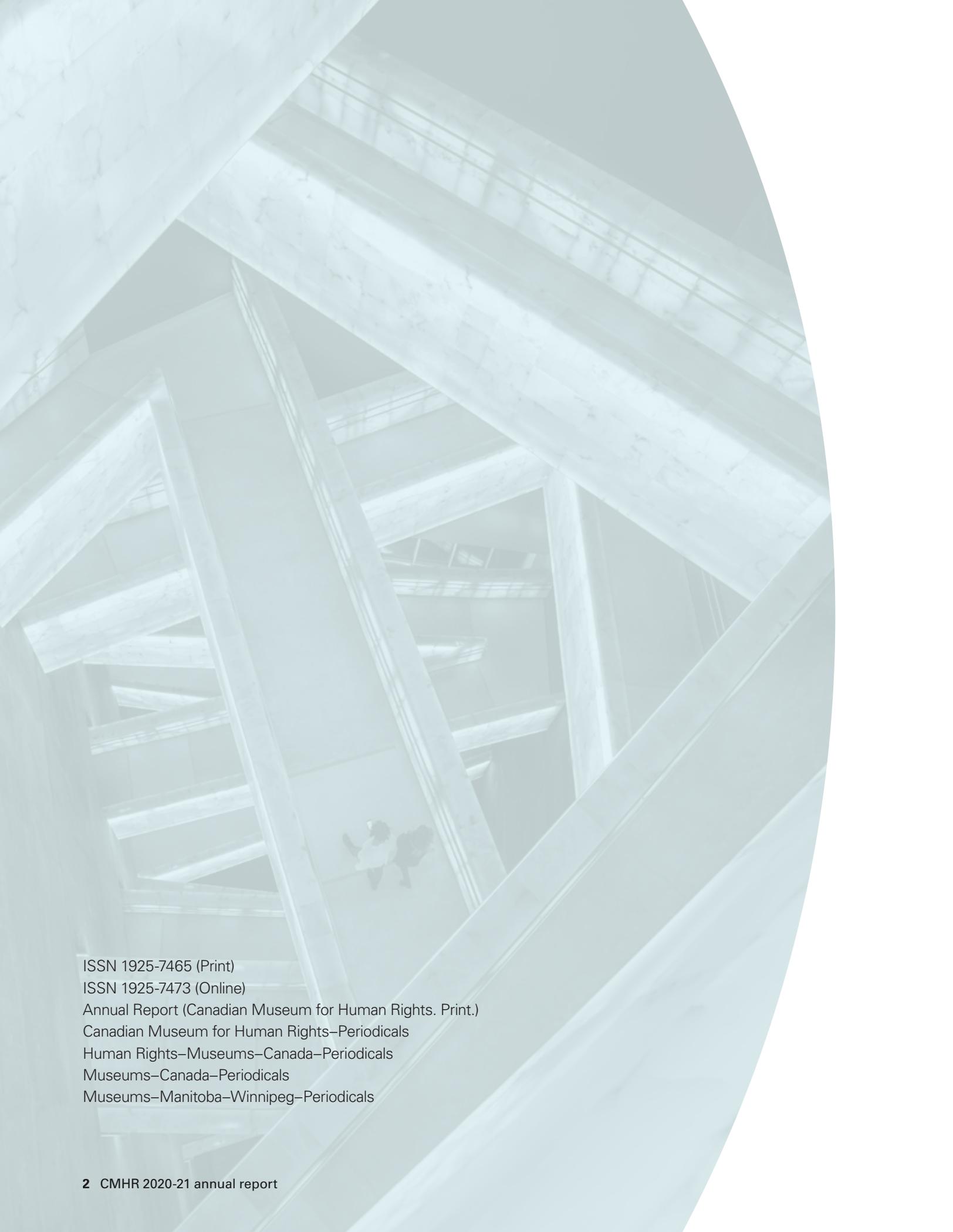


Room **for** everyone



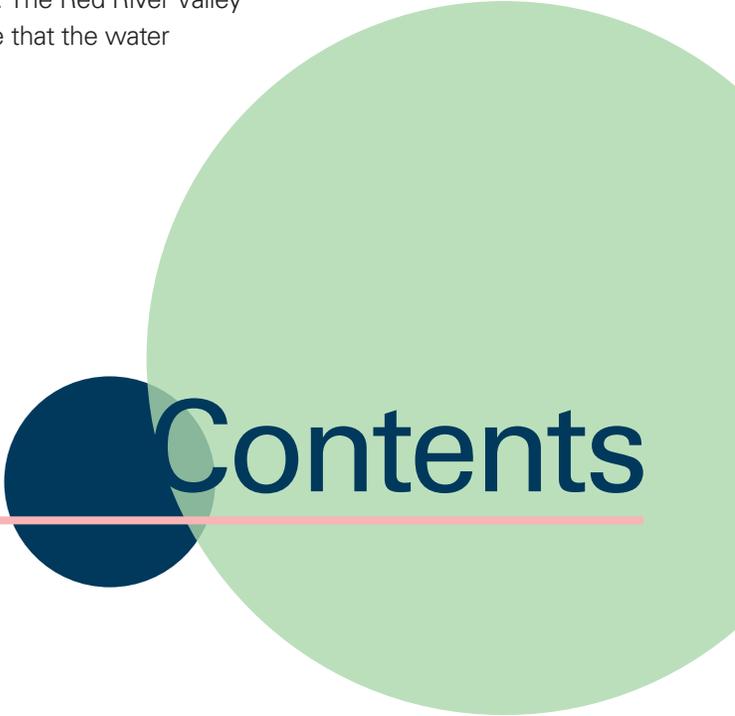


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About the Museum

The Canadian Museum for Human Rights (CMHR) is intended to bring people together. It is a space to explore human rights and inspire action. It is a physical and virtual site for education, discussion and community, where people gather to share stories, learn and reflect. Located where major rivers and historic cultures come together in Winnipeg, in the heart of Canada, the Museum is a place of hope and optimism that encourages people to connect with something larger than themselves and acknowledge their personal stake in building a better world. An achievement in architectural design, the CMHR opened in 2014 as the first national museum established outside Canada's capital region – and the only museum in the world exclusively dedicated to the pursuit of human rights for all.

The Museum is located on ancestral lands on Treaty One Territory. The Red River Valley is also the birthplace of the Métis. We acknowledge with gratitude that the water in the Museum is sourced from Shoal Lake 40 First Nation.



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Year at a glance

- **A global pandemic** twice closed the Museum's doors: from March 14 to June 16, 2020 and again from October 31, 2020 to February 23, 2021. (A third closure would begin on May 8, 2021.)
- **Visitors** to the Museum's website increased by 73 per cent in the year to 805,000. Virtual tours and online stories about human rights proved extremely popular.
- **Virtual field trips** were booked solid as teachers searched for remote learning solutions. Over 8,000 students had taken a CMHR virtual field trip by March 31, with an additional 9,500 booked for April, May and June 2021.
- **Online public programs** attracted well over 2,000 participants. These live, virtual events included lectures, panel discussions, film screenings and performances. A virtual group tour was also created.
- **An outdoor exhibition** called *ARTiculate Our Rights* ran from July to October 2020, featuring art about human rights by young Manitoba artists on 13 large structures.
- **Glowing colours** inspired by northern lights shone from the Museum from December 21 to January 30 as a sign of hope for 2021. The Israel Asper Tower of Hope was twice lit blue in support of health-care workers and other frontline workers.
- **A comprehensive plan for sustainable change** was developed after an external review into systemic racism and discrimination, commissioned by the Museum after a number of former and current employees came forward in June 2020 to share their experiences. Many new initiatives were launched, including staff training and advocacy support, community engagement, and reviews of leadership roles, hiring practices and Museum content.
- **Isha Khan was appointed** as the Museum's new CEO in August 2020 and began her tenure with a commitment to creating an equitable workplace where everyone is respected and valued.
- **The Museum ended the year** with visitor numbers of 18,602 (compared to normal annual levels near 300,000) and revenue from operations reduced to \$0.4 million. The Government of Canada provided COVID-19 relief funding to all national museums, including \$2.2 million to the CMHR.





A message from the **chair**

The year 2020-21 has been a transformational time in the growth of this young museum. The first five years after its 2014 opening were devoted to gaining experience in operating a national museum, which broke new ground as the first in Western Canada, not to mention the only museum in the world solely devoted to a broad exploration of human rights.



“

“Together, we have shown there is always room for hope, even when things look most bleak – and that human rights must always light the path forward.”

J. Pauline Rafferty,
Chair, Board of Trustees



The next five years represent a new phase, where we apply what has been learned. Some of those lessons have been hard. Some have required the [Board of Trustees](#) to re-examine our priorities for policies and strategic direction. Through it all, we have benefitted from learning and working together with Museum staff, embracing the concept that there is always room to grow.

