



STRENGTHENING CANADIAN DEMOCRACY

**A Pan-Canadian Proposal to
Strengthen Canada's Associational
and Representational Democracy**

SFU

MORRIS J. WOSK
CENTRE FOR DIALOGUE

26 September 2017



TABLE OF CONTENTS

| | |
|---|----|
| INTRODUCTION | 3 |
| 1.0 RATIONALE | 4 |
| 2.0 WHO ARE THE ACTORS SHAPING OUR DEMOCRACY IN CANADA? | 7 |
| 3.0 GOALS & OBJECTIVES | 9 |
| 4.0 ACTIVITIES | 10 |
| 4.1 PHASE I – CO-DESIGN AND DEVELOPMENT | 10 |
| 4.2 PHASE II – DEVELOP INFRASTRUCTURE TO SUPPORT COLLABORATION | 10 |
| 4.2.1 Convene a Dialogue of Potential Partners & Collaborators | 10 |
| 4.2.2 Create Advisory Committee for Design, Implementation & Evaluation | 10 |
| 4.2.3 Create an Advisory Committee for Academic Research | 10 |
| 4.2.4 Development of Multimodal On-line Communication Platform | 11 |
| 4.2.5 Build Public Outreach – A Commitment to Diversity and Pluralism | 11 |
| 4.3 PHASE III – IMPLEMENTATION | 12 |
| 4.3.1 Innovative Capacity Building for Democracy Through Collaborative Projects | 12 |
| 4.3.2 Youth Campaign | 13 |
| 4.3.3 Post-Secondary Institution Campaign | 13 |
| 4.3.4 Engaging Academic Research | 14 |
| 4.3.5 Engaging Media on Democracy in Canada | 14 |
| 4.3.6 Engagement of Indigenous Peoples | 14 |
| 4.4 PHASE IV – EVALUATION | 14 |
| 5.0 GOVERNANCE AND IMPLEMENTATION | 16 |

REVITALIZING OUR DEMOCRACY

CONCEPT PAPER – SEPTEMBER 26, 2017

“Democracy is not just a question of having a vote. It consists of strengthening each citizen’s possibility and capacity to participate in the deliberations involved in life in society.”

– Fernando Cardoso, President of Brazil 1995-2002

INTRODUCTION

Revitalizing our Democracy is a pan-Canadian multi-sector collaboration of individuals and organizations, including leading scholars, indigenous, government, private sector, and civil society leaders, foundations, retired parliamentarians, diversity advocates, and engagement practitioners concerned with the health and vitality of Canada’s democracy.

The aim of Revitalizing our Democracy is to create a five year, focused collaborative program designed to strengthen the pillars of Canada’s democratic ecosystem by addressing the underlying symptoms that have made our democracy vulnerable.

The overarching vision of the initiative is to spur innovation in the creation, development, and implementation of citizen participation and engagement methods that work to recognize and reinforce Canada’s democratic assets.

Revitalizing our Democracy will:

- Develop a multi-sector collaborative program with partners that recognizes the urgency in acting now to address the underlying symptoms of democratic disengagement and fragmentation in Canada;
- Encourage and support the creation, development, and implementation of innovative capacity building projects

and techniques designed to strengthen associational and representative democratic institutions.

- Build a body of applied research to identify citizenship participation and engagement techniques that work most effectively, why they work, and the context(s) in which they can have the greatest impact.
- Build a body of academic research to identify key challenges facing Canadian democracy and solutions to address them.
- Build upon and enhance, rather than duplicate, the exceptional work of a multiplicity of actors and practitioners - existing institutions and organizations, affinity groups, and individuals who strive daily to create an inclusive and healthy democracy;
- Recognize the evolving complexity of media and information technology and harness it’s potential to build rather than polarize and fragment our communities;
- Reflect and embrace the diversity of Canadian society in the design, development and implementation of the program;
- Focus on practical solutions that are future-oriented, compelling, and effective.

1.0 RATIONALE

WHY DO WE NEED AN INITIATIVE TO REVITALIZE CANADIAN DEMOCRACY?

Key assets of Canadian democracy need to be supported and strengthened continually in order to remain relevant. While not directly under attack, key democratic institutions (e.g. civil service, judiciary, Parliament, media, civil society, etc.) are being slowly weakened by a number of forces both internal and external to Canada:

1. Democracies rely on strong human rights legislation to protect their citizens, yet racist and authoritarian "populist" movements are on the rise in western democratic nations.

Canada, the United States, and Europe are experiencing upsurges in racist and authoritarian discourse, often nourished by political leaders seeking to address local constituencies who are uncomfortable with growing cultural diversity fed by immigration, fearful of religious extremism with its terror-related incidents in their communities, and frustrated by economic dislocation brought on by globalization. This provides fodder for marginal elements in society (e.g. white nationalists, neo-Nazis, and other alt-right and alt-left groups) ready to exploit sensitivities and push for radical policy alternatives often with violent repercussions. The result is a general social malaise that weakens bonds between people living in democratic societies, which are replaced by an "us vs. them" dynamic where no consensus is difficult to achieve and where threats to the social fabric become commonplace or normalized.

