



Strategic Plan

2024–2029





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Who we are

The Canadian Museum for Human Rights is one of Canada's national museums and the first museum in the world dedicated to the evolution, celebration and future of human rights.

What started as the dream of the late Israel Asper inspired Canadians from coast to coast to coast: to create a place to learn, celebrate, reflect and dialogue about our shared history of human rights in Canada and beyond, and to inspire a brighter future. The Museum's iconic building in the heart of the continent placemarks this sacred and traditional gathering place, and our digital presence and in-person programming—nationally and internationally—expands the connection between the stories we tell and standing against injustice. In Winnipeg, online, and in museums, schools and community spaces across Canada and beyond, we invite people to explore the idea that respect and understanding of human rights can serve as a positive force for change in the world.

Our mandate

Our mandate is to explore human rights in Canada and beyond, to enhance the public's understanding of human rights, promote respect for others, and encourage reflection and dialogue.

Our vision

Our vision is to create a world where everyone values human rights and takes responsibility for promoting respect and dignity for all. This vision sets out the impact we wish to create in the world.



Governed by a Board of Trustees appointed by the Minister of Canadian Heritage, our exceptional team of staff, contractors and volunteers is deeply committed to human rights. We steward and care for the histories and belongings entrusted to us, engage in scholarly research and story development, build temporary, travelling and digital exhibitions, develop and deliver education tours, programs and resources and host events and experiences that impact millions of people each year.

We do our work on the ancestral lands of the Anishinaabeg, Inninewak, Anishinewak, Denesuline and Dakota Oyate; on Treaty 1 Territory. These lands are also the birthplace and homeland of the Red

River Métis. The water in the Museum is sourced from Shoal Lake and we are grateful for the First Nations that have cared for that water since time immemorial. This acknowledgement is the starting point for honouring the land and water that gives us life, embracing our responsibility as truth-tellers and stewards of the collective memory of Canada, acknowledging the ongoing impacts of colonization, and contributing to reconciliation.

As dreams became reality, we spent our first ten years of operation testing out our assumptions and learning more about our role with, and impact on, the people who connect with us. As we embark on our next decade of operations, we reflect on the impact we wish to make in pursuit of our vision.

**We create
transformational
experiences**

What happens here

Grounding our planning in systems-thinking has given us a way of making sense of the complexity of our mandate and subject matter, and prompted us to explore who we are, what we do, and what our success looks like.

Our understanding of our role and impact is now guided by a Theory of Change and a framework called Our Path Forward. It may feel audacious to suggest that a museum could help create a world where everyone values human rights and takes responsibility to promote respect and dignity for all. Yet, as we mapped out our work and how each activity connects with another, we saw we do just that: when we centre relationships, share stories that inspire action, host transformational experiences, model and promote human rights principles, and share what we learn, our actions turn into outcomes—and our outcomes create impact.

Our impact helps make our vision a reality. In each visit, event, program, and click, we can see how we are helping to create a world where everyone values human rights and takes responsibility to promote respect and dignity for all.



We centre relationships

We model and promote human rights principles

We share stories that inspire action

We centre relationships

Relationships—with the water, the land, with our team, our partners, and with all living things—are at the heart of what we do. Our acknowledgment of the connection between these relationships and our mandate is inspired by Indigenous ways of knowing, being and doing, and systems thinking; and it is an intentional act of decolonization.

Our vision is not achieved by the Museum alone, and the work of advancing human rights happens in a diverse ecosystem of builders and visionaries, disruptors and frontline responders, guides and healers. Our role is to be a storyteller, and to inspire through reflection and connection—but we must remain connected to the whole, with appreciation for the roles that others play, and with reciprocity and accountability to everyone who helps us to play our part. We centre relationships as an essential step in making progress towards our vision, enabling us to build a community of deeply engaged ambassadors for the Canadian Museum for Human Rights across Canada and beyond.

We host transformational experiences

Understanding human rights is a journey, we welcome individuals to take a journey that may transform how they see the world around them. We engage people in the kinds of experiences that move them from understanding through to reflection, empathy, empowerment and—always—to act in whatever way is right for them.

We facilitate transformation in the lives of countless individuals and communities by offering interpreted tours and education programs, onsite and online. We rent and offer our space to communities and connect attendees with our human rights content. Our team and the partners we work with to gather and share stories are being transformed together, in our work as a museum.