During the past year, some former and current Museum employees shared that they had experienced systemic racism and discrimination at the CMHR. This motivated learning and change as we committed to become better together. The global pandemic has also compelled us to work in new ways and shift to online engagement. These changes are driving innovation that will serve us well into the future as we extend our efforts for human rights across Canada and around the world. We are also learning from communities how to tell their stories better, in ways that amplify their own voices and perspectives – including lessons from Indigenous Peoples and from the experiences of Black and LGBTQ2+ communities in Canada.

When, at the Board's request, I assumed the role of interim Chief Executive Officer (CEO) during the summer of 2020, I was privileged to learn from employees and community members about their visions for the future of the Museum. I am also privileged to be part of a Board full of diverse backgrounds and perspectives – and an unwavering belief in the possibilities for this museum.

Our new [Diversity and Inclusion Committee](#) includes trustees and community members with different backgrounds and life experiences. Their oversight and guidance are intended to promote a workplace culture in a bias-free environment that is fully welcoming for all staff, volunteers, visitors, donors and partners.

The August 2020 appointment of [Isha Khan](#) as the new CEO by the Honourable Steven Guilbeault, Minister of Canadian Heritage was welcomed by our Board as a crucial and positive step towards rebuilding trust in the Museum's commitment to human rights. Isha has the personal and professional experience to lead the organization through the necessary changes that are now well underway. She has dedicated her career to issues of human rights and equity as executive director of the Manitoba Human Rights Commission and as a lawyer and educator.

In the months since her appointment, Isha has moved forward on a [comprehensive plan](#) that envisions the Museum as a place of equity, respect and dignity for all, where staff and community come together as partners with a shared goal to promote human rights through storytelling, discussion, listening and learning.

The Board is proud to support this new leader and our shared vision for the Museum as we move forward in a climate of change and positive growth. We also thank Minister Guilbeault and the federal government for their ongoing support during a year of unprecedented challenges, including emergency funding relief to help national museums get through the pandemic.

Together, we have shown there is always room for hope, even when things look most bleak – and that human rights must always light the path forward.

J. Pauline Rafferty

Chair, Board of Trustees

A message from the CEO



The Canadian Museum for Human Rights was designed with room for big ideas to grow, for community to come together and for many voices to be heard in thought-provoking ways.



“Throughout this process, I have been struck by a consistent belief that this museum has great potential to make a difference in the world for human rights.”

Isha Khan,
Chief Executive Officer

Since joining the Museum in August 2020, my sights have been firmly set on community because that, after all, is where universal human rights begin. The pursuit of equity and dignity is occurring all around us, in those small places close to home, in the communities where we live and work, right here and right now. The reality of this message – made famous by Eleanor Roosevelt as she helped draft the 1949 Universal Declaration of Human Rights – came into sharp focus last year, including at the Museum.

And the lesson was this: We can (and must) do better.

In November 2020, I released a plan to address issues of systemic racism and discrimination in our museum. Called “[Creating an equitable museum](#): A framework to create a safe, respectful and healthy workplace,” it was drafted in consultation with staff and community as a blueprint for long-term change. This strategy requires a deep commitment to challenging our systems and the way we work. It requires us to work together in a deliberate, thoughtful and sustained effort over time.

It also gives me great hope. Throughout this process, I have been struck by a consistent belief that this museum has great potential to make a difference in the world for human rights. I have listened to Elders, community leaders and advocates and understand that we will walk together on this journey. I’ve heard loudly and clearly from our Board of Trustees that addressing systemic racism and discrimination head-on is our priority. I’ve met with staff and heard their deep desire for a workplace and a way of working they can be proud of – where everyone is empowered and supported.

However, this will not happen overnight. And it won’t always be easy. To move forward, we must all ask tough questions, challenge our own biases and be willing to do things differently, even if it means we will make mistakes. And I have seen that happening. It gives me confidence that this museum will become a place where everyone feels they belong – a place with room for all.

Another huge challenge we faced during 2020-21 was the COVID-19 pandemic, which closed our doors for more than half the year and significantly reduced on-site visitation and revenue. But where doors close, windows open.

Photo: CMHR, Aaron Cohen

Enhancements to the Museum’s digital presence dramatically increased online visitation from across Canada. Live [virtual field trips](#) with a guide, introduced to help teachers keep remote classes engaged, have been hugely popular with educators all across the country, reaching more than 8,000 students during the year.

[Virtual group tours](#) were also introduced for the general public, along with recorded virtual tours posted on our website. [Online educational tools](#) were bolstered with learn-at-home programs, live virtual lessons and new teacher resources. [Public programs](#) were offered through interactive online platforms, featuring live discussions about the risks of artificial intelligence, experiences in the Warsaw Ghetto, and protecting human rights during a global pandemic. Our annual public meeting moved into cyberspace, as did the annual fundraising gala organized by the Friends of the CMHR.

All throughout the year, we learned valuable lessons that will provide many benefits well into the future. In a nutshell, that is what 2020-21 was really all about: learning how to do things differently – motivated by necessity, guided by our goals, and grounded in our values. I thank the Museum’s staff and volunteers, the Board of Trustees and the executive team for their hard work during this difficult time.

At a time when hope for the future sometimes feels in short supply, it is important to remind ourselves that not only are we “all in this together,” but that we share many common goals for the kind of world we’d like to see: a world built on dignity, respect and human rights for all.

Isha Khan

Chief Executive Officer



Room **for** everyone.

Corporate governance

Mandate

To explore the subject of human rights, with special but not exclusive reference to Canada, in order to enhance the public's understanding of human rights, to promote respect for others and to encourage reflection and dialogue.



The Canadian Museum for Human Rights is a Crown corporation established by the *Museums Act*, governed by the control and accountability regime established under Part X of the *Financial Administration Act*. The Museum is required to comply with a range of provisions in other statutes, including the *Federal Accountability Act*, *Access to Information Act*, *Privacy Act* and *Official Languages Act*.

Board of Trustees

Under the *Museums Act*, the Museum is governed by a Board of Trustees consisting of a Chair, a Vice-chair and not more than nine other trustees, to be appointed by the Minister of Canadian Heritage with the approval of the Governor in Council. Outreach strategies seek to attract qualified candidates who reflect Canada's diversity by considering factors such as regional representation, gender, ethnicity, culture, sexual orientation, bilingual proficiency and representation by Indigenous peoples and persons with disabilities. Trustees are appointed for a term not exceeding four years, and are eligible to serve three consecutive terms. Trustees may continue in office until a successor is appointed. The Chair and Vice-chair are eligible to serve only two consecutive terms in those roles.

The Board of Trustees is independent from management and provides the Corporation with strategic direction and oversight. The Board is accountable to Parliament through the Minister of Canadian Heritage. The roles and responsibilities of the Board of Trustees and its committees are set out in the Museum's bylaws and terms of reference. The *Museums Act* vests responsibility for the day-to-day management of the Museum in the CEO of the Corporation. Management is accountable for the day-to-day operations of the Museum, its long-term viability and the achievement of its objectives.

In 2020-21, the Board of Trustees met 10 times via online video conference.



Chair

J. Pauline Rafferty
British Columbia
Term: 2017-12-14 to 2021-12-13



Vice-chair

Michèle Rivet
Quebec
Term: 2019-01-22 to 2023-01-21



Trustee

Gail Asper
Manitoba
Term: 2008-08-26 to 2022-03-11



Trustee

Mark L. Berlin
Ontario
Term: 2018-04-01 to 2022-03-31



Trustee

Julie Jai
Ontario
Term: 2019-02-05 to 2023-02-04



Trustee

Dr. Wilton Littlechild
Alberta
Term: 2008-08-26 to 2023-02-26



Trustee

Pardeep Singh Nagra
Ontario
Term: 2018-06-01 to 2021-05-31



Trustee

Benjamin Nycum
Nova Scotia
Term: 2018-04-01 to 2022-03-31



Trustee

Rob Philpott
Prince Edward Island
Term: 2019-06-22 to 2023-06-21



Trustee

Ana Serrano
Ontario
Term: 2018-06-01 to 2021-05-31



Trustee

Robyn Sneath
Manitoba
Term: 2019-06-22 to 2022-06-21

Special activities in 2020-21

Upon the departure of CEO John Young on June 25, 2020, the Board appointed Pauline Rafferty to act as the Corporation's Interim CEO, a position she held until Isha Khan was appointed as the new CEO on August 17, 2020 by the Minister of Canadian Heritage. Pauline received full support from the Executive Committee of the Board during this time.

On June 26, 2020, the Board created the Diversity and Inclusion Committee (see below). In July and November, non-voting external advisors representing Black, Métis and disability communities were added to broaden the perspectives included on the Committee in keeping with its terms of reference and objectives.

The Interim CEO and the chair of the Diversity and Inclusion Committee held many meetings with Museum staff during the summer of 2020 to gather information and better understand concerns raised about systemic racism and discrimination in the workplace.

Since that time, the Board has been fully engaged in the work of learning more about what is required to dismantle systemic racism and discrimination at the Museum, in accordance with strategies outlined in the "[Creating an Equitable Museum](#)" framework plan released in November 2020. This has included trustee participation in education sessions, as well as personal reading and self-reflection. The Board also commenced review of the Museum's entire governance model through an anti-racist and anti-oppressive lens. Policies and reporting processes are also being reviewed and improved to ensure the Board is adequately and appropriately overseeing the work and performance of the CEO, including measures undertaken to address workplace culture.

