

COLLEGES AND INSTITUTES CANADA
INTERNATIONAL STRATEGY
2018–2021

BUILDING ON A STRONG FOUNDATION TO CREATE
OPPORTUNITIES AT HOME AND ABROAD FOR OUR
MEMBERS AND PARTNERS

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Colleges and Institutes Canada
Collèges et instituts Canada



2018–2021 INTERNATIONAL STRATEGY

VISION

Colleges and institutes drive Canadian prosperity by being global leaders in applied education and partnered innovation.

MISSION

Colleges and Institutes Canada promotes the excellence of the Canadian college and institute system.

INTERNATIONAL PURPOSE

Improving lives—and changing the world—through education and work force development by enabling CICAN members to define and realize their international goals of educating Canadians for success in a globalized world

STRATEGIC PILLARS



ADVOCATE



EMPOWER



RESEARCH



PARTNER



EXCEL

GOALS

Position CICan members as Canada's foremost providers of skills training in Canada and abroad

Position members with Global Affairs Canada on the Feminist International Assistance Policy, and with other funding institutions

Support members' recruitment of more international students, and diversification of campus international student body

Provide CICan members with the knowledge and information they need to further their international goals

Meet CICan members' training, professional development and mentoring needs in support of their internationalization goals

Fill key knowledge gaps related to members' internationalization goals

Ensure members have the strategic information they need to explore new markets and business opportunities.

Support skills development efforts with international assistance project partners

Provide members with access to various public and private international partnership models suited to their needs

Advance Canada's international agenda vis-à-vis education, student recruitment, and economic development

Ensure our projects, programs and other activities respond to needs and priorities communicated to us by our members.

Effectively manage our partnership

Ensure we have staff capacity to meet members' priorities and needs

INTRODUCTION

BUILDING ON A STRONG FOUNDATION OF WORK TO CREATE OPPORTUNITIES AT HOME AND ABROAD FOR MEMBERS AND PARTNERS

Canadian colleges and institutes integrate international dimensions into the classroom and pursue a wide range of international activities to provide the best possible educational opportunities and outcomes for their students. International linkages developed through student recruitment, international development projects and contract training overseas feed professional development for faculty and staff, stimulate professional intercultural exchange, create institutional partnerships, bring in revenue to support programs and services for Canadian students, and open the world to students through exchanges, semesters abroad and work study. These bring direct benefit to students—and the communities in which they live—by strengthening education quality and giving students access to good jobs in a labour market where employers are on the lookout for qualified graduates with cross-cultural competencies and a global outlook.

Canada's colleges and institutes are a diverse group. They vary greatly in enrolment and operating budgets, their community identity is as varied as Canada's geography, they teach in different languages, their student populations are becoming ever more heterogeneous, and their academic offerings cover a vast range of disciplines and pedagogies. This diversity does much to explain why Canadian applied education has a strong international reputation; it has been the key strength behind CICan's efforts to work internationally on behalf of its members. A considerable amount of consultation, analysis and reflection has gone into the development of an International Strategy that is flexible enough to serve our members' diverse internationalization objectives.

"Internationalization" is moving from the periphery to the core of Canada's colleges and institutes missions. But levels of internationalization still vary greatly among CICan members. Several colleges and institutes undertake the full range of internationalization activities, including opening overseas campuses and delivering corporate training services abroad and they seek CICan support as a partner in seizing new international business opportunities in a competitive environment. Other member institutions engage in fewer international activities such as student recruitment and international cooperation projects and seek CICan support to take the next step in their internationalization efforts. Some institutions are interested in internationalizing and seek CICan help to provide them with more learning opportunities, to assist them in finding the right overseas partner or to get international project experience.

The International Strategy builds on a strong tradition of championing education, training and innovation on a global scale and seeks to meet the diverse needs of Canada's colleges and institutes. Over the last forty-four years, CICan has worked with members and partners to create opportunities at home and abroad through a range of activities in areas such as:

- Supporting the recruitment of international students through collective marketing campaigns and engagement with Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) to improve the efficiency of student visa processing.
- Providing access to Canadian institutions willing to share their expertise and experience around the world. CICan currently coordinates more than 75 institutional partnerships funded via six Education for Employment projects (EFEs) worth over \$80 million. Those projects have allowed

college and institutes leaders, faculty and students to gain meaningful global exposure and to share relevant Canadian experience and resources. Most colleges and institutes have used such projects to build their reputation abroad and to develop institutional partnerships that are sustainable long-term.

- Assisting member institutions identify overseas partners by organizing missions abroad and hosting incoming delegations.
- Offering leadership and professional development opportunities for college and institute staff, primarily through the annual International Leadership Institute and the CICan Annual Congress which now includes a full international stream.
- Leadership training and familiarization tours for leaders of post-secondary institutions from various countries.
- Supporting members in developing comprehensive international strategies.
- Managing student and faculty mobility projects.

