 2023. The event took place in Ottawa and was generously hosted by Ingenium. This event marked our first in-person conference since the COVID-19 pandemic. It was a building back year, and was a great success as we reached a record number of attendees and speakers.



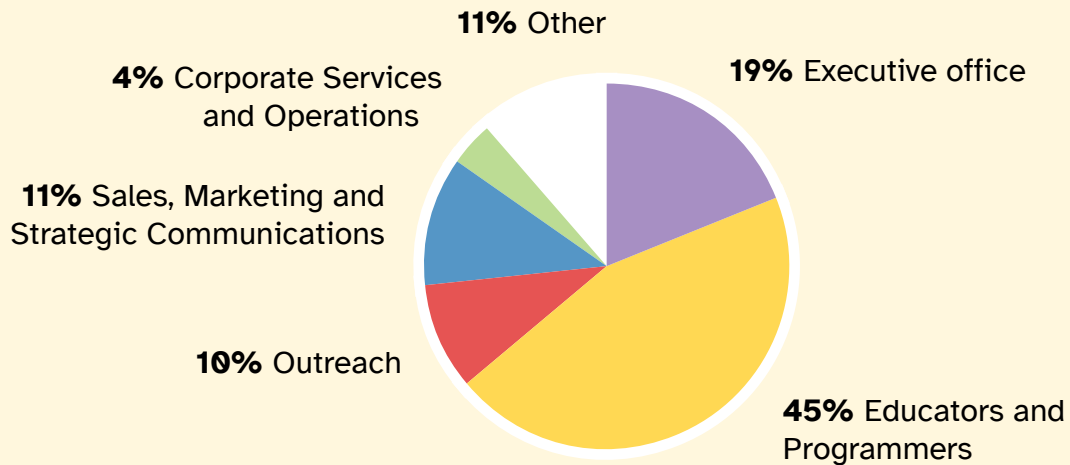
184
attendees



50+
speakers and presenters



Attendee breakdown



Over 70% of attendees found the conference relevant to their work

Over 80% of attendees would recommend the CASC conference to their colleagues

Indigenous Knowledge Systems Change Initiative

Systems Changer in Residence

In 2023 CASC began working with Dr. Melanie Goodchild, a systems thinker and complexity scholar, to decolonize our ways of working, and to help us better understand the space between Indigenous ways of knowing and Western science so that we can be in right relation with one another and with the communities we serve.

Over the course of the year, Dr. Goodchild facilitated numerous gatherings with different audiences within the CASC network. These gatherings took the form of yarning sessions, a traditional Aboriginal form of conversation from Australia, rooted in narrative storytelling.



Dr. Melanie Goodchild
HBA, MA, PhD
Academic Director,
Makwa Waakaa'igan

- Niigani miinigowiziiwin (We give these gifts to the future): a workshop with senior leaders; two virtual workshops and one in-person during the CASC conference
- Indigenous Practitioners Community of Practice: 7
- Yarning sessions with the entire CASC network: 6
- Yarning sessions with CASC staff: 4

- 80% of senior leaders reported experiencing new perspectives
- 86% of CASC members who attended noted their experience as very valuable
- 87% of CASC member who attended yarning sessions gained a deeper understanding of systems change work after working with Dr. Melanie Goodchild



What's to come: CASC will continue working with Dr. Melanie Goodchild and her team at Algoma University's Makwa Waakaa'igan Indigenous Knowledge Systems Lab. Together, we will continue to facilitate professional development opportunities that look to decolonize and indigenize the informal public STEM engagement sector in Canada.

Photo: Dr. Melanie Goodchild and Dr. Marianne Mader at the CASC 2024 conference

GenAction



GenAction unites 31 CASC member organisations across the country to deliver youth climate action programming inspiring the next generation of climate heroes. Its mission is to engage over 200,000 youth by 2024. Collectively, participating CASC members are connecting educators and youth with Science Spotlights, accessible peer-reviewed climate research articles, raising awareness of climate change science AND delivering programming to educate citizens on climate actions they can take to make a difference.