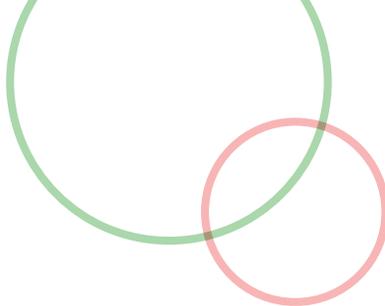
The Board has six standing committees:

The Executive Committee is delegated authority to make decisions in between meetings of the Board if necessitated by unusual circumstances. It is comprised of the Board chair and the chairs of each standing committee. The Executive Committee met informally on a weekly basis during June, July and August 2020 and continued to meet on a bi-weekly basis thereafter in 2020-21. Members: Pauline Rafferty (chair), Mark Berlin, Julie Jai, Benjamin Nycum and Michèle Rivet.

The Diversity and Inclusion Committee helps the Board and CEO ensure the Museum's mandate of promoting human rights and respect for all is fully reflected in its internal operations and programming, with a view to overcoming systemic racism, discrimination and oppression and to model an inclusive society built on respect for one another. Its composition includes members of Black, Indigenous, LGBTQ2+, racialized and disability communities. The Committee was formed in June 2020 in response to issues raised by former and current employees. It met nine times in 2020-21. Members: Julie Jai (chair), Mark Berlin, Wilton Littlechild, Pardeep Singh Nagra, Michèle Rivet and Pauline Rafferty (ex officio). External advisors: Esi Codjoe, Danielle Peers, Brenda Gunn, Celeste McKay (July to October).

The Audit and Risk Management Committee oversees the Museum's obligations under the *Financial Administration Act* and its standards of integrity and behaviour, financial reporting, risk management and internal controls. The Committee met four times in 2020-21. Members: Benjamin Nycum (chair), Gail Asper, Pardeep Singh Nagra, Rob Philpott, Robyn Sneath and Pauline Rafferty (ex officio).

Corporate governance



The Finance Committee oversees and holds management accountable for the Museum's budgeting, financial planning and procurement practices. This Committee also assists the Board in monitoring corporate performance against both short- and long-term strategic plans and annual performance targets. The Committee met eight times in 2020-21. Members: Benjamin Nycum (chair), Gail Asper, Julie Jai, Rob Philpott, Ana Serrano and Pauline Rafferty (ex officio).

The Human Resources and Governance Committee assists the Board in its obligations related to human resources, compensation, succession planning and CEO performance assessment. This Committee also takes a lead role in establishing and overseeing processes related to Board governance, effectiveness, training and skills development, and recommending individuals to be encouraged to participate in the Government of Canada's appointment process. The Committee met seven times in 2020-21. Members: Michèle Rivet (chair), Julie Jai, Pardeep Singh Nagra, Robyn Sneath and Pauline Rafferty (ex officio).

The Strategic Planning and Programs Committee assists the Board and CEO in setting and maintaining the Museum's strategic direction. This Committee's primary focus is to ensure the Museum has a current and relevant strategic plan and to oversee the successful implementation of this plan. The Committee also reviews and recommends to the Board policies for guiding the overall development of Museum programs, and provides oversight on the Museum's content review process and overarching stakeholder relations strategies. The Committee met twice in 2020-21. Members: Mark Berlin (chair), Wilton Littlechild, Benjamin Nycum, Michèle Rivet, Ana Serrano and Pauline Rafferty (ex officio).

Executive officers



Chief Executive Officer
Isha Khan
(Appointed August 17, 2020)



Chief Executive Officer
John Young
(Until June 25, 2020)



Chief Financial Officer
Susanne Robertson



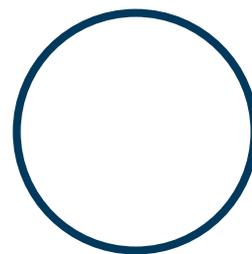
Corporate Secretary
Lianne Lambert



Annual Public Meeting

The Museum's Annual Public Meeting was held virtually on January 26, 2021. After a blessing by Anishinaabe Elder Mary Courchene, Board chair Pauline Rafferty opened the meeting. She noted the importance of talking openly and frankly: not only about the Museum's accomplishments but also about its shortcomings. This, she said, is the way to move forward. CMHR curator Isabelle Masson then provided an overview of an exhibit called *Ododo Wa: Stories of Girls in War*, presented through the lens of two women captured as girls by the Lord's Resistance Army in Uganda and held for years as conjugal slaves.

CEO Isha Khan shared highlights of the past year including the exhibition *Time to Act: Rohingya Voices* (which opened in June 2019) and *ARTiculate Our Rights* (which ran outdoors from July to October 2020), featuring visions of the future for human rights, created by young Manitoba artists. Khan talked about the Museum's efforts during the pandemic to create new ways to engage students, educators and the public in a virtual space where everyone is welcome. She also spent time discussing the Museum's path forward to address systemic racism and discrimination. This includes, she said, finding news ways to reach people, share stories and inspire hope while confronting our own shortcomings and modelling how to take responsibility and change.



Room **for** everyone.

The spirit and intent of the group is to foster respectful and open dialogue, advice and perspectives, to safely and openly share ideas in a good way, and to collaborate on program development work.

**Indigenous Educators
Working Group**



Advisory councils

Advisory councils

Standing Indigenous Advisory Council (SIAC)

Elders and Indigenous leaders have been part of shaping the Museum's exhibits, programming, and operations from the beginning. Since 2013, SIAC has guided the Museum by providing a broad and inclusive perspective reflective of the unique rights, interests, priorities and circumstances of Indigenous peoples in Canada. Council members advise the Museum on many issues including (but not limited to) corporate policy, exhibit content, curatorial processes, audience testing and evaluation, art, education and public programs, visitor services, public engagement, communications, human resources, museum operations and ceremony. The Seven Sacred Teachings – Respect, Humility, Love, Truth, Honesty, Courage and Wisdom – guide the process of engagement for all SIAC members.

Council membership includes a broad representation of perspectives in terms of Nation, language, gender, sexual orientation, age, ability, and expertise. Members are all people who have experience with Indigenous leadership and governance, academics, art and curation, traditional knowledge and/or human rights of Indigenous Peoples. Members serve on the Council for two calendar years with the possibility of extension.

In 2020-21, SIAC met eight times through virtual platforms. The Council reports directly to the Museum's CEO and is coordinated by the CMHR Indigenous Relations Advisor.



CMHR Indigenous Relations Advisor
Jennefer Nepinak

Minegozhiibe Anishnaabe First Nation, Manitoba





SIAC members as of March 31, 2021



Donna Augustine
*Elsipogtog First Nation,
New Brunswick*



Diane Longboat
*Mohawk Nation, Six Nations of the
Grand River, Ontario*



(Sharon) Lisa Dewhurst
*Nlaka'pamuk Nation
(Currently resides in the Yukon)*



Sharon McLeod
*Norway House Cree Nation,
Manitoba*



Guy Freedman
*Métis, Flin Flon, Manitoba
(Currently resides in Ontario)*



Barbara Nepinak
*Minegozhiibe Anishnaabe First Nation,
Manitoba*



Wayne Helgason
*Sandy Bay First Nation, Manitoba
(Currently resides in British Columbia)*



Clarence Nepinak
*Minegozhiibe Anishnaabe First Nation,
Manitoba*



Damon Johnston
*Fort William First Nation, Ontario
(Currently resides in Manitoba)*



Deborah Price
*Sioux Valley Dakota Nation,
Manitoba*



Fred Kelly
*Onigaming Anishnaabe Nation, Ontario
(Currently resides in Manitoba)*



Dana Soonias
*Red Pheasant First Nation,
Saskatchewan*



Nikki Komaksiutiksak
*Inuit, Chesterfield Inlet, Nunavut
(Currently resides in Manitoba)*

Advisory councils

Inclusive Design Advisory Council (IDAC)

This council was established in early 2011, almost four years before the Museum opened its doors. As an actively engaged national advisory group, it is representative of people with diverse lived experience and backgrounds in accessibility, disability rights and inclusion.

Before the Museum opened, IDAC contributed to the Museum's design and construction process through diverse modes of participation, including reviewing various iterations of design and related contents. A tactile model of the Museum was constructed to allow members who are blind to directly understand the building's architecture.

The Council also assisted with prototyping

and testing of hardware and software that underlie digital exhibits and contents, as well as reviewing plans for education and public programs, offering input on presentation standards for web, social media and graphic design, and conducting on-site reviews of the built environment.

Since opening, input from IDAC has become ingrained in our institutional processes as we grow and evolve. Members have continued to support our inclusive design methodology with an expanded focus that enables us to develop a more inclusive lens in our program and exhibit development and visitor experiences.

In 2020-21, IDAC met six times. The Council reports directly to the Museum's CEO.