2. Greater numbers of Canadians feel like they are falling behind economically and feel like the political system isn't serving them.

Economic globalization, spurred on by technological advancements, has significantly altered the distribution of labour and incomes in Canada, with many Canadians facing economic displacement, retraining requirements, or simply longer periods of un- and under-employment. Growing inequality and a shrinking of the middle class feeds a "rich get richer, poor get poorer" narrative that poses unique policy challenges for governments. As Canadians struggle to maintain their standard of living, frustration turns

to pessimism that governments are unable to address declining economic circumstances of the majority.

3. Our perceptions of ourselves as a democratic nation are evolving

Among the defining characteristics of a nation state are its people and its territory. With globalization and the increase in migration, our notions of nation states are changing. While Canada may have a clear territorial identity over which it exercises its control, the same may not be of its people. Canadian governments are increasingly challenged to manage a population who have multiple alliances, who are transnational in their businesses and their connections, and who are pluralistic in their world view. Our immigration, our connectivity through the internet, our trade across borders have created an openness in our country, and offered opportunities that can be leveraged for the betterment of all. But, this also presents challenges for advancing a common vision of our democratic nation that embraces diversity and the wealth it can contribute.

4. There is a sense of growing polarization fuelled by political advocates using advanced information technology that fractionalizes the Canadian electorate.

The growing fragmentation of media channels means Canadians can access information from a multitude of sources at the "click of a mouse". However, the increasing tendency of social media (intentionally or by self-selection) to "silo" individuals into like-minded groups or 'echo chambers' weakens citizens' ability to have meaningful discussions where a diversity of perspectives on issues is available or desired. This contributes to a greater polarization of debates and a disrespect of viewpoints different from one's own which makes it difficult for people to consider the interests of the broader Canadian community as a whole.

5. Declining participation rates in electoral processes, notably among youth, reflect a diminishing faith in government institutions and processes to adequately meet the needs of citizens or represent the diverse voices in Canada.

Increasingly, Canadians believe their democratic institutions are not living up to expectations when it



comes to reflecting or representing the diversity of values, voices and perspectives that contribute to the Canadian socio-economic and political fabric. This includes their general dissatisfaction with the electoral system, policies that fail to deliver promised outcomes, “processes of governing” that suggest meaningful consultation but deliver one-way communication, and a prevalence of negative partisanship that thrives on personal attacks over substantive policy dialogue. What results is a further decline in trust in democratic institutions and a heightened sense of alienation from those same institutions.

While this is not a novel 21st century trend, there is currently a sense of urgency to address the concerns, one tied to increased polarization of debates and a negative tone of public debates on issues affecting all Canadians (e.g. energy and the environment, immigration and refugees, inequality, etc).

6. Governments are not keeping pace with technological changes that are fragmenting the spaces where citizens come together to discuss, debate and advance issues

Governments and democratic institutions are failing to keep pace with the technological changes shaping Canadians’ lives. Everything from the internet to social media to many of the so-called “disruptive technologies” are changing the way Canadians eat, sleep, get around, and have fun, yet some believe that the institutions of democracy

fundamental to the act(s) of citizenship seem frozen in 19th century models of representation and governance that are increasingly unresponsive, if not archaic. In recent campaigns (Brexit and the US elections) technology was harnessed in an unprecedented ways to target and exploit divisions. Governments will need to keep pace, but it will require a changing mindset within government and advancement and adoption of new technology to allay security-related fears.

7. Insufficient civic education efforts mean many Canadians are ill-prepared or trained in the rights and responsibilities of citizenship.

Governments seem uncommitted to investing enough in efforts to educate Canadians on what it means to live in a democracy. The risk, particularly for young Canadians and newcomers to the country, is not establishing solid foundations in what makes a democracy work, and in the importance of taking part in act(s) of citizenship. This can undermine a belief in democracy and reinforces the perception that government and participation in democratic acts don’t matter.

8. Support systems for settlement of new immigrants and refugees are not resourced and designed adequately to integrate diverse communities fully into the Canadian society.

Often, settlement support systems fall short in providing immigrants and refugees alike the assistance (e.g.

language training, socio-cultural sensitivity, job finding skills etc.) they need to contribute effectively and productively as they would like to their new country. This means they often remain isolated in ghettoized communities, economically disadvantaged, and easy targets for discrimination, unfairly blamed for taking dollars and jobs from other Canadians and for a breakdown in social cohesion.

9. Our notions of federalism are evolving

Canada is a country that was founded by two nations: French and English. It is also a country that was created on the lands of indigenous peoples and it has been populated and developed by immigrants and refugees. Since 1867, our notions of federalism have been evolving. The balance of power between provinces and the federal government have been shifting and the voices of indigenous peoples have been getting stronger and more organized. With 80% of Canadians now living in urban centres, cities have also become important actors in our democracy but have not been formally recognized as a legitimate level of government with the power to tax or drive policy independent of provincial governments.