We share stories that inspire action

Storytelling is a critical way to engage individuals to learn about human rights. We must select and share stories based on the diverse lived experiences of individuals across Canada and beyond, our capacity to tell these stories well, and their potential to inspire and drive action. We share human rights stories that move people to act. We do this by partnering with communities to gather their oral histories for exhibitions and digital stories, by curating more than 40,000 square feet of exhibition space with human rights stories and hosting traveling exhibitions, and by interpreting our content through tours, gallery animations, and education and public programs. We engage tens of thousands of students every year to learn about human rights onsite, in their classrooms and online, and convene thoughtful discussions on human rights issues in Canada and around the world. We engage millions of people on our social media platforms and website to think about human rights.

Our curatorial practice—how we make choices about content and modes of storytelling—is grounded in theory and practice, undertaken with intention and curiosity. Every member of the team takes responsibility for curating transformative experiences. We understand that our choices have impact, and we are accountable for those choices.

We model and promote human rights principles

“Living the work” means embedding human rights practices, norms and laws in every aspect of our work. We must foster systemic change by leveraging our convening potential and actively sharing what we are learning. We are a symbol of hope and human rights, inspiring reflection, dialogue and understanding—but we aspire to be more than symbolic. We know we must be an exemplar of human rights done well, as a museum and a Crown corporation.

We have built an internal culture of equity and accountability and continue to work towards implementing human rights principles in our ways of working, our policies and our relationships. When we get it wrong, and when we excel, we share what we’re learning to help build the sectors we work in.



Where we are going

As we reflect on who we are and what happens here, we are deeply thankful for the work that has been done and the impact that has been generated in pursuit of our mandate and vision in the first decade of the Museum's history.

As we look ahead, we are ready to build on this work and have chosen to focus our activities so that we can:

- Grow our presence as a museum for all Canadians from coast to coast to coast;
- Make an impact that is sustainable today, and for future generations; and
- Build a team that is engaged, effective, representative and grounded in human rights practices.

We also see more clearly that to do this work well, we must develop our internal capabilities in the following areas:

- Values and governance;
- Strategic foresight;
- Team development;
- Curatorial practice;
- Digital transformation; and
- Sustainability.

We also identified that to advance these three strategic priorities, we must focus our efforts on the following strategic objectives:

Strategic priorities	Strategic objectives
<p>National reach</p> <p>We will grow our presence as a museum for all Canadians from coast to coast to coast.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Invest in tools, systems and programs that support all Canadians to have strong relationships with the Museum. 2. Reimagine online and travelling content to broaden our impact and access. 3. Expand programming to reach more Canadians.
<p>Sustainability</p> <p>We will make an impact that is sustainable today, and for future generations.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Align and steward resources to ensure long-term financial health. 5. Reduce environmental impact of our operations and initiatives. 6. Advance digital transformation to support team effectiveness. 7. Develop our strategic foresight and curatorial practice across all Museum areas to ensure aligned, accountable and impactful content choices. 8. Increase visits and revisits to establish deeper, more impactful relationships.
<p>Equity</p> <p>We will build a team that is engaged, effective, representative and grounded in human rights practices.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 9. Develop internal structures to support a culture of respect, inclusion and wellbeing. 10. Build a team that is representative of the community. 11. Establish shared values and model them in all aspects of our work. 12. Promote human rights and equity building across all sectors.

Strategic priorities and objectives

1. We will grow our presence as a museum for all Canadians from coast to coast to coast.

National reach

Since opening in 2014, we have started to establish ourselves locally, nationally and internationally as a top-rated museum, gathering place, tourist attraction, and trusted resource. We have built relationships and partnered with people across the country in exhibition design, development and programming; but we still have work to do.

We must continue to expand our impact by growing and deepening our relationships with people across this land through digital content, school-based programming, travelling exhibitions and a strong national presence.

By 2029, more Canadians will know who we are and what we do each day, here and in their local communities. More Canadians will be curious to build and deepen their relationships with us. People and organizations from a broad range of communities will choose to gather and build relationships with us, and we will have strong relationships and partners across the country who work with us to create transformative experiences that encourage meaningful engagement on human rights.