IDAC members as of March 31, 2021



Laurie Beachell
Manitoba



John Rae
Ontario



Jim Derksen
Manitoba



Catherine Roy
Quebec



Brian Everton
Manitoba



Jutta Treviranus
Ontario



Carol McAndrew
British Columbia



Photo
unavailable
Heather Walkus
British Columbia



Tracy Odell
Ontario



Valerie Wolbert
Manitoba



Yvonne Peters
Manitoba



Rick Zimmer
Manitoba



Susanne Dewey Povoledo
Manitoba

Advisory councils

Indigenous Educators Working Group (IEWG)

This working group was established in 2014 to work collaboratively with Museum staff on the development of education programs that include teachings about Indigenous experiences in Canada. These programs include school programs, the human rights leadership program (a national student program), online education offerings, youth engagement, pre- and post-visit learning activities, specialized programming for educators and other professionals, and outreach to schools.

IEWG members are Indigenous people who are experts in diverse educational fields. The spirit and intent of the group is to foster respectful and open dialogue, advice and perspectives, to safely and openly share ideas in a good way, and to collaborate on program development work. IEWG members also serve as liaisons between the Museum and their respective educational communities. The group strives to ensure Indigenous Elders are present at all meetings.

In 2020-21, the IEWG met three times. It reports to the Museum's Manager of Education Programs. All current members reside in Manitoba.

IEWG members as of March 31, 2021



Connie Wyatt Anderson



Jaime Black



Rebecca Chartrand



Jaime Cidro



Mary Courchene



Sherri Denysuik



Helen Robinson-Settee



Ally Stoneypoint



Room **for** everyone.

The Museum strives to be a place where the public can participate in important presentations, discussions, and debates about human rights.



Year in review

Room **for** new possibilities

It was a year like no other. A global pandemic closed down the Museum for a total of six months, while travel restrictions and ongoing health concerns slowed the flow of visitors to a trickle when our doors were open.

But where a door closes, a window of opportunity opens – and a new world of possibilities for human rights education emerged online. As soon as the first pandemic lockdown began in March 2020, the Museum’s digital team leaped into action. Our first recorded virtual tour, called “Stay Home, Stay Safe,” was posted within days, featuring a guide pointing out exhibits and architecture in two of the Museum’s most popular galleries.



The response was amazing. Within two weeks, the 20-minute video received over 400,000 views and was shared 1,000 times, with hundreds of positive comments from around the world. Media attention was also extensive. During April and May, our virtual tours attracted hundreds of stories from local, national and international media outlets ([as far away as the UK and China](#)), including publications like [Forbes magazine](#), the [Toronto Star](#) and CTV British Columbia.

The Museum’s education program team also moved into high gear, turning the virtual tour into a popular classroom resource for teachers by creating five-unit lesson plans for two different age groups.

“It worked because we got it up fast,” said Rhea Yates, the CMHR’s Director of Digital Outreach. “People stuck at home were searching for things to do online with their families. By being responsive, we reached a lot of people who had never heard of us before.”

Within weeks, two more recorded tours were added: one about [the architecture](#) and another that took viewers [up the glowing alabaster ramps](#) into the viewing platform of the Israel Asper Tower of Hope . New web pages called “[Explore the Museum from Home](#)” and “[Learn at Home](#)” were created with activities and resources for the public, teachers, parents and students. A feature called “[Share Your Story](#)” was developed, inviting viewers to send in personal videos about acts of kindness they had seen or carried out as the pandemic began.

But the real story was...stories.

During the previous two years, a major revamp had seen the Museum’s website transformed from a traditional promotional vehicle into a platform for [human rights storytelling](#). The timing proved right for what was to come.



“

People stuck at home were searching for things to do online with their families. By being responsive, we reached a lot of people who had never heard of us before.”

Rhea Yates,
CMHR Director of Digital Outreach

Year in review > Room for new possibilities

When George Floyd was killed by a Minneapolis police officer on May 25, 2020 and Black Lives Matter rallies were organized across Canada and around the world, it sparked heightened interest in the impact of anti-Black racism – including its pervasive and systemic nature in Canada. Many online searches brought people to the CMHR’s website – in particular to stories about [slavery in Canada](#) before Confederation and about [Africville](#), a Black community in Halifax that was destroyed in the 1960s. Together, these two stories accounted for 250,000 page views – an increase of 1,200 per cent and 300 per cent over the previous year for each of the two stories, respectively (and an average dwell time of over seven minutes, refuting previous assumptions that users would not become engaged in long reads online).

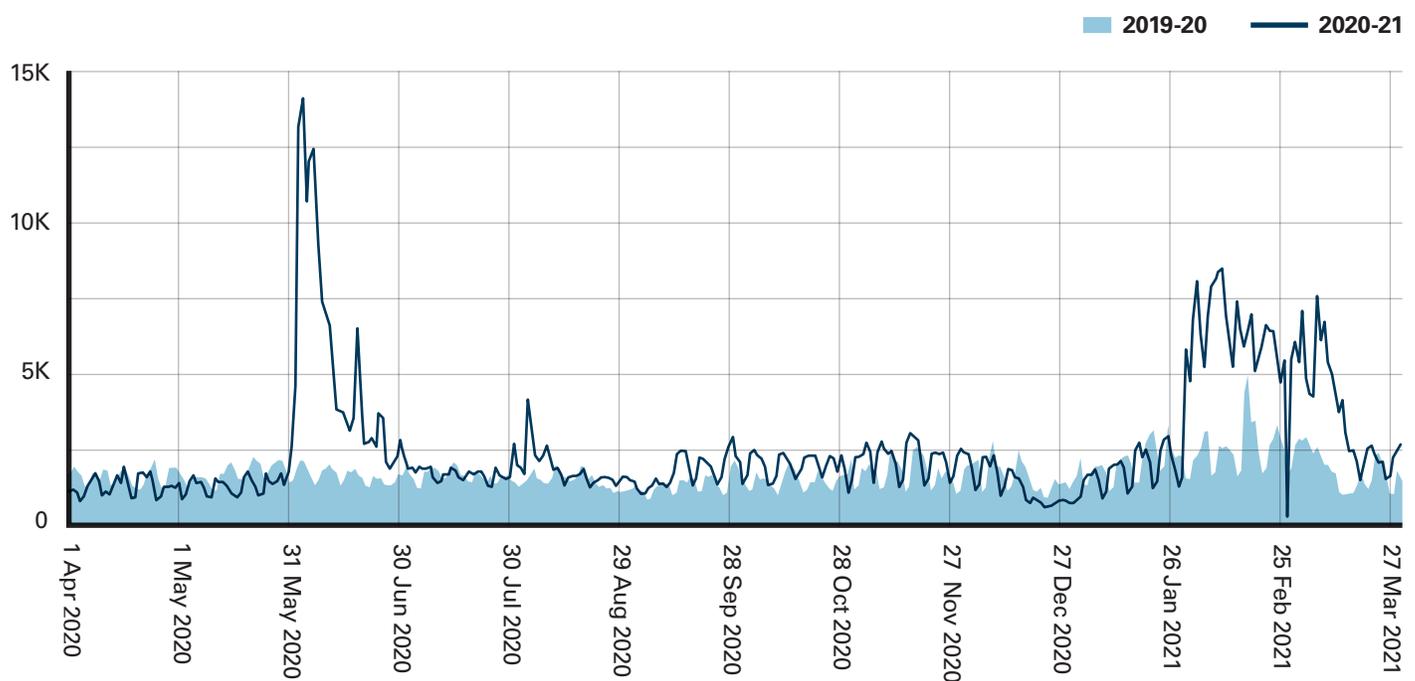
Stories suddenly became the most popular website content – more than making up for the loss of visitors checking the home page for things like hours of operation or onsite exhibitions. In total during 2020-21, 49 per cent of all page views (650,666) were on stories, compared to only 22 per cent (249,000) the previous year.





Website visitors increase by 73 per cent

Bolstered by this interest, the increase in online users was incredible: 805,539 visitors in 2020-21, a 73-per-cent increase from the previous year. The graph below shows the pattern of web use on the English site: a huge bump in late May and early June spurred by issues relevant to the Black Lives Matter and anti-racism discussions, heightened interest in the fall when school began, and another huge jump when virtual field trips resumed in late January 2021.



The website also became a place where the Museum could continue its commitment to support efforts for reconciliation between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people in Canada. We ensured that an [acknowledgement of the genocide](#) against Indigenous Peoples was posted on our site in several places. We created or reposted diverse, original stories about some of the human rights issues relevant to the Indigenous experience in Canada: about [Indigenous nurses](#), veteran [Dick Patrick](#), Métis resistance fighter [Elzéar Goulet](#), the [Witness Blanket](#) artwork, [Indian residential schools](#) and approaches to [reconciliation](#). The original film in one of the Museum’s main exhibits about Indian residential schools was also posted on Facebook.



Dozens of other stories are presented on the site, covering a range of human rights topics from Canada and around the world. Each story ends with a set of “Ask Yourself” questions – which spurred teachers to begin using these pieces as classroom resource material for remote learning during the pandemic.