Many have seen Canada as a strong working federalism and a model for other countries. Others have questioned the version of federalism that is being projected. How do we reflect a model of Canadian federalism that recognizes the complexities and challenges of our system? How do we allow the voices of minorities into the debate about Canada's democracy in a manner that respects their historical experiences, their values, their assets and their interests? How do we enable cities to secure the financial and governing capacity to provide the services required of a more urbanized country?

10. Governments can't do it alone

Government is changing, as are our processes for decision-making in government. Today, many non-state actors (e.g. business, civil society organizations, young people, philanthropists) do not wait for government to act; they are leaders in advancing their own versions of social and economic change. Government capacity for research and policy is eroding and the locus for federal decision-making is increasingly being centered out of the Privy Council Office, the Prime Minister's Office and the Ministry of Finance.

Against this backdrop, it's difficult to see where the citizen's voice fits.

With government shrinking and the manner in which policy making is shifting, new democratic processes need to be created to ensure that citizens' have a voice, and that it's heard and listened to. Existing scholarship on direct democracy and citizen engagement in public policy has made inroads into policy making experimentation, but governments remain quite reticent to integrate more citizen participation in their decisions through structural and functional changes to the way they operate. This feeds the overall narrative that the democratic voice of Canadian citizens is either not relevant or not respected, and contributes to the alienation Canadians feel towards their governments.

11. The Indian Act continues to disenfranchise and marginalize indigenous peoples from the political and governance process in Canada.

By all measures, the socio-economic reality for Canada's indigenous peoples continues to remain far below standards of other Canadians. Efforts at reconciliation to atone for the impact of Indian Residential Schools on many individuals are just beginning. Land claims and treaty negotiations remain largely unresolved, backlogged and stagnant, to the frustration of indigenous peoples and other Canadians. Political representation of indigenous voices in Canadian institutions is scant at best, leaving their interests and needs to potentially fall to the bottom of the government priority lists. Some indigenous peoples feel very much on the "outside looking in" on a democratic system that barely recognizes their right to exist as separate peoples or nations with rights. Key challenges exist to include indigenous peoples in the fabric of Canadian democracy when, in many cases, this involves the resolution and recognition of historical grievances, and a desire to address issues on a nation-to-nation basis.

The Revitalizing our Democracy initiative acknowledges the challenges these many factors place in front of Canada's democratic institutions and processes. It seeks to invite key actors working in the democracy space in Canada to develop innovative projects and activities that address some of these shortcomings and focus on reinforcing our country's democratic foundations.

2.0 WHO ARE THE ACTORS SHAPING OUR DEMOCRACY IN CANADA?

Public policy and Canada's democratic foundations are no longer the purview of just our federal, provincial, and municipal governments. There are myriad actors – businesses, non-profit organizations, academic institutions, scientists, media, experts, and citizen groups – that bring forward evidence-based information for consideration in the decision making that shapes Canada's democracy. Each actor brings an expertise, a network of relationships, and a brand or identity to their work. The Revitalizing our Democracy initiative will connect the various actors in ways that enhance collaboration, knowledge exchange, and collective action to bring about innovative and impactful solutions to issues related to democracy.

This multi-stakeholder collaborative network will capitalize on existing expertise, enhance/maximize impact, and identify areas of strategic interest and innovation to fill gaps that might exist. This will be done through encouraging and inviting key actors to develop and implement innovative projects that will build citizens' participation and engagement in associational and representative democratic processes, touching issues that affect them.

While it would be impossible to map all of the actors working in Canada to strengthen our democratic processes and institutions, it is worth noting some of them to give a sense of the scope and importance of their influence in advancing Canadian democracy :

ACADEMIC

- Simon Fraser University (Public Square, Morris J. Wosk Centre for Dialogue, School of Public Policy)
- UBC (Centre for the Study of Democratic Institutions, Summer Institute for Future Legislators, Harold and Dorrie Merilees Chair in the Study of Democracy, Participedia)
- University of Alberta (Centre for Public Involvement)

- University of Toronto (Munk School of Global Affairs, School of Public Policy and Governance)
- Ryerson University (Jarislowsky Chair for the Study & Advancement in Democracy)
- University of Ottawa (Jarislowsky Chair in Public Sector Management, Graduate School of Public & International Affairs, Institute of Fiscal Studies and Democracy)
- McGill University (Centre for the Study of Democratic Citizenship, Institute for the Study of Canada)
- HEC Montreal (Jarislowsky Chaire de gouvernance, Institut de la gouvernance des organisations publiques et privées)
- Memorial University (Jarislowsky Chair in Cultural and Economic Transformation (Rapidly Developing Modern Societies))

GOVERNMENT

Federal

- Privy Council Office (Consultations & Public Engagement)
- Treasury Board (Open Government)
- Community of Practice in Public Engagement (staff within departments across the federal government)
- Ministry for Democratic Institutions

Provincial

- Ontario (Consultations Directory, Public Engagement Framework)
- BC (Re-imagine BC, Integrity BC)
- Quebec (Quebec Portal)

Municipal

- Vancouver (Talk Vancouver, Pop-up City)
- Calgary (Engage, Civic Innovation YYC)
- Toronto (Growing Conversations)
- Montreal (Office of Public Consultation)

1 The SFU Morris J. Wosk Centre for Dialogue wishes to acknowledge and thank Samara Canada for providing us its "Mapping Ecosystem for Democratic Engagement in Canada", a list of organizations working in the democracy space that inspired the listing and categorization presented here. The SFU Morris J. Wosk Centre for Dialogue takes full responsibility for the categories created, and any discrepancies with the Samara mapping.