31
CASC members



162,307
youth reached and climbing



47
Bilingual Science Spotlights
and downloaded **5,837** times



83,998
commitments to
action and climbing



40,000+
unique website
visitors



1,500+
pieces of content posted
across social media channels

ScienceUpFirst

ScienceUpFirst is a national initiative operated by CASC that works with a collective of independent scientists, researchers, healthcare experts and science communicators working to stop the spread of misinformation. We share the best available science online in creative ways to stop the spread of misinformation, as well as we work with partners and collaborators across Canada to foster an ecosystem that bridges science, research, and society.



37 million+

views since launch in 2021



461 pieces of content
since launch in 2021



1.1 million+

engagements since
launch in 2021



40+ collaborators
including CASC members,
national organisations,
community organisations,
science communicators,
researchers and experts



4 connections to the
research ecosystem.
ScienceUpFirst supports
research programs and
research grants at UofA,
UBC, SFU, and Royal
Roads University.



7 micro-grants provided
in 2023-2024 to support
14 local activities
exploring vaccines and
vaccine misinformation.
The grant program
reached over **800** people.



40+ knowledge
mobilization activities,
sharing best practices for
addressing misinformation
at conferences, workshops,
and on various media
(print, radio, etc)

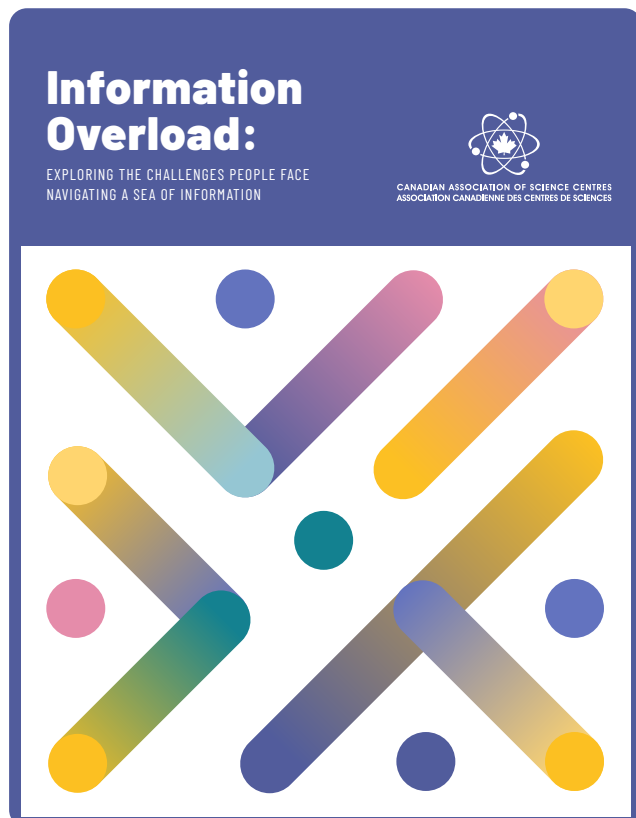
Research

Information Overload Report

With the rise of misinformation and disinformation in recent years, information overload is becoming a common experience for many people. To better understand the impact of this trend, we conducted a research study that combined quantitative and qualitative methods. Our aim was to gain insights into how people perceive and react to misinformation and disinformation, and how this affects their views on information and science.

In this report, we're excited to share the results of our study, which shed light on the ways in which people engage with information, and the challenges and opportunities that exist for organisations needing to communicate important facts about topics that matter.

Whether you're a science communicator, researcher, member of the public, policy maker, or strategic partner, this report provides an accessible overview of our key findings and offers important insights into how we can all work together to fight the spread of misinformation and disinformation.



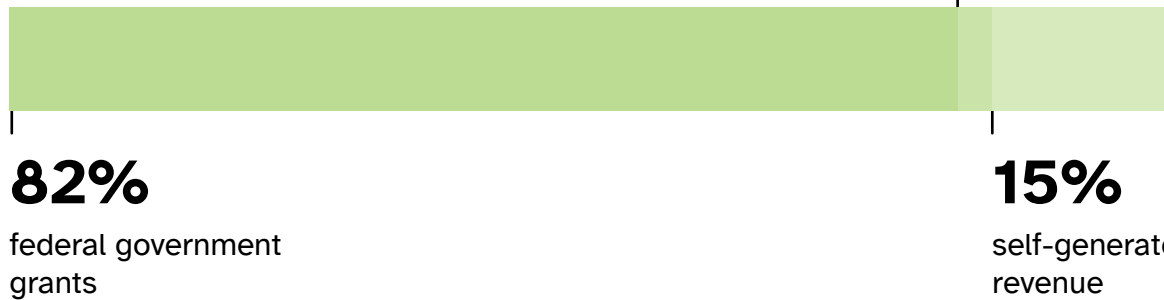
[View the report here](#) 