Demand for virtual field trips explodes

The other remarkable phenomenon of the year was virtual field trips. This innovative learning tool was being piloted prior to the pandemic – testing how classrooms would interact with a guide who took them through the Museum’s galleries in real time using a smart phone, a gimbal (a rotating camera stabilizer arm) and an online platform like Zoom, Microsoft Teams or Google Meet. The idea was to mirror the same experience students would receive in person, including time for questions and discussions.

When schools locked down and remote learning set in, the demand for these field trips exploded – and the Museum’s education and program delivery teams were ready. By the end of March 2021, more than 8,000 students had participated, all at no cost thanks to the generous support of the [Richardson Foundation](#) and [The Asper Foundation](#).

By the middle of January, CMHR virtual field trips were booked solid to the end of the school year, even with some programs operating at double capacity. In total, over 17,000 participants were booked during the 2020-21 school year. Schools in Alberta and Ontario were the biggest participants, greatly expanding the Museum’s geographic reach for human rights education.

“If there’s a silver lining to the lockdowns, it’s that they increased everyone’s comfort levels with online technology – including teachers,” said Lise Pinkos, CMHR Manager of Education Programs. “When we first piloted virtual field trips and went out to education conferences trying to promote them, teachers just didn’t understand. It wasn’t until they were forced into remote learning that the lightbulbs really went on.”



“If there’s a silver lining to the lockdowns, it’s that they increased everyone’s comfort levels with online technology – including teachers...”

Lise Pinkos,
CMHR Manager of
Education Programs

Calgary teacher
Natalie Steeves helped
organize CMHR virtual field

trips for 108 students from four Calgary schools. “Amidst the challenges of teaching and learning in the pandemic, this program was one of the bright spots,” she said. “It was so moving to watch them connect and learn from the guide and from each other – and understand how they could be leaders and take action for human rights. I am still seeing the effects of the virtual field trip in the insights they share and the understanding and empathy they’ve built with each other.”

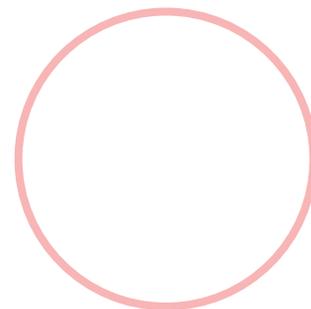


New teacher resources created

Other Museum education initiatives during the pandemic included revamping the teacher guide for an online resource called “[Be an Upstander](#)” to make it relevant for learning at home. This resource incorporates drag-and-drop activities with reading, discussion and projects based on the examples of real-life human rights defenders from around the world. A separate online [toolkit of teacher resources](#) continues to be enhanced and expanded with new CMHR content.

Online lessons for high school classes were also offered, featuring a Museum interpreter presenting a live program called “[Deliberating Charter Rights](#)” about how Canada’s Charter of Rights and Freedoms is interpreted by the courts to address human rights challenges. This was especially useful during times when Museum staff were all working from home.

When staff were able to work from the building, virtual field trips expanded to include new offerings like “Expressing Rights Through Art” and a revamped “Journey to Human Rights” program that now incorporates learnings related to systemic racism and LGBTQ2+ rights (in three versions for different grades). Other virtual programs include “Be an Upstander” (which can be used in association with the online resource) and “Dignity and Rights,” where students learn how “othering” has led to genocide – including against Indigenous people in Canada.



Innovative public programs attract virtual audiences

Innovation also burst into new life on the Museum's public program team, which quickly found ways to offer a series of engaging public events online – attracting increasing numbers of participants as the year progressed. In total, more than 2,000 people took part in CMHR virtual programs during 2020-21.

Public programming is an important way to educate Canadians about human rights and act as a catalyst for positive change. The Museum strives to be a place where the public can participate in important presentations, discussions, and debates about human rights.



In May 2020, virtual film screenings about inequality and empowerment for women and girls were offered for International Museum Day in collaboration with the National Film Board (NFB). This was followed a few days later by the premiere of a live film-concerto digital broadcast called "The Rescue." This presentation of film, music and discussion told the little-known story of Salvadoran Colonel José Arturo Castellanos who, as El Salvador's ambassador to Switzerland, saved over 13,000 Jewish people and others persecuted by the Nazis.

In November, the Museum organized a virtual lecture and public discussion about the human rights impact of artificial intelligence (AI), featuring Dr. Rumman Chowdhury, a leading expert in AI and machine learning. The event was presented as the second annual Simces & Rabkin Family Dialogue on Human Rights and was moderated by Amber Mac, a prominent Canadian tech influencer and journalist who co-hosts an award-winning podcast series called "The AI Effect."

In January, working with the embassies of Sweden, Norway, Denmark and Finland, the Museum presented a virtual panel discussion about human rights issues arising around the world during COVID-19, featuring the ambassadors to Canada of these four Nordic nations. This event was followed a week later by a special online event for International Holocaust Remembrance Day and the 80th anniversary of the sealing of the Warsaw Ghetto, presented in partnership with the Jewish Heritage Centre of Western Canada. It featured a film screening and a discussion with Winnipeg Holocaust survivor Dr. Stephan Carter (Reicher), who was separated from his parents in the Warsaw Ghetto as a teenager and never saw them again.



Photo left: CMHR, Aaron Cohen

The Museum was also proud to partner with the NFB to present three films in French as part of *Rendez-vous de la francophonie*, with a focus on human rights. We also participated in *Nuit Des Idees* in collaboration with the Alliance Française du Manitoba and the Institute française. In January, we worked with the Department of Canadian Heritage to contribute to programming for Winterlude, a coast-to-coast-to-coast virtual celebration of winter.

Building on work that had begun prior to COVID-19, public program and interpretive staff also developed a new way for the public to experience the Museum's galleries – which was especially valuable at a time when public tours were forced to be cancelled.

Gallery “animations” consist of interpreters engaging directly with the visiting public to bring to life specific stories that can be found in the galleries. This work is still under development and Museum staff look forward to continuing this exciting new program in the months and years ahead.

In early 2021, the on-site tour called “[Explore the Galleries](#)” was also moved online for group pre-booking. This fascinating virtual tour involves a guide taking the group through various museum galleries in real time using the same technology as the virtual field trips.



Year in review > Room for new possibilities

An exhibition heads outdoors

Amid lockdowns and health concerns, plans for Museum exhibitions were dramatically revised.

An exhibition developed for the 150th anniversary in 2020 of Manitoba's entry into Confederation was re-imagined as a two-part presentation, with an outdoor component that opened in July 2020. In [Articulate Our Rights](#), young Manitoba artists share their visions for the future of human rights. For the outdoor art exhibition, works by 26 teenagers from across the province were jury-selected from over 100 submissions.

Large photographs of the art were displayed on 13 three-sided structures arranged throughout The Forks – a gathering place where the Red and Assiniboine rivers meet, located adjacent to the Museum in downtown Winnipeg. The indoor version of this exhibition, featuring over 100 artworks, is scheduled to open in the Museum's Level 6 Expressions gallery in summer 2021. *Articulate Our Rights* has been generously supported by PCL Construction, Vickar Automotive Group and Crosier & Kilgour Partners Ltd.

In addition, the opening date for two major exhibitions showcasing art as a means of activism for human rights ([Artivism](#) and [Witness Blanket: Preserving a Legacy](#)) was pushed back to April 2021.



Shining light in the darkness

As Desmond Tutu once said: "Hope is being able to see that there is light despite all of the darkness."

Throughout this difficult year, the Museum looked for opportunities to shine some light – through [inspiring web stories](#), social media posts about hope and resilience, and initiatives designed to support and connect with the community.

On two occasions, the Israel Asper Tower of Hope that glows atop the Museum building was turned blue in support of frontline health-care workers. When we re-opened in June 2020, frontline workers in all occupations were offered free admission in gratitude for their work for others, often putting their own safety at risk.

In December, on the darkest day of the year, the entire Museum and its tower were lit up in glowing colours as a sign of hope and optimism for 2021. The winter solstice marks a change of season and time of renewal that has long been celebrated by Indigenous people. It is a time to reflect on the past and look forward to the "new sun" of the future. Large LED light cannons set up inside the Museum illuminated the 1,300 panes of its glass "cloud" in shifting colours inspired by northern lights and snow. The colourful lights glowed in the darkness every day until the end of January – turning blue in the last few days as another gesture of support for health-care workers.

“

“Hope is being able to see that there is light despite all of the darkness.”