INDEPENDENT FOUNDATIONS (SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURS/INVESTORS, WEALTHY PHILANTHROPISTS)

- Stephen Jarislowsky Foundation
- Trudeau Foundation
- J.W. McConnell Family Foundation
- Atkinson Foundation
- Maytree Foundation
- Martin Family Initiative
- Aga Khan Foundation
- Community Foundations of Canada (and local equivalents)

THINK TANKS & INSTITUTES

- The Manning Centre
- Broadbent Institute
- Fraser Institute
- Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives
- Institute on Governance (IOG)
- Canadian Institute for Advanced Research
- Institute for Research on Public Policy (IRPP)
- Canada 2020
- Public Policy Forum
- Environics Institute
- Angus Reid Institute
- Mowat Centre
- Mosaic Institute
- Caledon Institute on Social Policy
- Couchiching Institute on Public Affairs
- Frontier Centre for Public Policy
- Institute for Canadian Citizenship
- Mosaic Institute
- National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation
- MacDonald-Laurier Institute
- C.D. Howe Institute

NON-GOVERNMENT & CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATIONS

Youth

- Apathy is Boring
- Institut du Nouveau Monde
- Civix
- Taking IT Global
- Forum for Young Canadians

Open Government / Digital

- Open North
- Code for Canada
- Centre for eDemocracy
- Civic Tech Toronto
- Ottawa Civic Tech
- Evidence for Democracy
- Democracy Watch

Citizen / Community Engagement / Citizen Action

- Samara
- Tamarack
- MASS LBP
- LeadNow
- Dogwood Initiative
- Organize BC/CanRoots

Diversity in Politics

- Equal Voice
- Canadian Muslim Vote
- Proud Politics
- Black Lives Matter
- Operation Black Vote
- Idle No More
- Reconciliation Canada
- Canadians for a New Partnership

Municipal Political Engagement/ Electoral Reform

- Democracy Kit/Open Democracy Project
- RaBit
- Civic Tech Toronto
- Ottawa Civic Tech
- VoteKit Calgary
- Ryerson City Building Institute
- Fair Vote Canada

Civic Education

- Civix
- Institut du Nouveau Monde
- Historica Canada
- Elections Canada (and provincial equivalents)
- People for Education
- CPAC
- Library of Parliament

Private Sector (Business / Labour)

- Conference Board of Canada
- Canadian Chamber of Commerce (and provincial equivalents)
- Canadian Labour Congress
- Canadian Council of Chief Executives
- Mouvement Desjardins
- Canadian Cooperative Association
- Deloitte
- McKinsey Institute

3.0 GOALS & OBJECTIVES

The overarching vision driving Revitalizing our Democracy is to **strengthen the democratic ecosystem within Canada by addressing the underlying factors that have made it vulnerable**. This vision will be achieved through a series of goals and objectives:

GOALS

1. Co-design and deliver a broad and inclusive multi-sector collaborative initiative that involves academics, citizens, non-government organizations, individuals, businesses, government, and institutions active and interested in supporting a stronger associational and representative democracy in Canada.
2. Encourage the community of practitioners to build innovative democratic capacity building projects.
3. Demonstrate a commitment to pluralism and equality in the design, delivery and evaluation of the initiative.
4. Create a strong multi-modal communications strategy that increases public literacy of Canadian democracy and identifies and profiles our key assets locally and nationally.

OBJECTIVES

1. Create opportunities for Canadians to take part in multiple activities designed to encourage their participation in our democracy.
2. Promote and support collaborative initiatives/projects designed to increase knowledge of and participation in Canada's democratic processes.
3. Promote and support innovative initiatives/projects designed to enhance government efforts and capacity in public consultation and citizen engagement on policy issues.
4. Encourage, promote and support practitioners to be innovative in the development of public consultation and citizen engagement methods and techniques.
5. Promote and support academic research on the most effective and impactful citizen engagement methods and techniques that work in specific contexts.
6. Promote and support academic research on key drivers that help strengthen the foundations of Canada's democracy (e.g. electoral reform, open government, use of digital technology, new forms of representation, etc.)"

4.0 ACTIVITIES

4.1 PHASE I – CO-DESIGN AND DEVELOPMENT

4.1.1 Consultations with Key Actors

The Revitalizing our Democracy initiative will consult with a broad range of actors and institutions actively working in democratic development. These consultations will focus on mapping who is doing what in the country, identifying opportunities for collaboration, clarifying gaps in research and programming, designing key elements of the collaborative program, clarifying the scope and indicators for success of the initiative, and securing in-kind and cash support. These consultations will also include sending a draft version of the concept paper to targeted individuals for their feedback on the design of the initiative.

