FUTURE CONCORDIA REPORT

WORKING GROUP "OUTREACH"

PARTICIPANTS AND THEIR BACKGROUND

In this report, we, the OUTREACH working group, summarize the outcomes and findings of six sessions of around two hours held between the Concordians described below:

- Allan Vicaire – *Project Coordinator, Indigenous Directions*
- Anna Ehrhardt – *Director of Administration, District 3 Innovation Hub*
- Carole El Ayoubi – *Assistant Professor Department of Mechanical, Industrial & Aerospace Engineering, Undergraduate Program Director Mechanical and Aerospace*
- David McKenzie – *Founder and Coordinator MBA Community Service Initiative, John Molson School of Business*
- Elisabeth Cramer – *Social Innovation Lead, SHIFT Center*
- Kristina Ramsay – *Alumni Relations Officer, Global Networks*
- Michael Bossert – *Manager Research Innovation and Business Development, Next-Generation Cities Institute*
- Perry Calce – *Coordinator Academic Programs and Curriculum Development, School of Community and Public Affairs*
- Shauna Janssen - *Affiliate Professor, Geography, Planning and Environment Concordia University Research Chair in Performative Urbanism*

We would like to begin by acknowledging that Concordia University is located on unceded Indigenous lands. The Kanien'kehá:ka Nation is recognized as the custodians of the lands and waters on which we gather today. Tiohtiá:ke, commonly known as Montréal, is historically known as a gathering place for many First Nations. Today, it is home to a diverse population of Indigenous and other peoples. We respect the continued connections with the past, present, and future in our ongoing relationships with Indigenous and other peoples within the Montreal community. As members of the Next-Generation University and a working group rethinking the future of "Outreach" activities, we reflected in each session on these historical facts, as well as on Concordia's efforts regarding Anti-Black Racism and society's collective need to fortify resiliency in the context of an ongoing global pandemic.

The workshops and discussions were organized, prepared, and facilitated by Kristina Ramsey and Shauna Jansen, except for the last meeting, as Kristina Ramsey transitioned to another position outside Concordia. During the last workshop, Michael Bossert filled the gap and assisted with facilitation. Due to personal reasons, Shauna Jansen had to withdraw from Future Concordia efforts after this final meeting of the working group.

The facilitators generally did not follow the playbook. Instead, they engaged the insights of group members, integrating the perspectives of those of us have been part of the Concordia community for decades with the objective viewpoints of new Concordians to see questions linked to outreach from varied perspectives. During two meetings, an external facilitator assisted the group in gaining a clearer understanding of our perspectives and the crucial elements of the topic as seen from our respective backgrounds. Throughout the process, no one external to the group was consulted or interviewed, an important context that leaves ample space to continue developing the recommendations elaborated in this report. This report reflects the workshop contents and integrates recommendations from all participants. It is to be understood as the shared product of the group composed by the steering committee.

PROCESS AND APPROACH

The working group met six times for around two hours to develop a shared understanding and vision for the future of "Outreach" activities at Concordia. Within the first three meetings, participants had developed the trust required to candidly discuss the topic of "Outreach" and to collectively approach the scope and extent of the mandate. Each member shared in detail experiences, observations, fears, and hopes connected to the initiative to develop a foundation from which to co-create ideas, a vision, and several missions to tackle (upcoming) identified challenges. We first identified several dimensions from which to approach the topic of outreach.

- Dimensions:
    - internal
    - city-wide
    - regional
    - national
    - international

In addition, indicators were identified, taking into consideration that "Outreach" may in fact be an incomplete descriptor for the university's efforts to engage with its various stakeholder groups. Discussion often centered on notions of "reciprocity" and "bidirectionality". We developed a shared conviction that the future of "Outreach" for Concordia should be re-imagined as a revolving door, with our porosity and accessibility toward actors without just as important as our efforts to reach out from within.