Desmond Tutu

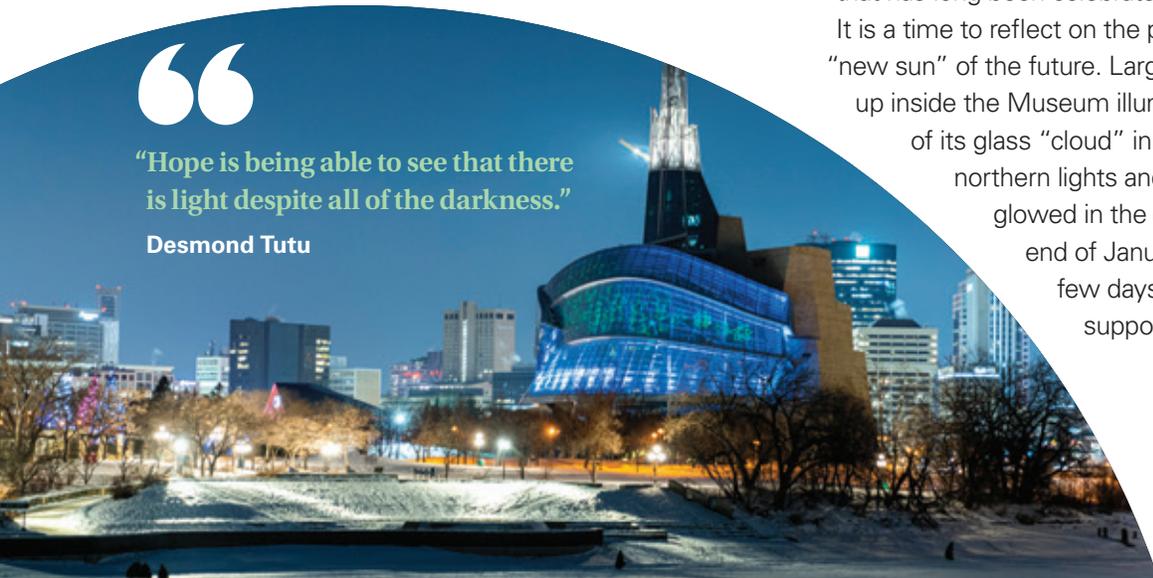


Photo: CMHR, Aaron Cohen

Music and art for humanity

Earlier in December, the Museum welcomed a brass quintet from the Winnipeg Symphony Orchestra (WSO) to gather at a safe social distance beneath the glass cloud of the Stuart Clark Garden of Contemplation. A beautiful rendition of John Lennon’s iconic song, “Imagine,” was played and recorded to share online on the anniversary of Lennon’s death – inviting listeners to imagine for themselves what a better world could look like. This was part of a set of three programs recorded in the Museum by the WSO.

We also welcomed other musical initiatives, including: the Winnipeg Jazz Festival recording local singing star [Kelly Bado](#) as part of a national broadcast; Folklorama recording a performance by Sister Dorothy for International Women’s Day; and an event with performers and speakers recorded for the City of Winnipeg’s Anti-Racism Week in March 2021.

In February, the Museum joined in the spirit of Festival du Voyageur by commissioning three outdoor snow sculptures for its grounds. Passersby could watch the icy artworks take shape as the artists worked, and enjoy the finished products until the snow melted. All three were based on human rights themes, such as environmental protection, peace, hope and love.



Room **for** equity and respect

Sometimes the most important lessons in life are the ones we learn the hard way.

In early June 2020, former and current employees came forward to share their experiences with racism and discrimination in the workplace. Shortly after they spoke out, other staff members shared concerns about exclusion of LGBTQ2+ content from some Museum school tours, which had occurred seven times between 2015 and 2017.

This practice was wrong. It was contrary to everything the Museum stands for. And that is why 2020-21 became a year dominated by efforts to [cultivate positive change](#).

In mid-June 2020, the Museum engaged an external reviewer to examine the extent to which systemic racism and oppression were affecting the organization and its staff, to make immediate findings on an interim basis, and to generate recommendations for remediation and further inquiry. The review was conducted from an anti-racist, anti-colonial, intersectional feminist, trauma-informed perspective.

The reviewer, Laurelle Harris, is a mediator, arbitrator and lawyer with specific expertise in Women's Studies and Black Studies. In this work, she was supported by a multi-disciplinary team with diverse areas of expertise, including Barbara Bruce, an Indigenous consultant and Elder who is president of All My Relations Inc. Bruce is a citizen of the Métis Nation – Michif Otipemisiwak and Two Spirit.

On August 5, the report of the [Phase One review](#), containing 44 recommendations for change was shared with staff and then released publicly. Phase Two of the review process is underway with another report expected in 2021.

When Isha Khan was appointed by the Government of Canada as the Museum's new CEO in August 2020, she expressed her commitment to creating an equitable workplace where everyone is respected and valued. Under her leadership, a [framework strategy](#) was developed through formal and informal consultation with staff, volunteers, community members and donors. The strategy identifies key outcomes to bring us together with the common purpose of creating a respectful and equitable workplace, informed by the report and recommendations of the external review. It was publicly released in November 2020.

In working for change, the Museum acknowledges that systemic racism and discrimination exist in Canada and at the CMHR. We are committed to acting in accordance with the fundamental principle that every person is free and equal in dignity and in rights.

But the new strategy also recognizes that many of the standard approaches to addressing racism and nurturing equity have not always worked well when they have been attempted by other institutions in the past. We need to do things differently, and we need to do it together. There can be no "quick fixes" to these important issues. Our work will be ongoing and evolving and cannot be viewed as a stand-alone project or initiative.



The five core outcomes that guide our efforts are listed below.

1. **Hear and consider diverse perspectives.**
2. **Cultivate a deep understanding of human rights principles.**
3. **Respect and value each other in our workplace.**
4. **Ensure meaningful relationships with our community.**
5. **Demonstrate respect for the lived experiences of others in how we care for and tell their stories.**

Isha has also led a renewed focus on employee and community engagement to support the Museum's work under this new framework. Dozens of meetings have been held with employees and volunteers. Between September 2020 and March 2021, Isha met with staff (one-on-one or in groups) a total of 284 times. Small group meetings were also held among non-managerial employees and a formal staff advisory committee was initiated. Several staff equity councils were also formed.

External consultation has also been extensive. Isha met with 127 community and stakeholder representatives and groups from September to March. Many other meetings were held at other levels of the organization as people reached out to listen, learn and seek guidance for the path ahead.

That path reflects an intersectional approach to systemic change intended to address racism and oppression, colonialism, sexism, heterosexism, homophobia, biphobia, transphobia, ableism and all other forms of discrimination. By the end of 2020-21, many initiatives had been undertaken. Some examples:

A content review began under the guidance of an external expert to identify gaps and improve Black representation in our exhibitions and digital content. Museum staff, academic experts and community members are assessing the Museum's representation of Black human rights history and experiences through an intersectional lens. This process will result in the development and testing of new content and programming, recommendations for content updates and additions, and key performance indicators to ensure that future content development is inclusive and equitable.

Leadership roles and responsibilities are being re-imagined. As part of this, the Museum announced in March 2021 that two new leaders had been hired. Riva Harrison brings 20 years of senior leadership experience and a lifelong commitment to human rights to her role as the new CMHR Vice-President, External Relations and Community Engagement. Most recently, she served on the executive team at Red River College in Winnipeg with a focus on strategic planning and communications.



Riva Harrison

CMHR Vice-President, External Relations and Community Engagement

Year in review > Room for equity and respect

Haran Vijayanathan, who has extensive experience in human rights advocacy and program management with under-represented communities, was selected for the newly created position of Director, Equity and Strategic Initiatives. He will support the Museum's work to create an anti-racist, equitable and inclusive workplace. He most recently worked with inner-city and urban Indigenous communities through Winnipeg's Mount Carmel Clinic.



Haran Vijayanathan
*CMHR Director, Equity and
Strategic Initiatives*

Also, in July 2020, the Museum's Board of Trustees established a [Diversity and Inclusion Committee](#), chaired by trustee Julie Jai. The Committee's role is to ensure the mandate of the Museum to promote human rights and respect for all is fully reflected in its internal operations as well as in its programming.

In addition, the terms of reference for the Board of Trustees and the performance goals for the CEO and the entire executive leadership team have been revised to explicitly identify their responsibility to ensure equity, diversity and inclusion in our workplace.

Staff advocacy has been encouraged and supported. Museum staff have independently created affinity and advocacy groups and are working with management and the executive team to help ensure our collective goals and strategies are anti-racist, anti-oppressive and grounded in our collective experience across the institution.

Hiring practices have been revised, including instituting anonymized review of applicants, improving "equivalent experience" criteria, and reviewing job postings and job descriptions for racism and inherent bias.

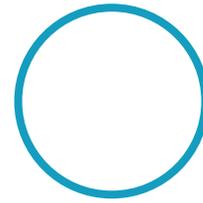


Anti-racism and inherent bias training for

staff is underway and an ongoing program of comprehensive, mandatory education is being developed. Thousands of hours of mandatory training for staff, volunteers, management and Board trustees have already been completed, including:

- Anti-Racism and Lessons from Liberation
- Unconscious Bias – Anti-Black Racism Training
- Workplace Sexual Harassment Training
- Fundamentals of Sexual and Gender Diversity
- Circles for Reconciliation
- Fundamentals of Anti-Oppression / Diversity, Equity, Inclusion
- Trauma Informed Leadership
- Disrupting Unconscious Bias
- Inclusive Language
- Inclusive Leadership
- Designing, Describing and Valuing Jobs
- De-escalating Potentially Violent Situations

The above list includes specialized training to ensure equity in human resources practices and to ensure personal and cultural safety in the workplace. All managers and many non-managerial staff are undertaking specialized training in trauma-informed leadership and toxic workplace dynamics. Visitor-facing staff will be offered conflict management training during 2021.