Timeframe: July to September 2017

4.1.2 Mapping the Democratic Ecosystem

Based on the research and consultations, the SFU Morris J. Wosk Centre for Dialogue will build on the work of Samara Canada to map the democratic ecosystem within the country. This mapping will identify key opportunities and inflection points for intervention. It will also identify potential key partners

Timeframe: September to October 2017

4.1.3 Conduct Base-line Opinion Research and Evaluation Methodology

There are many opinion polls on Canadians' attitudes towards democracy, but few take a comprehensive look at the state of Canadian democracy from the multiple perspectives sought by this initiative. The SFU Morris J. Wosk Centre for Dialogue will review the existing polls and work with an opinion research firm and leading scholars to develop a base-line poll of Canadian attitudes towards and interests in democracy.

Timeframe: September to December 2017

4.1.4 Develop Evaluation Methodology

In addition to examining opinion research, we will develop an evaluation methodology at the front end of the initiative (See Section 4.4). The evaluation methodology will outline the specific measures/outcomes, and evaluations that will

be incorporated into the process design, including: project specific measures and outcomes, as well as timelines for measuring outcomes over the 5-year initiative.

Timeframe: September to December 2017

4.2 PHASE II – DEVELOP INFRASTRUCTURE TO SUPPORT COLLABORATION

4.2.1 Convene a Dialogue of Potential Partners & Collaborators

To launch the initiative, the SFU Morris J. Wosk Centre for Dialogue will convene a two day meeting with a broad-based, multi-sector and multi-stakeholder group in Vancouver at the Centre. This meeting will identify, define, and frame the key issues/themes, identify actions, and begin to develop the clusters of collaborative efforts that will be led across the country for the initiative.

Timeframe: November 2017

4.2.2 Create an Advisory Committee to Oversee Design, Implementation & Evaluation

The design and implementation of the Revitalizing our Democracy initiative will be managed by an Advisory Committee comprising individuals representing organisations and institutions across the multiple sectors targeted for collaboration. The Centre will seek interested individuals who have expertise in the democracy space to provide ongoing monitoring and guidance, as well as to develop the initiative's evaluation methodology.

Timeframe: November 2017

4.2.3 Create an Advisory Committee for Academic Research

In the days following the Vancouver consultation in 4.2.1, the Centre will convene a gathering of academics interested in working to identify and substantively advance an academic research agenda on strengthening Canadian democracy. In particular, the Centre will invite Jarislowsky Foundation Chairs in Democracy (or related fields) currently in position at Canadian universities. Members of this Advisory Committee will help oversee the academic engagement of this initiative and will also be invited to take part in the broader multi-stakeholder collaborative process.

Timeframe: November 2017

4.2.4 Development of the Multimodal On-line Communication Platform

Platforms: A cornerstone of the Revitalizing our Democracy initiative will be an interactive multimodal communication strategy which will be designed to educate and mobilize a diversity of audiences to participate in the initiative. The strategy will be designed to draw people in and help them move through the arc of:

Awareness - Education - Judgement - Advocacy - Action

The architecture will enable multiple modes of entry into various social media platforms including a website, YouTube, Instagram, Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter and other tools that arise through the process. Wherever possible the initiative will go to the places where key target audiences are already convening and build on the existing social media platforms.

Target Audiences: Access will be targeted through multiple communities (e.g. youth, students, ethnocultural and Diaspora communities, teachers, women's groups, community groups, interested Canadians, academics, etc), actions (e.g. learn more about Canadian democracy, participate in local activities, become a member of a thematic discussion forum, download our publications), special offers (thematic surveys, classroom activities, on-campus events, competitions) and content (what is Revitalizing our Democracy, resources, publications, instagrams, games), etc.

Collective Branding: If deemed appropriate by the participating partners and collaborators in November, the initiative will develop an umbrella brand that all partners, affiliated initiatives and activities can use to demonstrate a unified message. This brand will be developed collaboratively and used to amplify the reach and profile of the initiative.

Language: Communications will be delivered in French and English and undergo constant development and refinement. Every effort will be made to ensure that there is a flow of conversation between participants and where resources are available and the programming demands it. The SFU Morris J. Wosk Centre for Dialogue will also communicate in other languages, as appropriate. The On-line Community Facilitator and Editor will be a bilingual and if funding

permits, the Centre will hire a French On-Line Facilitator.

Resources: The following basic information is proposed as content provided through the communications platform:

- On-line interactive surveys "How To" guides for facilitating citizens' dialogue – these guides will be tailored to different audiences (e.g. young people, ethnocultural communities, book clubs, seniors' groups)
- Learning aides for teachers interested in developing classroom dialogues (for grades 6 to 12)
- A section for young people in how to get involved in the initiative which will include: tips on mobilizing young people, youth event calendar, resources on hosting your own dialogue, project design templates, action plans, fundraising strategies, grant proposal templates, budget outlines, report-back templates, etc.
- An opportunity for citizens to provide input into the creation of innovative projects and activities through text, audio and visual uploads
- A blog providing information on the progress of the initiative
- Links to key resources and groups
- Member profile directory to support networking
- Links to relevant mainstream and online media
- Interactive activities identified and developed through the strategic communications and public affairs campaign

Timeframe: The development of the communications platform will begin in October and launch in January. It will be updated regularly throughout the duration of the initiative.