The range of stakeholder groups evoked by individual committee members in their respective understandings of "Outreach" presented a challenge to our committee's cohering around a shared vision and narrative. Outreach efforts for Advancement target local and international alumni. The Cities Institute liases with local and international corporate actors and municipal authorities, while D3 engages entrepreneurs and SHIFT, CSI, and SCPA collaborate with local grassroots community organizers and non-profit groups. Each of these audiences imply different objectives and approaches from which to ground a strategy. Further planning effort may require sub-segmenting university actors according to the stakeholder groups that they engage with. The fact that many of our conversations focused on Concordia's engagement with historically marginalized groups despite the diversity of perspectives that composed the committee is notable and perhaps reflective of the university's general cultural orientation toward community service and engagement.

Several members of the working group expressed the fear that it would be counterproductive to "start from scratch" and that an internal review of existing activities would be a necessary foundation for the development of any strategic orientation. To begin this effort, we worked from an (incomplete, outdated) list of community-oriented initiatives developed by the SHIFT Center during their consultations in 2019. Around 60 internal initiatives were listed (see "Initiatives at Concordia" in the Addendum), each engaging with different very specific community groups, with initiatives scattered across all units. It is immediately evident that Concordia has an established network and is involved in numerous initiatives within its urban surroundings and

context. Even this non-comprehensive list highlights how critical it is to co-create and tailor a wide range of outreach activities. The diverse needs of different groups call for different communication strategies and tailor-made win-win situations based on trust.

Additionally, the list illustrates connections among (single) individuals. There was no doubt that outreach activities are driven primarily by individuals and their relationships and interests, not by units, departments, or the broader institution. Creating a Concordia-wide strategy would then entail a more thorough analysis of existing initiatives to better understand each in its individuality as well as how they complement one another as an aggregate picture. Consequently, stakeholder personas would likely need to be created (a very time-consuming task) based on interviews, experience, and assumptions. These would act as the basis the further (extensive) strategic development process. With that information, it might be possible to co-create a mission statement and rethink internal processes and strategies to share information about existing networks and outreach activities. Due to a shared recognition of the mismatch between the complexity and breadth of work involved in developing an overarching "Outreach" strategy and the relatively short time remaining in the mandate, the team decided to change the approach and develop first ideas that could be considered "low-hanging fruits" and could be organized within a short time. These first ideas, along with a general approach to outreach, are outlined in the next section.

OUTREACH – MOTIVATION AND DRIVERS

An internal mapping exercise provided an explanation of why Concordia is already so successful in creating networks with its environment and entering relationships with various stakeholder groups. Two types of drivers were identified - internal and external.

Internal drivers:

- The mindset to be and define what a Next-Generation University is
- Very catchy 9 Directions that are (at least in parts) atypical for an HEI
- The visible endeavour to bridge silos (e.g. Next-Generation Cities Institutes, City Studio)
- The intention to contribute to the local environment and have an impact on the street (e.g. SHIFT, Community Service Initiative, District 3 Innovation Hub, 4TH SPACE)
- Orientation toward educating future change-makers and catalysts (e.g. Centre for teaching and learning, Institute for co-operative Education)
- Research topics that are connected to the community (e.g. climate change, social innovation, cyber security)

External drivers:

- The "Grand Challenges" of our times, UN Sustainable Development Goals, and the "Decade of Action" and associated tasks for HEI
- The responsibility to educate the next generations of decision-makers and to create/define new job profiles
- The need to shape the post-pandemic recovery & reality

Regarding the impact and the amount of influential and visible activities, all workshop participants agreed that Concordia already performs exceptionally well. Yet, it became apparent that there is a need to understand the common ground, wishes, and (latent) needs of stakeholder groups and initiatives to co-create a shared vision and several missions more deeply. A well-thought-out and well-planned approach is needed to get closer to the given goal. Furthermore, it will be necessary to include more perspectives and persons who have outreach as their primary responsibility in their daily routines. Evidently, this working group's activities overlap and are interdependent with those of the other four groups. Furthermore, there is a significant potential for aligning activities with other ongoing initiatives at Concordia, e.g. Office of Community Engagement, Innovators Club, Anti-Black Racism Initiative, Indigenous Directions, Concordia's Campus as a Living Lab, Inter-University Accelerator etc.

Bringing all those "loose" ends together might take some time. Nevertheless, there is potential to map out all of the players and initiate activities to identify common ground, facilitate co-creation, and inform effective, focused, and tailored mission development for key stakeholders.

