

Live Work Well Research Centre

Strategic Plan 2023–27



From the Director

As the Live Work Well Research Centre (LWWRC) embarks on a new strategic plan for 2023–27, it is important to acknowledge that this plan is authored by many. While I may be writing this welcome message, it is a collective effort that shapes our vision for the next five years.

Back in the fall of 2017, when I arrived new to Guelph, I went on a listening tour. I spent hours listening to those deeply connected to the Centre, and those who wished to be. They talked about their work and the ways that it intersected, informed, and affected diverse families, work, and well-being.

The main theme running through these conversations was consistent: to understand the diverse forms of families, work, and well-being, we need to begin from the margins. Since those conversations, I have had the privilege of working with our colleagues and partners to rename and rebrand from the Centre for Families, Work and Well-Being to the Live Work Well Research Centre in November 2018.

We established five intersecting Research Clusters: “All My Relations” Indigenous Ways of Knowing; Disabilities, Access, and Inclusion; Displacements, Emergence, and Change; Reimagining Care (formerly Integrating Care and Livelihoods); and Sexual and Gender Diversity. The work of each Cluster examines the unique and diverse intersections between their respective themes and the relationships among families, work, and well-being.

Our vision, work, and values that have guided us over the past five years resulted from collaboration among Cluster Leads and Co-Leads, community and academic partners, students and early career researchers, and Centre staff and colleagues. As we move into the next five years together, we took the opportunity to reflect on what we’ve learned and experienced together since 2017, and we applied these learnings to recommit and revise our strategic plan.

Over the past months, we have learned about many ideas and dreams of those connected to the Centre. Together, we revised this strategic plan reflecting the needs and aspirations of our communities. So let us embrace this collective wisdom. Let us be guided by a commitment to inclusivity, diversity, and understanding the complexity of families, work, and well-being as we move forward and create positive change for the future.

Deborah Stienstra

Director, Live Work Well Research Centre

Our Proud History

The Centre for Families, Work and Well-Being was founded in 1998 as an educational centre to respond to challenges and changes in family patterns, paid work, and broad economic, political, and social structures. Its founding mission was to direct research and promote family and individual well-being, responsive workplaces, and sustainable communities. The Centre created a space to bring together faculty, graduate students, and undergraduate students to engage in policy analysis, research, knowledge mobilization, and best-practices development.

Over its 20-year history, the Centre has led and collaborated on significant projects that influenced policy and programs, motivated workplaces and communities to adapt to the changing needs of individuals and families, fostered interdisciplinary research, and provided new ways of learning for students and communities. With an emphasis on policy and practices, the Centre looked beyond work–life balance and addressed the challenges of family diversity with paid and unpaid caregiving, father involvement, precarious work, and the effects of rural locations on economic and social livelihoods.

We celebrate the Centre’s many local, national, and international achievements as well as the researchers, students, and partners who made them happen. Many of the key publications and a [more detailed history](#) are available on our website.



How We Got Here

In March 2023, the Live Work Well Research Centre embarked on renewing our strategic plan for the next five years. We invited our partners and collaborators to join us in discussions over two sessions to reflect, discuss, recommit, and reimagine the Centre's vision, work, values, and goals for 2023–27.

Each session focused on different sets of discussion topics. The sessions were held in a hybrid format, with options to attend either in-person or virtually. We also invited feedback and comments by email.

Session 1 focused on

- Revisiting the Centre's vision, work, values, and goals from our 2017–22 Strategic Plan
- Reflecting on where we are today and how we got here, involving discussions on our successes, challenges, opportunities, and areas for growth

Session 2 focused on

- Identifying where we want to go over the next five years
- Outlining the actions, knowledge, and resources we will need to achieve our goals

Session 1 and Session 2 surveys were provided for participants to provide written feedback or comments, whether or not they were able to attend the session(s).

Seventeen participants attended across both sessions. Following the two meetings, LWWRC staff compiled summary notes from the discussion to incorporate into the revised strategic plan. A copy of the revised strategic plan was drafted and sent to participants and other key contacts for feedback.



Vision, Work, and Values

Our Vision:

Through our research and Centre activities, we connect with and cultivate communities to allow diverse families and kin, lives and livelihoods, and living environments to flourish.

Our Work:

Anticipating, learning, and being responsive to the changing needs of diverse families and kin, lives and livelihoods, and living environments through research, teaching, and accessible knowledge sharing, including policy-relevant and community-engaged activities.

Our Values:

In addition to the values identified in the [2017 College of Social and Applied Human Sciences \(CSAHS\) Strategic Plan](#), the Centre values:

- Recognizing the persistent and unequal effects of colonization on Indigenous peoples and all others
- Pursuing reconciliation and decolonization through our work
- Engaging in research that centres individual lives and communities
- Centering care and acknowledging our care responsibilities and care needs in the work we do
- Responding to the care needs and diverse responsibilities of our members and ourselves drawing on feminist, Indigenous, disabled, queer, critical race, intersectional, and community approaches
- Situating our disciplinary and interdisciplinary research within these approaches
- Modelling and strengthening equitable, respectful, and reciprocal relationships near and far
- Advancing opportunities for students and interested communities to grow, share, and collaborate
- Supporting the well-being of our members
- Reflecting on where we have been and where we want to go together
- Celebrating our collective successes

How we work:

Research Clusters

Beginning from the margins, our research is focused on five intersecting Research Clusters, with each Cluster exploring complex themes and the ways they influence work, family, and well-being in all their diverse forms: “All My Relations” Indigenous Ways of Knowing; Disabilities, Access, and Inclusion; Displacements, Emergence, and Change; Reimagining Care; and Sexual and Gender Diversity.