4.2.5 Build Public Outreach – A Commitment to Diversity and Pluralism

With the exception of Aboriginal people, Canada is a country of immigrants. Whether we are first or eighth generation Canadian, we all have some connection to another place or country. As Canada becomes a more diverse society, our vision of ourselves as a country changes. Revitalizing our Democracy embraces pluralism as a Canadian democratic asset. No effort to strengthen Canadian democracy would succeed if it was not designed, delivered, and evaluated by diverse communities.

To reach a broader community of Canadians in the initiative, the SFU Morris J. Wosk Centre for Dialogue will work through mainstream, ethnocultural and community print and broadcast media and other communication channels using a combination of news and feature reporting.

Outreach activities will include:

- Working with mainstream, ethnocultural and community media at the front end to assist in the design of the engagement process
- Launching the initiative (news)
- Releasing the results of the first public poll (news)
- Working with regional and national broadcasters to host democracy spots
- Engaging radio talk show and feature public affairs programmes to cover aspects of the initiative
- Working with stakeholder groups to educate and mobilize their networks in the initiative (organizational engagement)
- Releasing media advisories in the regional and community press announcing local activities
- Working with national and local media to publish feature commentary pieces on future scenarios for Canadian democracy
- Creating and maintaining an online blog and survey.

Timeframe: The outreach strategy begins in Phase I and continues throughout the initiative.

4.3 PHASE III – IMPLEMENTATION

4.3.1 Innovation Fund to support Democracy Building Projects

The core of the Revitalizing our Democracy initiative is to provide a funding envelop to support activities designed to strengthen and reinforce Canadian democracy and delivered through multi-sector collaboration activities.

Given the complexities of the challenges, it would be premature to predict appropriate activities for each region. Revitalizing our Democracy will work through the design phase to identify thematic “clusters” in the associational and representational democracy space in Canada. Within each thematic cluster, the goal will be to invite interested

partner organizations to work collaboratively to design and deliver projects that demonstrate what works, why, and in what contexts. Organizations within each cluster will specifically:

1. Develop proposals to implement pilot projects to apply new innovative approaches to challenges in their cluster.
2. Work to expand the network of organizations within their cluster to include organizations not traditionally included in activities of this scope and nature.
3. Promote and develop links with existing associations in local communities in the implementation of innovative citizen engagement projects.
4. Ensure projects reach out to a diversity of communities in their design and implementation.
5. Document activities, process, and outcomes for possible application in other contexts. To identify.
6. Define measures to evaluate concrete project outcomes, and implement evaluation methodology.

Based on our preliminary mapping of organizations working in the Canadian democracy space (in Section 2.0), and a preliminary scoping of current and future projects among many key actors, there are multiple thematic clusters that could be targeted within the context of the Revitalizing our Democracy initiative. Below is a preliminary list of proposed thematic clusters, and a tentative list of the potential collaborating organizations.

Citizen engagement capacity building within the civil service

Support training of public servants and elected officials on best practices of citizen engagement, and work to develop new innovative approaches. While this type of work is already occurring to some degree, there are opportunities to explore new and innovative ideas and pilot projects to test ways to develop this type of capacity. Opportunities exist to share information on best practices between levels of government who face similar challenges to engage their citizens in policy discussions, and who seek information on what works, under what conditions, and why.

Possible collaborators: Samara, Public Policy Forum, Civic Engage, Canada 2020, PCO, PCO-equivalents at provincial/municipal level.

Citizen-centred/community discussions on public issues:

Build citizen-centred discussion initiatives on specific issues relevant to communities. Partnering with local community organizations and networks, collaboration efforts would identify issues of concern to residents, invite them to join with government to bring a comprehensive understanding of an important issue they face, and assist them in developing relevant and appropriate solutions.

Possible collaborators: Civic Engage, Samara, Kettering Foundation, SFU Public Square, Canada 2020, McConnell Foundation, Atkinson Foundation, Civic Tech Toronto, Ottawa Civic Tech.

Civic education

Build, support, and expand knowledge transfer and exchange about citizenship rights and responsibilities of living in Canadian democracy. This would include aspects of the political and governance process (e.g. voting, government budgeting and legislation, how decisions are made, media literacy, etc.). While the focus would be on reaching students in elementary, secondary, and post-secondary institutions, efforts could also target the full range of individuals and communities across the country.

Possible collaborators: Civix, Institut du Nouveau Monde, Apathy is Boring, UBC Summer Institute for Future Legislators, Fair Vote Canada.