Statement of Financial Position

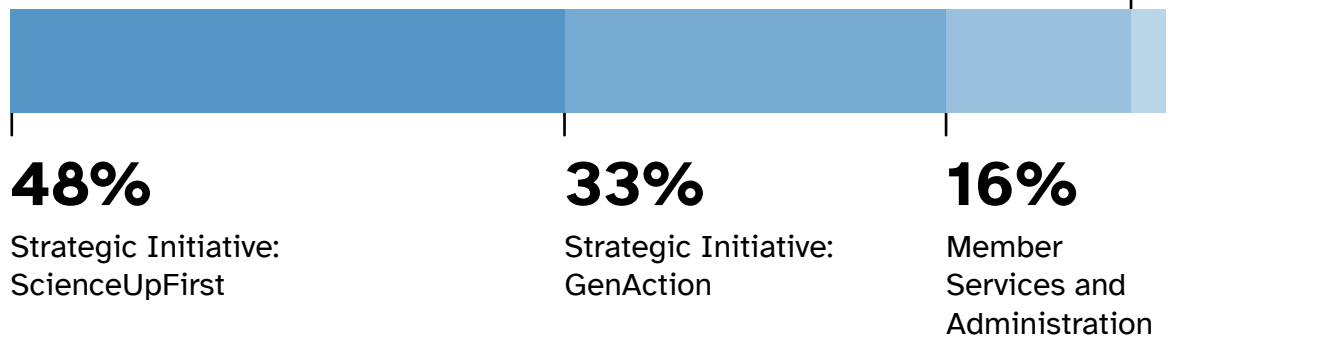
**\$3.3
million**

budget for
2023-2024

Budget sources



Resourcing



*Diversity, Inclusion, Equity, and Accessibility

Sponsors and Supporters

2023 CASC Conference

Conference Host



Lead Partner



Innovation, Science and
Economic Development Canada

Innovation, Sciences et
Développement économique Canada

Keynote Partner



Supporting Sponsors



Eco-Sponsor



ASTC Dinner



ScienceUpFirst

Partners



Funders



Innovation, Science and
Economic Development Canada

Innovation, Sciences et
Développement économique Canada



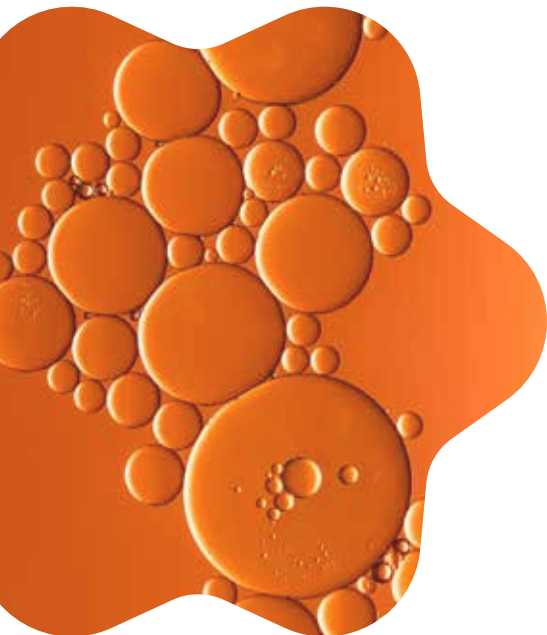
Canadian Institutes
of Health Research

Instituts de recherche
en santé du Canada



Public Health
Agency of Canada

Agence de la santé
publique du Canada





CANADIAN ASSOCIATION OF SCIENCE CENTRES
ASSOCIATION CANADIENNE DES CENTRES DE SCIENCES

Contact us

#1203-130 Albert St.
Ottawa, ON. K1P 5G4
Email: info@casc-accs.com

Visit us

canadiansciencecentres.ca

Follow us

