

Memorial University

Public Engagement Framework

Land Acknowledgement

We acknowledge that the lands on which Memorial University's campuses are situated are in the traditional territories of diverse Indigenous groups, and we acknowledge with respect the diverse histories and cultures of the Beothuk, Mi'kmaq, Innu, and Inuit of this province.

Labour Acknowledgement

We acknowledge the labour theft extracted from people of African descent and used to build European wealth and economies globally and in the Canadian nation state—including Newfoundland and Labrador's shipbuilding and cod fishery industries—through the violence of trans-Atlantic enslavement.

The Public Engagement Framework

We've always known that folks at Memorial University want to make a positive change in their communities, the province, the country, and the world. When asked why they do publicly engaged work, the majority of Memorial faculty and staff respondents said they wanted to contribute to their communities and the province; nearly half of these said they were moved to do so by a sense of moral responsibility.

The Public Engagement Framework is a guide to help Memorial faculty, staff, students, alumni, and community and public partners work together to make a positive difference here and around the globe.

What is public engagement at Memorial?

Public engagement is a collaboration between people and groups *inside* Memorial and people and groups *outside* the University that further both Memorial's academic mission and the priorities of our public and community partners. We use the term "public" to refer to a broad range of people and groups outside the University; it could include, for example, anyone from non-governmental organizations to Indigenous groups to community organizations to industry associations to governments.

Drawing on the knowledge and resources brought by all involved, public engagement is based on mutual respect, mutual contributions and mutual benefits for all participants.

It's a broad definition because it needs to cover a lot of ground! We encourage Memorial students, faculty, staff, and community and public partners to reflect on where they fit into the definition. Each of Memorial's campuses does public engagement differently, using different approaches to work with different publics.

Similarly, individual disciplines will have their own words to describe activities related to public engagement in their areas—and that’s fine! We encourage everyone to use the words that feel the most relevant in their contexts.

Why does public engagement matter at Memorial?

Memorial University’s academic mission rests on three pillars: research, teaching and learning, and public engagement. As the only university in the province, Memorial has a unique relationship with Newfoundland and Labrador, and a special obligation to the people of this place. As one of Canada’s most publicly engaged universities, Memorial has made public engagement a core area of focus and responsibility.

Who is the Public Engagement Framework for?

Everyone at Memorial plays a role in implementing the goals and objectives of the Public Engagement Framework: university leadership, faculties, centres and institutes, administrative units, faculty members, students and staff.

The Office of Public Engagement is the steward and champion of the Public Engagement Framework, and works with all these groups and individuals, connecting and coordinating to advance Memorial’s vision for public engagement.

MEMORIAL UNIVERSITY’S VISION FOR PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT: to be a globally engaged university fulfilling its special obligation to the people of Newfoundland and Labrador through meaningful public engagement, responsibility to diverse communities, and a commitment to place.

PRINCIPLES:

Excellence in public engagement practice, and the recognition that good publicly engaged research and teaching and learning requires skill, training, and support;

Responsiveness to needs and priorities identified by communities and public partners;

Ease of access to Memorial’s people, systems, and facilities;

Integrity, transparency, and accountability within public engagement activities and partnerships;

Humility, which comes from self-reflection and listening to the perspectives of others;

Courage to pursue bold, innovative, and transformative ideas.

OUR COMMITMENT: Public engagement at Memorial University is underpinned by our ***commitment to the principles of equity, diversity, inclusion, and anti-racism***, and to supporting students, faculty, and

staff in their EDI-AR efforts. We also recognize that alignment with the University's *Indigenization and reconciliation* priorities is crucial to successful public and community partnerships.

GOAL 1: Enabling public engagement

Good public engagement doesn't just *happen*. Great ideas become meaningful partnerships through responsive policies, adequate support, and good listening, among other things.

Objectives:

- Develop and improve policies, structures, and systems throughout Memorial that support public engagement.
- Provide support and education for students, faculty, and staff in undertaking public engagement activities.
- Reduce barriers and provide more equitable access to public engagement supports.
- Promote, support, and amplify Indigenous voices in public engagement at Memorial.
- Enable collaboration between Memorial's public engagement support units, and foster connections between publicly engaged Memorial units and the broader Memorial community.
- Increase and enhance student participation in publicly engaged research, learning, and work opportunities within academic curricula.
- Allocate appropriate financial and human resources to areas of public engagement priority.
- Develop and improve processes, tools and resources to recognize, listen to, and understand public needs, opportunities, and priorities, and to build relationships.

GOAL 2: Doing public engagement right

Public engagement activities can go by many names, including "just how we do things." Publicly engaged students, faculty, and staff work with community and public partners to exchange their social, health, economic, cultural and environmental knowledge and expertise in support of the public good.

Objectives:

- Develop responsive, trusting, and sustained relationships with public partners and communities.
- Ensure the results of public engagement go back to the public in a useful way.
- Mobilize knowledge, expertise, and resources to support informed policy and decision making.
- Facilitate and participate in thoughtful public dialogue.
- Respond to community and public needs and priorities by connecting university expertise to continuous, adult, and lifelong learning opportunities.
- Collaborate with other post-secondary institutions in Newfoundland and Labrador to meet the needs of the province.
- Facilitate greater use of Memorial's spaces through increased access, outreach, partnerships, and public education.

GOAL 3: Welcoming the public

Public engagement must be developed in relationship with the public. In order to make the most of the potential of collaboration, Memorial has to be open, accessible, and committed to true partnership. We also need to ensure that the public knows what we have to offer, and how to access it.

Objectives:

- Encourage the inclusion of community and non-academic expertise, knowledge, methods, and approaches to public engagement.
- Make resources available for partners to enhance their capacity for public engagement.
- Create and expand pathways for the public to share their ideas, requests, and initiatives with Memorial.
- Provide information about Memorial's systems, structures, and decision-making processes.
- Create appropriate avenues for the public to contribute to university decision-making at different levels, and encourage public participation in existing opportunities such as boards, committees, and planning processes.
- Effectively communicate Memorial's public engagement resources and opportunities to audiences both inside and outside the university.
- Utilize Memorial's global network of alumni to increase the impact of public engagement activities at Memorial.

GOAL 4: Recognizing, celebrating and rewarding public engagement

Recognizing great work is important! We value, recognize, and celebrate the initiatives, efforts, and successes of Memorial students, faculty, staff, and public and community partners by bringing the stories of Memorial's publicly engaged activities to the province and the world. Public engagement presents unique challenges; the skills and expertise related to this type of scholarship should be recognized and rewarded.

Objectives:

- Recognize, celebrate, and communicate public engagement activities by students, faculty, staff, and community and public partners.
- Increase recognition of public engagement activities within hiring and professional advancement processes for faculty and staff.
- Establish and maintain practices allowing for timely, fair, and appropriate compensation for participants in public engagement activities.
- Monitor and evaluate public engagement activities across Memorial in order to strengthen our public engagement best practices.
- Share, within Memorial and beyond the university, lessons and best practices in successful public engagement.