Digital Democracy & Open Government

Build, support, and expand efforts by organizations and academics to make more effective use of innovative digital technologies to enhance democratic processes and government decision making. This could include among other things: building and updating digital capacity within government, using electronic processes for democratic decision making, adopting “open data” approaches to government data as a way to build trust and promote citizen participation, experimenting with ways to use machine learning and artificial intelligence to conduct deliberative dialogues, and develop government department website service interfaces with an eye to citizen use.

Possible collaborators: Open North, Code for Canada, PubliVate, PCO (and provincial/municipal equivalents), Mary

Francoli (Carleton University), Centre for eDemocracy, Open Media, Sum of Us

4.3.2 Youth Campaign

Engaging young people in the initiative will be a critical component of the Revitalizing our Democracy initiative; they are the foundation upon which the future of Canadian democracy will be built. To this end, the initiative will work with a youth advisory team which will lead a grassroots youth engagement campaign entitled the Youth Civic Action Strategy. The strategy will be developed over the coming six months by the youth advisory team.

Possible Collaborators: Taking It Global, Get your vote on, Civix, Apathy is Boring, Laidlaw Foundation, J.W. McConnell Foundation, Canadian Federation of Students

4.3.3 Post-Secondary Institution Campaign

Revitalizing our Democracy will serve as a platform for the SFU Morris J. Wosk Centre for Dialogue to tap directly into its immediate university milieu as a way to build knowledge transfers and exchanges on Canadian democracy, and to provide engagement opportunities for students, faculty, staff, and alumni in the initiative. The overarching intent would be to advance connections between students, faculty, staff, alumni, and, in SFU's case, with the Centre. This will include seeking out and working with faculty, staff, students, and alumni to promote the overall initiative, and to get the university community involved – as appropriate – in democracy activities designed specifically for campus. There may also be internship and fellowship opportunities for students over the course of the five year initiative.

The SFU Morris J. Wosk Centre for Dialogue will work with the Deans, the SFU Public Square, the Student Society, and the Alumni Office to develop a program of initiatives to weave into the university's overall program of events. This program framework would act as a template that will be promoted and shared for use at other interested Canadian post-secondary institutions.

4.3.4 Engaging Academic Research

Revitalizing our Democracy will engage Canadian scholars in a multitude of research projects over the five-year initiative. Building upon the research agenda developed by the Committee of Academic Research (see 4.2.3), the

scholars will be tasked with reflecting on the fundamental challenges facing Canadian democracy now and into the future, and on innovative approaches to addressing them.

4.3.5 Engaging Media on Democracy in Canada

Recognized as a key asset in Canadian democracy by many, the shifting media landscape is also the focus of great attention among individuals and organizations working in the democracy space for its potent influence on shaping the democratic process and exchange of ideas in debates on public policy. For this reason, the Revitalizing our Democracy initiative will convene a forum on media and democracy in Canada during the course of its five year plan. This would include major media organizations, journalists, and academics working in the field to discuss the Canadian media landscape (current and new directions) and its impact on Canadian democracy. In addition, we will undertake ongoing outreach to media for their input and reflections on the initiative's projects.

Pending the Advisory Committee's recommendation, the forum would seek to explore innovative ideas for how media can serve the goal of strengthening Canada's democratic processes and help mitigate threats to the way Canadian democracy functions.

4.3.6 Engagement of Indigenous Peoples

With the full participation of indigenous community representatives, Revitalizing our Democracy will design a framework to ensure the discussions, activities, and projects within the initiative reflect and respect the specific context, diversity of experience, and aspirations of indigenous peoples in Canada's democracy. To this end, the initiative's Advisory Committee will include interested indigenous representatives who will assist in the initiative's initial framing of goals and outcomes, as well as make recommendations for the involvement of appropriate indigenous organizations in projects and related activities throughout the initiative.

4.4 PHASE IV – EVALUATION

As noted in section 4.1.3, the evaluation methodology will be determined in the Phase I – Co-Design & Development phase of the initiative. The methodology will outline the key indicators of success and the tools that will be used to

evaluate activities in the process and assess the impact of the initiative. Evaluation will be built into each project and activity of the initiative run by partner and collaboration organizations.

Some of the indicators of success that have been identified through our interview process to-date include:

1. Number of individuals and organizations involved in collaborative efforts, including the range of different sectors they work in (e.g. government, academia, NGOs, private sector, etc.)
2. Number of new and innovative concrete, applied projects launched/implemented.
3. Number of initiatives that build upon current existing work.
4. Number of new connections made between organizations working in the democracy space.
5. Concrete changes achieved in specific areas of democracy (TBD from the thematic areas of interest) as a result of the initiative's collaborative efforts. Specific attention to how the collaboration projects had an impact on citizen participation.
6. Number of research papers completed through collaborative efforts.
7. Completion of a detailed systems map of organizations working in the democracy space.
8. Completion of best practices for citizen participation (using case studies and academic research), specifically identifying how they can be used in specific contexts to address specific problems.
9. Change in level of citizen participation in democratic processes (e.g. voting in elections, engagement in local community issues, etc.)
10. Awareness level of Revitalizing our Democracy initiative in the general population, and among specific target audiences (e.g. youth, post-secondary students, etc.)