When we explore research within and across each Cluster and beyond, we can better understand the effects on diverse families and individual well-being, changes in work and livelihoods, factors that shape work and family relationships, and needed policy changes and community actions.

Research Cluster Leads and Co-Leads are appointed by the Director in consultation with the Dean and are responsible for the functioning and viability of their respective Research Cluster. They are also responsible for reviewing Centre goals, activities, budgets, and the annual report, and contributing to the strategic planning and visioning work of the Centre.



[Learn more about Research Cluster work](#)

Director

The Director, appointed by the Dean of CSAHS, in addition to providing intellectual direction and support to many research activities, is responsible for maintaining and supporting a vibrant, inclusive, and supportive culture where opportunities for personal and professional growth are actively encouraged through mentorship, knowledge sharing, community engagement, and other ways of discovery and learning.

Research and Knowledge Mobilization Manager (RKMbM)

The RKMbM is a staff position reporting to the Director. They provide leadership and support for day-to-day activities by initiating, developing, managing, and supporting the research and knowledge mobilization efforts of the Centre, its researchers, and its partners.

University and Community Partners

The Centre provides a vibrant atmosphere of learning and sharing, offering opportunities for faculty, staff, students, and community partners to participate in Centre planning and activities. The Centre's offices are on the University of Guelph campus in the MacKinnon Building.

Goals and Actions

The Centre has five key priorities associated with goals and measurable actions, which will guide our activities for 2023–27 and ensure links and collaboration with other parts of CSAHS, the University, and our broader communities.

PRIORITY	GOAL	ACTIONS
<p>Research Activities</p>	<p>Support Cluster and cross-Cluster research activities in line with our Vision and Values.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cluster Leads will ensure the vibrancy and functioning of their respective Cluster and work with other Clusters in cross-Cluster activities; • The Centre will provide resources and support for the five intersecting Research Clusters; • The Centre will bring Clusters together annually to imagine, reflect, prioritize, and allocate support for research activities; • The Centre will amplify these activities through knowledge mobilization, grant administration, and coordination, in consultation with the CSAHS and University research offices; • The Centre will initiate Centre-wide activities where appropriate.



PRIORITY	GOAL	ACTIONS
<p>Student Engagement and Development</p>	<p>Create and connect with opportunities for students to develop research and collaboration skills, gain experience in community-engaged practices, support and learn from peers, and engage in Centre activities, in collaboration with institutional and community partners.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Centre will facilitate and support opportunities for graduate and undergraduate students to engage in and contribute to Centre and Research Cluster work; • Students will connect and network with other students to incubate their ideas, share their strategies, and provide support and feedback; • The Centre will explore ways to recognize and celebrate student contributions to Centre and Cluster work through monetary and non-monetary means (e.g., shared GRA positions with other CSAHS units, scholarly opportunities, and recognitions); • The Centre and Clusters will encourage students to present and share research at Centre events or through the Centre's website and social media.
<p>Community Engagement</p>	<p>Demonstrate good practices in critical and justice-oriented community engagement.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Centre and Clusters will pursue local, national, and international partnerships that model and strengthen equitable, respectful, and reciprocal relationships; • The Centre and Clusters will create reciprocal and co-learning opportunities and events to reinforce and learn from the existing strengths and skills of community partners and researchers; • The Centre and Clusters will collaborate on and co-create projects with partners in order to ensure partner benefits (as defined by partners); • The Centre and Clusters will establish and strengthen relationships with community partners through Centre-initiated and Cluster-led events.

PRIORITY	GOAL	ACTIONS
<p>Communities of Practice</p>	<p>Convene and connect with communities of practice among members of the Centre’s community including faculty, students, and community partners to extend our circle of knowledge across a wide spectrum of disciplines as well as scholarly and lived experiences.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Centre will collaborate with the CSAHS and University research offices that offer opportunities for students and researchers to build learning networks, workshop early ideas, and learn grant-development and management skills; • The Centre will seek opportunities to establish specific communities of practice to facilitate interacting and learning together on a regular basis.
<p>Knowledge Mobilization</p>	<p>Share knowledge from current and past activities widely, in multiple and accessible formats, reaching diverse audiences successfully.</p>	<p>The Centre will build and implement a renewed knowledge mobilization plan and evaluation components, including:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Maintaining an accessible website, featuring past and present research work as well as resources for those inside and outside the University; 2. Maintaining a social media presence to support the work of the Centre, its partners, and community members; 3. Ensuring the Centre is following best and promising practices and continues to mobilize knowledge in innovative and accessible ways; 4. Developing and disseminating KMb products that draw upon and highlight Centre and Cluster research; 5. Hosting and providing support for Centre-initiated and Cluster-supporting events and workshops; 6. Regularly assessing our relationships and evaluating the effectiveness of our knowledge mobilization strategies with partners inside and outside the university.

How Will We Get There?

The Live Work Well Research Centre's Strategic Plan gives us clear goals and actions for the next five years and will guide our work planning and hosting Centre activities and initiatives.

We will meet annually to review the goals and actions identified in the Strategic Plan in order to document progress/accomplishments for the year as well as next steps. This will provide us with opportunities to reflect on what we have achieved and what more we aim to accomplish. We will share information about our progress on our LWWRC website and in our newsletter.

Through our shared commitment to this Strategic Plan and our work, we will achieve our vision by following our values and our five strategic priorities.

How Will We Get There?





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RESEARCH CENTRE

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