In addition, staff and management have been creating and participating in a range of formal and peer-organized learning opportunities. These include anti-racism and inherent bias reading and discussion groups, independent self-education using online resources and learning sessions about human rights at all-staff meetings.

Respect for gender diversity is being recognized and supported through review of our communications and web content to identify and remove binary gender assumptions and language. All staff have been encouraged to provide pronouns in Museum communications such as e-mail signatures.

Spaces of cultural safety and support have been designated, where staff can reflect, pray and smudge. Work is in progress to provide additional spaces for ceremony, smudging and recognition of our place on ancestral lands. A ceremonial terrace on Level 2 has long been open for public reflection, prayer and smudging, but we are looking for additional spaces the public can access for smudging purposes. We have also instituted an Elder-in-Residence program with an Indigenous Elder available to staff during designated hours. Elder Robert Greene, originally from Iskwatwizaagegan Independent First Nation in Ontario, became the first Elder-in-Residence to support our staff.

A working group is also drafting a visitor code of conduct to help ensure safety and respect for our visitor-facing staff by setting clear expectations about respectful dialogue and engagement.

An enhanced focus on community engagement is being encouraged. Museum leaders have been meeting formally and informally with employees, contractors, volunteers, external organizations, leaders and advisors to discuss how we can better serve our staff and our community.

The Museum recognizes that the strength of the stories and programs we share is directly related to the active and meaningful participation of the affected communities. We are strengthening our existing relationships and reaching out to make new connections and develop new partnerships.

We are having ongoing discussions and participating in ceremony with Indigenous people, including Elders and organizational leaders. We regularly look to the CMHR's Standing Indigenous Advisory Council and Indigenous Education Working Group for guidance and leadership.

We are actively engaged in discussions with Black people and organizations with the goal of building relationships and informing Museum content and programs. We have been meeting and consulting with LGBTQ2+ organizations about building stronger relationships of accountability and collaboration. This has included engagement with members of the Two Spirit community, who helped us plan a ceremony that was subsequently postponed due to COVID-19.

As we continue on our journey, we acknowledge the courage of every individual who has taken a stand against discrimination in all forms. We also acknowledge the harm that has been done to our staff and the communities that support us. Our work to address systemic discrimination will be thoughtful, deliberate and transparent. We will be guided by our expectations of each other and by our community.

We will find room for everyone in an environment of dignity and respect.



Corporate performance

On March 14, 2020, due to public health risks associated with the COVID-19 pandemic, the CMHR and all national museums of Canada closed their doors to the public.

The CMHR re-opened on June 17, 2020 with significant adaptations, including the closure of all high-touch, interactive exhibits, including touch screens, as directed by the Province of Manitoba. On-site school programs and group tours were suspended. The on-site restaurant, ERA Bistro, also remained closed during the year. Facility rentals were minimal.

Based on the expected reduction in visitor numbers, the Museum decided to reduce its opening hours to five days per week, Tuesday through Saturday, instead of the normal six days per week (seven days in summer). The Museum also discontinued evening operations.

On October 30, 2020, when Manitoba returned to “Code Red” pandemic status, the Museum closed for a second time and did not re-open until February 23, 2021.

The closures and subsequent re-openings with reduced hours, along with ongoing limitations on public gatherings and travel, significantly affected all activities in the Museum – including admissions and visitation, membership sales, facility rentals and catering, restaurant operations, Boutique sales, public and educational programs, and travelling exhibitions.

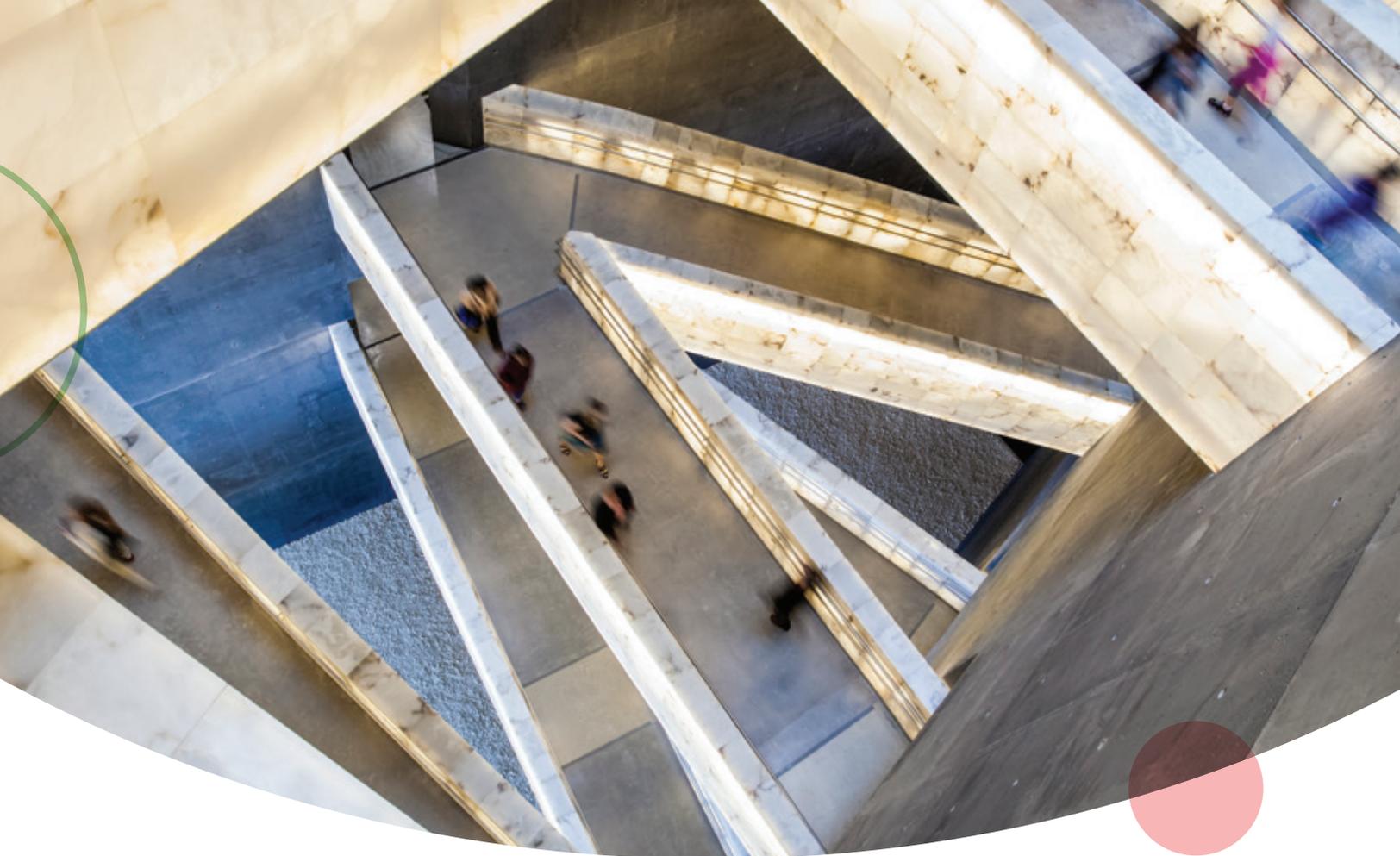
Budgets and targets revised

Because of this highly unusual year, the normal process of setting budgets and corporate performance targets had to be substantially revised. In May 2020, new projections were set at 36,800 for on-site visitors and \$0.5 million for operating revenue. However, reality fell significantly short of those early expectations.

Actual visitors during the year totalled 18,602 – only seven per cent of the 285,020 who had visited the previous year. Operating revenue was \$0.4 million, compared to \$3.3 million in 2019-20. The total operating budget was reduced by \$2 million, from \$29.5 million to \$27.5 million. Non-urgent capital facilities and core exhibit renewal projects were deferred to ensure that all available funds in 2020-21 could be used for basic operations and priority projects.

In light of these challenges, the federal government allocated additional funding to all national museums to help mitigate the impact of these challenges. The CMHR received \$2.2 million in COVID-19 relief funding for 2020-21.

The impact of COVID-19 is expected to persist for some time due to changes in visitor patterns. Travel will take time to return to previous levels, which will have a significant impact on visitation and revenues, as almost 70 per cent of CMHR’s ticketed visitation has been derived from people who live outside Winnipeg. Persistent health concerns will also restrict local visitation and facility rentals in the near-term future.



Dramatic increase in online visitors

A bright spot during the year was online visitation, which became a significant success story during 2020-21. With minimal on-site visitation, the CMHR increased its focus on online engagement through web stories, virtual field trips, virtual group tours, online public programs and other interactive activities. Reflecting these efforts, the Museum's original target of reaching 605,000 website visits (sessions) was retained.