Further, each specific project designed and implemented through the collaborative network of organizations will define its own evaluative measures that will be examined and reported on.

Some of the evaluative tools used for measuring outcomes will include:

1. Polling of public attitudes on Canadian democracy at the beginning of the initiative.
2. On-line surveys to gauge public interest and engagement in the initiative.
3. Surveys of organization representatives in the collaborative network before and after the implementation of their project to determine the effectiveness of design, logistics, and outcomes/impacts.
4. Surveys of individuals taking part in projects run through the collaborative network.
5. Tracking of website statistics including on-line sessions, users' demographics, page views, downloads, uploads, blog contributions to measure public engagement.
6. Tracking of outreach efforts to determine scope, and demographic reach.
7. Qualitative interviews in the mid and final phase of the initiative.
8. Media monitoring to determine scope and nature of outreach and coverage.
9. Monitoring of reference to policy options by government and non-state actors to determine substantive impact.

Further, a formal evaluation of the process and results of the five-year initiative will be conducted at the three year mark, and then again at the end of the initiative. The Advisory Committee and staff will review the outputs and impact of initiative projects and activities, notably those involving new and innovative methods. A final evaluation report will be compiled for distribution among partner and collaborating organizations. Although the key indicators will be defined in Phase I, below is a preliminary list of some of the process and programmatic outcomes and impacts:

Process Outcomes:

1. Collaborators feel empowered to participate in the design and delivery of the initiative.
2. The initiative is Pan-Canadian and reflects a diversity of communities and opinions.

3. The initiative incorporates a strong gender perspective.
4. Funding is derived from a variety of sources.
5. Academics engage in shaping and advancing a collaborative research agenda on democracy.
6. Citizen participants in project activities learn about Canadian democracy.
7. The process facilitates dialogue, deliberation and learning.
8. The process is inclusive and reflects the demographic makeup of Canada.
9. Resource materials are created that support participation, dialogue and deliberation among women, French and English Canadians, ethnocultural and immigrant communities, indigenous peoples, and people who are feeling isolated from the democratic process.
10. The communications platform facilitates the participation of Canadians in the initiative in both official languages.
11. Citizens concur with the findings of their project evaluation/outcomes.
12. The initiative's findings are communicated effectively publicly to government and other democracy stakeholders.
13. The Canadian public knows about the initiative's process and opportunities to participate, as well as projects of a more local nature design through the collaborative network.
14. A broad range of Canadians participate in the initiative through their school, university, community organization, or virtually through the communications platform or through the media.
15. The initiative's process is transparent and well documented for the historical record and for the benefit of future exercises

Overall Programmatic Impact:

Canadians surveyed identify a revitalized democracy that:

1. Reflects and embraces the diversity of Canadian society.
2. Inoculates the Canadian electoral process against race-based populist movements.

3. Engages people who have felt disenfranchised and isolated from the democratic process.
4. Provides directions to democratic institutions on how to strengthen governance and engagement.
5. Creates greater awareness and interest in democratic institutions.
6. Increases voter turn-out intentions particularly among young people.
7. Acknowledges the multiplicity of actors involved in democracy and builds their capacity.
8. Strengthens the democratic ecosystem and makes the actors, institutions and processes more transparent.

Organizations and governments obtain:

1. A citizen engagement tool box containing a variety of innovative tools/methods they can use for citizen participation and engagement.
2. A better understanding of the challenges facing Canadian democracy, and practical solutions to addressing them.
3. Access to a broader collaborative network of potential partners to work with on furthering the democracy agenda.

5.0 GOVERNANCE AND IMPLEMENTATION

Revitalizing Our Democracy is a project of the Simon Fraser University Morris J. Wosk Centre for Dialogue. The Centre governs the funds, the contracts and any formal arrangements between Revitalizing Our Democracy and its funders and partners.

The SFU Morris J. Wosk Centre for Dialogue fosters understanding and positive action through dialogue and engagement. Founded in 2000, the Centre acts as a hub for dialogue and engagement initiatives, exploring emergent and complex issues of public importance. We work across sectors and borders to support communities locally, nationally and internationally. As a trusted convener, we create a space for respectful conversations between diverse stakeholders, where mutual curiosity and collaborative inquiry act as alternatives to adversarial approaches.

SFU IMPLEMENTATION LEADS

Shauna Sylvester, Executive Director, SFU Morris J. Wosk Centre for Dialogue (bio)

Dr. Daniel Savas, Adjunct Professor, School of Public Policy, Sr. Opinion Researcher (bio)

Robin Prest, Program Director, SFU Morris J. Wosk Centre for Dialogue, Civic Engage (bio)

Janet Webber, Executive Director, SFU Public Square (bio)

SFU will work in partnership with a range of organizations across the country. Over the next two months we will be recruiting committee members from academia, government, indigenous communities, youth, the private and not for profit sector. An Advisory Committee will be formed by January 2018 to oversee the programmatic dimensions of the initiative.



MORRIS J. WOSK
CENTRE FOR DIALOGUE

sfu.ca/dialogue/democracy
[@SFUDialogue](https://twitter.com/SFUDialogue)