OUTLOOK AND FIRST RECOMMENDATIONS

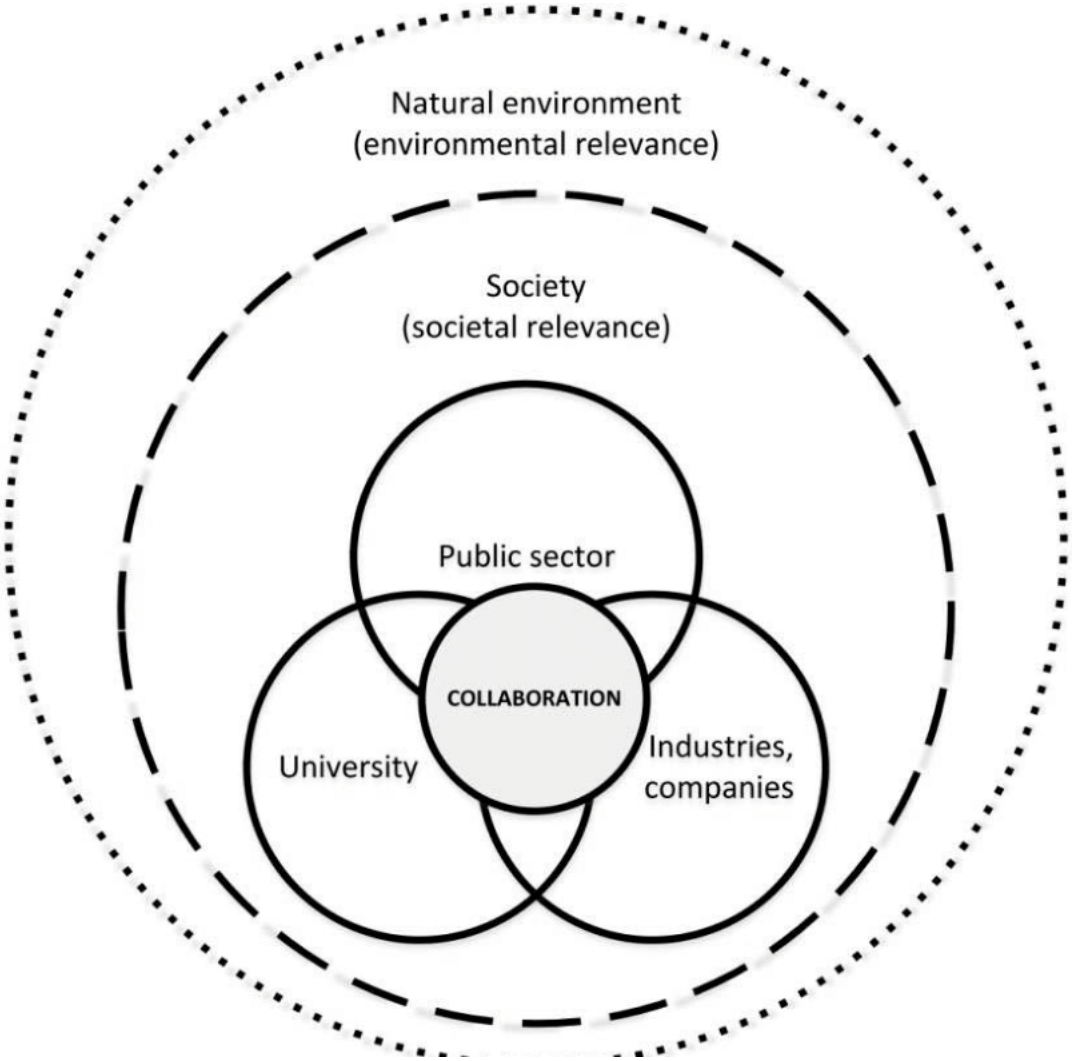
It became clear during our time together that the topic of "Outreach" is very broad and multi-faceted. Strategic development requires further discussion with a larger group of key personnel. Given the relatively short timeframe and the change in co-chairs, and the decision not to use the playbook to guide the process, the groups identified the following initial recommendations:

- Develop Concordia's DNA further and co-create a Vision for Outreach focusing on the next generations of urban thought leaders.
- Prepare strategies for 5, 10, and 15 years, taking into consideration the different levels and dimensions.
- Identify core pathways for clusters/ groups/ units.
- Better incentivize community-led research in faculty hiring, tenure, and promotion pathways
- Re-balance and reconcile individual and institutional-level engagements
- Ensure cross-initiative discourse
- Develop a community engagement framework according to a codex that is based on the DNA and vision of Concordia to attract, engage, and, most important, build and maintain trust. In addition, this framework needs to include Indigenization and EDI principles that support the Concordia community in developing future programming.
- Set up a board/ committee continuously dealing with/ overseeing Concordia's future and reevaluation processes, values, and strategies to maintain a high level of qualitative outreach initiatives and events.
- Create a regular forum for all the faculties to showcase their outreach activities, programs, courses, etc. Representatives could meet, share, learn, develop common ground, develop mechanisms to enable ease of meeting, sharing, learning, etc.
- Open an alumni house to bring people and ideas together.
- Change student/ staff/ faculty recruitment processes according to the "Vision of Outreach" (and the insights the other working groups highlighted)
- Establish strong connections with childcare providers and schools to learn about the next generation and share resources with them to increase recruitment and bonding.
- Intensify activities to recruit international students, staff, and faculty
- Establish specific inter-/ transdisciplinary Summer Camps/ Schools
- Offer resources (i.e. physical space) for collaboration and facilitation to community groups, the municipality, industry, and academia.
- Setup mobile satellite spaces for workshops in the city with under-represented populations and provide dedicated spaces that serve as a resource for outreach activities.

Furthermore, the working group recommends continuing our collaboration throughout the summer and using two or three more intensive sessions or even a facilitated hackathon with an extended group to analyze the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats of ongoing activities/ initiatives. Based on those, it will be possible to co-create a vision and several mission statements to deliver more comprehensive and substantial recommendations for the given mandate. Michael Bossert, Anna Waclawek, Anna Ehrhardt, Elisabeth Cramer mentioned already they would be willing to co-lead the process. Additional persons will be invited to have voices from community groups/ citizens, municipality/ government, industry, and academia.

ADDENDUM

Quintuple helix model



Sources:

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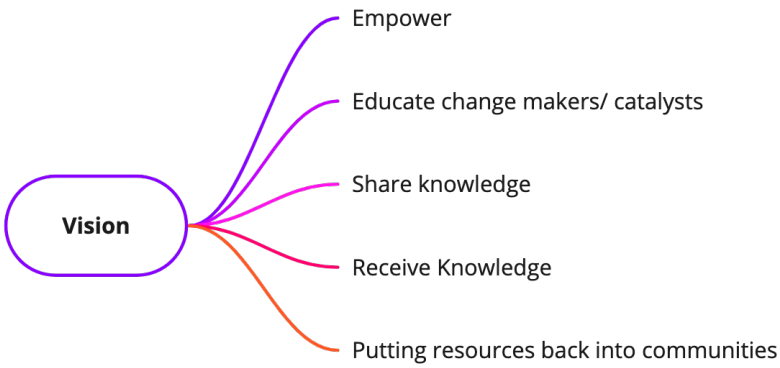
List of SHIFT Center