In fact, actual online visits surpassed that target by over 400,000 sessions, hitting 1,037,479 – a 52-per-cent increase over the previous year. The total number of visitors for the year (people who initiated at least one visit/session) was 805,539 – which was a 73-per-cent increase from the year before. Virtual field trips were also in great demand and fully booked for most of the year, most notably from schools in Alberta and Ontario. In total, there were 8,067 participants in CMHR virtual field trips and real-time lessons about human rights.

New educator resources were created for remote learning, which also increased traffic to the website. In addition, heightened public interest in issues surrounding racism sparked by Black Lives Matter campaigns drove thousands of Canadians to the Museum's website to learn more. Public programs also transitioned into the virtual world, attracting more than 2,000 visitors to online lectures, film screenings, performances and panel discussions about diverse aspects of human rights.

While most online programs were offered at no charge (in the case of virtual field trips, thanks to the generous support of the Richardson Foundation and The Asper Foundation) this foundational work may lead to future revenue opportunities.

To view the Museum's 2020-21 financial statements, visit [humanrights.ca](https://www.humanrights.ca).

Room **for** everyone.

We recognize that a long-term approach will be necessary to improving our workplace culture if changes are to be sustained into the future.

A look ahead

All human
beings are
born free
and equal
in dignity
and rights.

Tous les
êtres
humains

A look ahead

Room for optimism

The 2021-22 year promises to be a time of hope and optimism. Although the Museum closed its doors as part of a third Manitoba pandemic lockdown on May 8, 2021, we look forward to eventually welcoming visitors from across the country and around the world once again as vaccinations continue.

However, this is going to take time. Ongoing travel restrictions and health concerns will persist in the short term. Destination Canada, Travel Manitoba and Tourism Winnipeg are projecting a five-year recovery before people start travelling and engaging in cultural and tourism activities like they did before the pandemic began. For the upcoming 2021-22 fiscal year, the Museum is cautiously projecting visitation and earned revenue at about 20 per cent of pre-COVID levels.

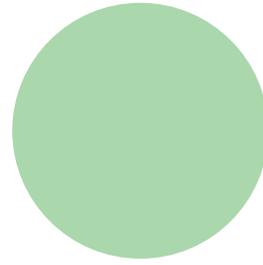
The Museum is grateful to the federal government for proposed COVID-19 relief funding for the upcoming year in recognition of the unique difficulties in operating a national cultural institution during these challenging times.

Exhibitions

While the pandemic has slowed us down, work for human rights education and promotion can never stop for long. Two major new exhibitions called *Artivism* and *Witness Blanket: Preserving a Legacy* opened in the Level 1 Gallery on April 30, 2021 and will run until at least January 16, 2022. They feature powerful works of art that have inspired action for human rights around the world.

The North American premiere of *Artivism* presents works by artists and art collectives from Argentina, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Indonesia, Iraqi Kurdistan and South Africa, along with art and sacred objects from Canada's [National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation](#) at the University of Manitoba. The exhibition – shown only once before at the prestigious Venice Biennale in 2019 – encourages visitors to confront the reality of past atrocities and commit to undertaking actions that create change in their own communities. It was created by the [Auschwitz Institute](#) for the Prevention of Genocide and Mass Atrocities, curated by Kerry Whigham, Francesca Giubilei and Luca Berta. The exhibition is generously supported by the Burns Family Foundation and [Canada Life](#).





[Witness Blanket: Preserving a Legacy](#) is the first public display of this monumental Canadian artwork since the Museum and artist Carey Newman (Hayalthkin'geme) forged a unique and historic agreement in 2019 to become its mutual caretakers. Visitors are introduced to the special conservation needs of this challenging installation, made of more than 800 objects that hold the Stories of Indian residential school survivors from across the country. The 12-metre-long artwork has become a framework for conversations about the genocide of Indigenous peoples in Canada. Its current exhibition is generously supported by major funding from lead partner [TD Ready Commitment](#) and additional support from [The Winnipeg Foundation](#).

Another vibrant exhibition is expected to open in early summer 2021, showcasing the work of over 100 Manitoba youth artists expressing their hopes and visions for the future of human rights. The thought-provoking works in [ARTiculate Our Rights](#) cover a range of issues that impact us all, from Indigenous rights and reconciliation to women's rights, from LGBTQ2+ rights to freedom of expression and environmental rights. Originally envisioned as a project to mark Manitoba's 150th anniversary as a province of Canada, the exhibition made its first appearance in summer 2020 when 26 selected works were presented on large outdoor structures. The indoor version will include visually engaging projections and interactive opportunities.

Work is also underway on an exciting exhibition about the intersection between popular music and human rights, with a focus on ground-breaking moments when music has played a pivotal role in social transformation and political change. Being developed in collaboration with the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame in Cleveland, Ohio, the exhibition will feature iconic artifacts, mixed-media installations, original films and interviews with musicians, immersive environments, physical and digital interactive elements, powerful photographs, and, of course, plenty of music! It is scheduled to open in late 2023.

Another important exhibition on the horizon will tell the story of the purge of thousands of people from Canada's military, RCMP and federal civil service who were deemed "homosexuals" or "sexual deviates" from the 1950s to the 1990s. This purge was one of the longest-running and largest-scale workforce violations of human rights in Canadian history. Being presented in partnership with the LGBT Purge Fund, this exhibition is expected to launch in late 2024, telling the stories of those who were directly impacted, reflecting the diversity of the LGBTQ2+ community (including Indigenous and Two Spirit perspectives) and exploring a legacy of courageous resistance and activism.



A look ahead

Online experiences

A rich and interactive digital experience featuring the *Witness Blanket* is scheduled to be introduced by the end of 2021. Working with artist Carey Newman, the Museum is developing this online visitor journey as a contribution to reconciliation between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people. It is intended to create opportunities for thought and discussion about the ongoing legacy of this genocide and the role of all Canadians to spark positive change.

The *Witness Blanket* is a major artwork made of over 800 objects (Stories) collected from the sites and survivors of Indian residential schools across the country, currently on display in the Museum's Level 1 gallery. Its digital representation will draw upon images, video and sound, showcasing selected Stories from the artwork with linkages to additional learning opportunities. Teachers' guides and resources are also being developed to ensure this initiative can contribute to school curriculum learning requirements.

Additional digital opportunities will continue to be pursued, building on the success of online engagement that greatly expanded during pandemic lockdown periods, as the world turned to remote learning and virtual cultural experiences. Digital storytelling will also continue to expand as a natural complement to onsite exhibitions and public programs. Virtual field trips will continue to be offered to classrooms across Canada, growing the Museum's reach for human rights learning.



A digital learning centre

The Museum will continue to pursue funding for completion of a state-of the art digital centre that not only offers vibrant onsite programs, but streams them into homes, schools and workplaces in urban centres and remote communities across the nation (and around the world). Designed as an inclusive and accessible space for discussion and dialogue about human rights, it will help Canadians learn and grow together. Featuring retractable seating, cutting-edge audio and visual capabilities and interactive digital technology, this space will welcome diverse events and programming with potential to cement the Museum's place as a world leader in human rights education.

Learning for schools

Creating programs and resources that help educators teach students of all ages about human rights is one of the Museum's primary goals. As we move forward, the current slate of [diverse programs](#) for schools will continue to be expanded and enhanced, ensuring they reflect our goals for equity, inclusion, anti-racism and anti-oppression. Virtual field trips and [online resources](#) will also be an ongoing focus for the Museum's education program team, which will welcome the addition of a new Educator-in-Residence during 2021.



Public programs

Throughout the global pandemic, the Museum has turned to innovative virtual solutions for delivering programs to the general public. This will continue in 2021-22, starting with an online panel discussion for Asian Heritage Month in May that explores anti-Asian racism in the workplace during COVID-19. In June, Indigenous History Month and the 25th anniversary of National Indigenous People's Day will be celebrated with a film series and a summer solstice sunrise ceremony and drum journey. In place of onsite summer programs, the Museum's public program team will deliver curated online performances and workshops for families and children. Many of these vibrant shows and activities were pre-recorded inside the Museum in early May. While virtual options will continue into the future as a means of reaching audiences across the country, we also look forward to the eventual return of onsite programs, including our popular "Friday Night Rights" social events. An annual celebration is also planned each year for International Human Rights Day on December 10.

Creating an equitable organization

The second report of an external examination of workplace issues at the CMHR is expected to be released in mid- 2021. The Museum looks forward to using this additional information and recommendations to ensure it is on the right path to building a healthy and equitable museum where everyone feels welcome, included and empowered. This work began immediately following the release of the Phase One report in August 2020 and was first formally articulated in a framework document called "[Creating an equitable museum](#)" in November 2020. These strategies will continue to be pursued in the months and years ahead – including staff training, review of onsite and online exhibitions and stories, revisions to recruitment and retention practices, and changes to the organization's operational and management structure that promote opportunities for fulfilling work free of systemic racism, bias, oppression or discrimination.

We recognize that a long-term approach will be necessary for improving our workplace culture if changes are to be sustained into the future. We also recognize that many other organizations are making efforts to disrupt systemic racism, so the Museum will continue to [share its journey](#) in hopes that others might benefit from learning about our mistakes and our progress.

Room **for** everyone