1. **Invest in tools, systems and programs that support all Canadians to have strong relationships with the Museum.**

- We will **reimagine our member, donor and volunteer model**, creating new approaches that honour all the ways in which people contribute to our vision, and that result in meaningful long-term engagement.
- We will **refresh our brand**, building on ten years of growth to better connect communities to our stories.
- We will review our **social media tools and strategies** to ensure we're using the right approaches for our communities and the stories we share.
- We will create a **new web strategy** that balances storytelling, marketing and visitor experience, and telling the Museum's story.
- We will **open a Digital Learning Centre**, with technology and programming, that enables us to connect with classrooms and communities across the country.

2. **Reimagine online and travelling content to broaden our impact and access.**

- We will **develop** online content in alignment with curriculum, travelling exhibitions, and current human rights trends and issues, so

that our **digital exhibits are timely, relevant and connected** to other Museum programs.

- We will design **travelling exhibitions that are agile and accessible** to non-museum venues, increasing our reach beyond traditional museum spaces.
- We will **develop programming and marketing for travelling exhibitions** to increase profile outside of Manitoba and to create integrated experiences from the gallery to community, and from community to the classroom.

3. **Expand programming to reach more Canadians.**

- We will **deliver more virtual field trips** in more schools across Canada than ever before.
- We will **build a model to expand the Upstander program** to reach students and teachers across the country by successfully implementing Be an Upstander in Alberta.
- We will **expand public programs** in-person and online using panel talks, events, tours and in-gallery animations.
- We will **develop adult education programming** that engages companies and organizations across the country.

We will know we are succeeding because:

- We are a trusted resource for all Canadians, working together with communities to promote human rights. Using a consistent framework, we have developed new ways of delivering content that enables our programs and experiences to reach more Canadians from coast to coast to coast.
- Our membership and donor base has grown and represents communities across the country. Members, donors and volunteers are meaningfully engaged in our work and are deepening their relationships with us year-over-year.
- More Canadians are aware of the Canadian Museum for Human Rights and engage with our digital exhibitions and stories online and in their communities.
- We understand who engages with us online and for what purpose.
- We measure connections as well as the depth of our online relationships.
- Our education programs are established and sustainable in provinces and territories outside Manitoba.

2. We will make an impact that is sustainable today, and for future generations.

Sustainability

Focusing on the sustainability of our work—ensuring we can continue to make an impact for years to come—requires us to pay attention to resources, relationships and how we do our work.

We have improved our budgeting accuracy significantly. And, year-over-year, we look for new ways to operate the Museum efficiently, finding ways to grow revenue while reducing expenses to balance our budget. But we still have work to do.

As we look to the future, we must pace investment in our growth, optimizing our revenue streams and operational effectiveness in the face of changing economic realities, climate change, and a changing social and geo-political landscape. To do this, we need to align our models and practice, ensuring our work is data-informed and that our decisions are guided by what Canadians know and value when it comes to human rights today.

By 2029, we will have built our internal systems and capabilities to measure and sustain our operations and growth. We will have honed the skills required to curate or make choices that enable the greatest impact and will have content and decision-making frameworks to support effective decision making across the Museum. We will have strengthened revenue-generating streams and will better understand our operations and know how we can grow our impact.

4. Align and steward resources to ensure long-term financial health.

- We will implement our **enterprise risk management** framework across the Museum and establish regular monitoring and reporting mechanisms.
- We will conduct an **organizational structure review** to ensure our staffing model is right sized for where we are today, and where we wish to grow.
- We will develop **adult education programs** tailored to meet the learning needs of adult and professional audiences and expand the breadth of our education programs.
- We will strategically grow our revenue generating activities that support an exceptional visitor experience through the **Bistro refresh**.
- We will build a **culture of philanthropy** in the Museum by developing the capacity of all areas of the Museum to support private sector investment in our work.
- We will ensure our building and assets are well maintained and can support the impact we seek to make by implementing technology and facilities **lifecycle maintenance plans**.

5. **Reduce environmental impact of our operations and initiatives.**

- **We will** thoughtfully consider how our decisions impact our planet for future generations as we imagine functional improvements to **the Stuart Clark Garden of Contemplation design** and develop an **outdoor site plan**.

6. **Advance digital transformation to support team effectiveness.**

- **We will** ensure we leverage technology to be as effective as we can by **upgrading Dynamics 365**, our financial management software.
- We will implement a new **Digital Asset Management system** to support our ability to share human rights stories and create transformational experiences in gallery and online in new and effective ways.
- We will implement a **Customer Relations Management** system to help us care for the relationships we develop.
- We will ensure our team is adept at using the **MS 365 Training suite**.