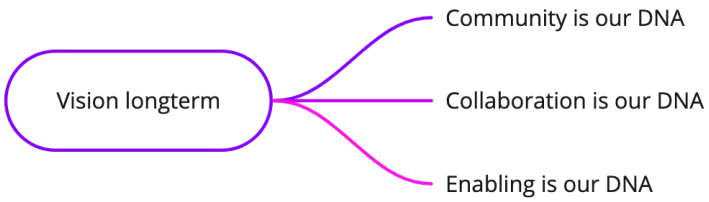
Group	Category
Curating and Public Scholarship Lab	research
Quebec Public Interest Research Group (QPIRG)	Student-driven
Engineers without borders (EWB)	Student-driven
Women in engineering (WIEC)	Student-driven
ENACTUS	Student-driven
PERFORM	research
Centre for Arts in Human Development	research
Critical Disability Studies Working Group	research
Collaboratoire	research
Centre for Oral History and Digital Storytelling (COHDS)	research
Batiment 7	Other
MBA Community Service Initiative (CSI)	exp learning
D3 Social Innovation Track	exp learning
EngAGE	research
Someone Project	research
4th Space	Other
Art Hives	research
Ageing + Communication + Technologies (ACT)	research
Loyola College for Sustainability and Diversity Internship Program	exp learning
Sustainability plan	Other
Indigenous women in prison social change research	research
Community Empowerment Education Development (CEED)	Student-driven
Institute for Community Entrepreneurship Development (ICED)	research
First Voices Week	Student-driven
Waste Not Want Not (WNWN)	Student-driven
DevBloc (Refugee Centre)	Student-driven
Zero Waste Concordia	Student-driven
FutureReady	exp learning
Social Justice Centre	research
Atelier Mobile Montreal	Student-driven
U Lab	exp learning
Spark!	exp learning
Concordia Institute of Water, Energy and Sustainable Systems	research
"Big Data Analytics for Smart City Infrastructure" Course	exp learning
Sustainability Action Fund (SAF)	Student-driven
Institute for Urban Futures	research
Indigenous Futures (Milieux)	Research
Nunalijjuaq project	Research
Concordia Food Coalition	Student-driven
Dish Project	Student-driven
CUCCR	Other
INSTEP	Exp Learning
Cities Cluster	Research
HOJO	Student-driven
The Hive	student-driven
Centre for Gender Advocacy	student-driven
Queer Concordia	student-driven
Frigo Vert	student-driven
People's Potato	student-driven
Coop Bookstore	student-driven
Concordia Greenhouse	student-driven
CUTV	student-driven
Concordia Student Union	student-driven
Enable Montreal	Other
University of the Streets Cafe	Other
StartUP Nations	Other
CHNGR	Exp Learning
City Studio	Exp Learning
Sexual Assault Resource Centre	Other
Next-Generation Cities Institute	Research
Applied AI Institute	Research

MIRO frames

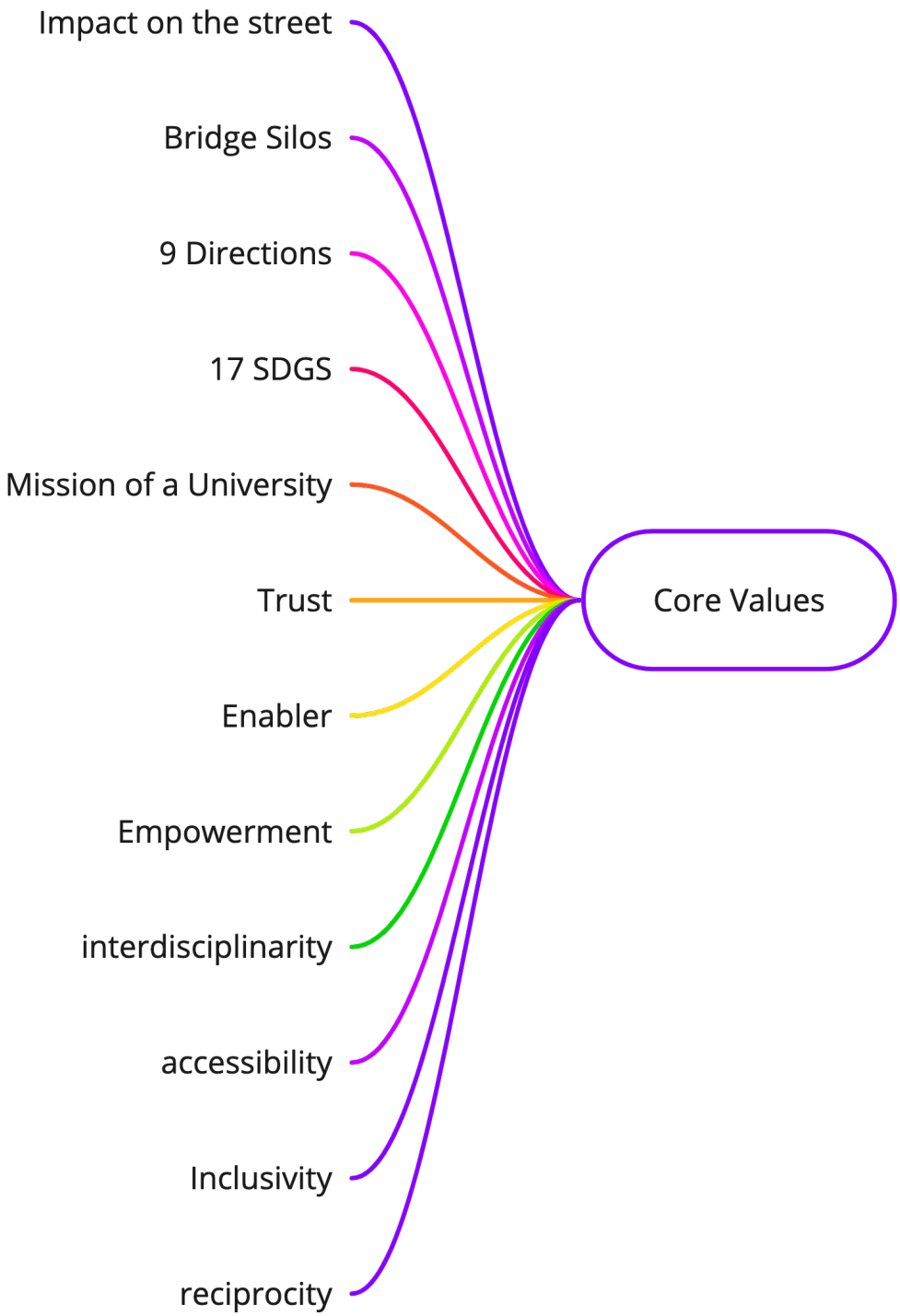
Mission Statement (VALUES)
Accessible education
Leadership
9 Directions
Connecting
Internal adjustments
Communication
Come in/ share
Exchange of information
Sharing expertise
External adjustments
Invitation for collaboration
Improve connectivity intern and extern
building bridges
reciprocity
Virtual
pandemic changes geographic definition of Concordia community
putting resources back into communities
amplifying the outreach that already exists at Concordia
Hybrid working
how to build community online
Offering Spaces to co-create
Chances to communicate worldwide
Meeting persons as new quality
Rethink the use of campus as testbed
Serendipity
collaboration
inviting in
partnerships
"inviting in" and public impact

Words, sentences, phrases that you think should be mentioned in a Vision





Values of OUTREACH



What are your ideas?

Create a showcase / forum for all the faculties to showcase their outreach activities, programs, courses, etc.
Representatives could meet, share, learn, develop common ground, develop mechanisms to enable ease of meeting, sharing, learning, etc.

Develop a community engagement framework that represents the values that have been shared within this committee and includes Indigenization and EDI principles that support the Concordia community in developing future programming.

1. Better incentivize community-led research across hiring, promotion, and tenure processes
2. Develop and strengthen pathways to higher ed credentials designed for/ relevant to marginalized groups

Pilot-university - have a university within the university.
Implement a "agile" mirror of CU (metaverse version of CU :)

What are your ideas?

Have 5-yearS-old engaged in CU activities. Implement more summer camps with eyes on designing programs for their future.

1.have mobile satellite spaces for art workshops in the city with under-represented populations (MIT Fab Lab model?)
2. have dedicated space at CU that serves as resource for outreach activities and makes visible networks

BOLD IDEAS: 1. create a central outreach office in Concordia : as the first point of contact with community, and to bring more visibility to all outreach activities happening, and get extra support.
2. change student recruitment process
....
3. give students credits? recognition? for participating in community engament and other outreach activities.
FIRST STEP: I don't know! Be part of this committee? :)

open an alumni house to bring ppl & ideas together. A sense of belonging and to facilitate programming

Set up a board/ committee dealing with Concordia's future that meets continuously and revises milestones' goals and collaborates with other Universities and the city (all stakeholders)