7. **Develop our strategic foresight and curatorial practice across all Museum areas to ensure aligned, accountable and impactful content choices.**

- **We will** establish a **human rights research program** to inform the development of

impactful content that is relevant and responsive to what will be most likely to better the understanding of Canadians about human rights.

- We will continue the shift towards **impact evaluation**, ensuring our data collection, analysis and reporting is at pace with this work.
- We will mature our **budgeting and monitoring practices**, policies and procedures to support greater data analysis and trends identification and reporting.
- We will develop a **theory and plan for galleries** that supports a new way of leveraging our research efforts to develop content on all scales.
- We will create new **training resources** to aid development of tours, animations and visitor experiences.

8. **Increase visits and revisits to establish deeper, more impactful relationships.**

- **We will** implement a **visitor engagement strategy** that drives us to think about all aspects of the visitor experience with the Museum, both onsite and online, to encourage more people to deepen their relationships with the Museum, our activities and our content.
- We will make enhancements driven by **visitor journey mapping exercises** that ensure our visitors have exceptional and innovative experiences.

We will know we are succeeding because:

- We are a vibrant, dynamic partner that makes connections to relevant human rights programming and information. Every event, exhibition and program is designed, using a consistent framework, to facilitate transformation and continued engagement, and we celebrate this kind of transformation in others and in ourselves.
- Our business strategies and decisions reflect best commercial practices, equity, environmental and financial sustainability, and are regularly evaluated and successful.
- We use technology, data and evaluation methods to drive efficiency, collaboration, engagement and reach.
- We have a balanced budget, and our reserves and fundraising contributions are used to fund innovative initiatives and projects that compound impact.
- We foster a culture of giving, engagement and philanthropy to promote human rights.

3. We will build a team that is engaged, effective, representative and grounded in human rights practices.

Equity

We have been working on building a culture of equity in the Museum and recognize that this work requires sustained effort over time. With a lens on equity, we are creating a workplace that our team is proud to engage in, where our values are clear and demonstrated in the smallest and most significant moments, and where every team member feels safe to be their authentic selves. And yet we still have work to do.

As we look ahead, we must remain steadfast in our commitment to equity, inclusion and building a culture of human rights in the Museum. We must ensure there is no roll-back on the advancements we have been driven to make and must ensure that we pursue equity as an outcome and not simply a box to check.

By 2029, we will have deeply embedded our values in our workplace culture, systems and policies. We will be actively engaged in decolonizing our ways of knowing and practices and be modeling systemic change. Our team will be representative of the communities around us and well equipped to deliver our mandate and vision.



9. Develop internal structures to support a culture of respect, inclusion and wellbeing.

- **We will** develop a comprehensive learning and development framework grounded in human rights that supports a culture of continuous learning.
- We will adopt a **systems-thinking approach** that promotes a healthy workplace and a better understanding of Indigenous ways of thinking and knowing.
- We will develop a **wellbeing toolkit** that incorporates a systems-thinking approach to govern the ways in which we work together and hold each other accountable.
- We will mature our **equity council structure** to ensure our team's diversity is valued as one of our key strengths.

10. Build a team that is representative of the community.

- **We will** create a **representative workforce strategy** that supports us to thoughtfully build a strong and diverse team reflective of the communities around us.

11. Establish shared values and model them in all aspects of our work.

- **We will** work together to establish a new **set of values** that reflects the beliefs and aspirations of our team.
- We will create a new **policy framework** to support our decision making at all levels of authority.

12. Promote human rights and equity building across all sectors.

- **We will** seek a **return of Indigenous cultural belongings** to the Museum site and work with Elders to ensure they are cared for in culturally-appropriate ways.
- We will **review our standard contracts** and other ways of doing business to ensure our values, vision and mandate are clearly communicated to all those who we do business with, and that we set expectations for our business partners.

We will know we are succeeding because:

- We are respected around the world for living our values.
- Our team is highly engaged and representative of the community around us.
- We have made meaningful progress in honouring our responsibilities under the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, the Calls to Action from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, and the Calls to Justice of the National Inquiry into MMIWG2S.
- Our work environment is built on systems and processes that reflect our values.
- We demonstrate our shared values in all of the ways we work with each other and people around us.
- We are a continuous learning environment.



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