These activities will continue but some will be implemented differently. What will be new is a more clearly targeted approach to pursuing business opportunities using key themes as filters and identifying a limited number of regions of focus. CICan will be more deliberate about diversifying sources of project funding. Based on feedback received, we will develop new business development models, thus creating more value for groups of members with different interests while finding ways to learn, develop and grow together as an association working in concert with our members. CICan will pilot innovative ways to fund international education projects including, for example, social finance and direct private sector support as potential markets.

The International Strategy is organized according to the five major pillars of our CICan Strategic Plan:

Advocate

Empower

Research

Partner

Excel

We felt that this framework was the best way to signal—and drive—further integration of international activities in the association’s overall activities.

CHALLENGES & OPPORTUNITIES IN THE GLOBAL ENVIRONMENT

The International Strategy reflects CIGan’s analysis of political, social, economic and institutional trends and influences both in Canada and the global environment. These trends present both opportunities and challenges for college and institute participation in international student recruitment, international development cooperation and forging international partnerships in other business areas.

Education markets currently face a shifting global environment influenced by broad cyclical and structural economic trends. This includes weak job and productivity growth after the 2008 recession, low commodity prices (a low point in the commodity super-cycle) and forecasts of slowing economic growth for China. Politically, there is an upswing in public sentiment favouring nationalism, economic isolationism and anti-immigration policies in the United States, the United Kingdom, and elsewhere.

Longer-term structural transformations such as the expansion of automation and artificial intelligence—the so called Fourth Industrial Revolution—are expected to bring about profound transformation that will likely create great challenges and opportunities for Canadian applied education, both at home and abroad.

CIGan has taken careful note of developments that will affect the overall **donor environment for international development**. Globally, the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) have become the main framework for the coordination of international assistance while in Canada, the new feminist international assistance policy will guide Global Affairs Canada (GAC) support for development. We expect the priorities laid out in these frameworks to increasingly dictate the flow of donor money. Themes like women’s empowerment and gender equality, climate change and sustainability, entrepreneurship and the stimulation of private sector growth are already *the* key areas of intervention.

We expect to see growing demand for comprehensive, competency-based, demand-driven Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET)—our members’ core strength—as primary and secondary education systems globally grow in capacity and as demand increases for partners who can help build the capacity of tertiary skills education systems.

However, the picture for funding opportunities is mixed. Recent data suggests that global aid flows may have peaked over the past couple of years, and that the overall education sector has declined as a donor priority, even as more developing and middle-income countries turn their attention to developing skills for employment.

We also expect opportunities to open as new financing vehicles are brought online (e.g., Canada’s Development Finance Institute), and as donors experiment more with private sector partnerships and performance based social financing mechanisms. One potentially significant challenge on the funding scene will be to seek opportunities with middle-income countries, countries which are

poised to develop TVET capacity. These countries, however, may need to be convinced about the value of investment in technical versus university education. These countries are also lower priority for development assistance financial flows.

CICan believes that diversifying funding sources to support members' international cooperation work should be a key priority. The Multilateral Development Banks (MDBs) and the diverse range of countries development agencies will receive greater attention going forward. These donor groups generally recognize the increased importance of TVET and skills development.

International student recruitment will be positively and negatively affected by many of the trends mentioned above, most notably the Chinese slowdown and a swing towards isolationism and nationalism. In several Asian nations, skills shortages driven by an ageing population will lead Asian countries to increase their efforts at attracting international students and step up efforts to retain or repatriate their own. The market has become increasingly crowded as certain countries (for example: China, New Zealand, Malaysia, United Arab Emirates, Ireland) have recently entered the competition to attract students to their institutions.

Nevertheless, the Organization of Economic Development (OECD) predicts that the global flow of internationally mobile students will increase to 8 million by 2025, up from an estimated 5 million in 2016. Over the last few years, Canada has gained a substantial share of internationally mobile students, with strong annual growth averaging 10% in study permit applications over the last ten years. And for the first time in 2016, a greater number of applications for permits associated with colleges and institutes were made than for universities. Greater international engagement on behalf of Canadian institutions, and perceptual changes related to Brexit, Trump and Trudeau have highlighted Canada as safe and welcoming study destination that offers students the opportunity to study, work and stay—the so called 'integrated offer.' According to various surveys of education agents, colleges and institutes must continue pressure to improve permit approval rates for our institutions and to advocate for a more consistent and predictable permit approval system.

The **disruptive effects of technology** represent both threats and opportunities. Increased automation is expected to drive demand for new types of skills. At the same time, many experts worry about the negative impacts for job growth, particularly in middle skill occupations. Certain developing and middle-income countries could be hard hit by these substitution effects, and would face major challenges realigning their labour markets and education systems. The rate of adoption of learning technologies is expected to increase as is the supply of digitized and open learning. This will stimulate demand for digital skills, but also introduce disruptions with traditional education delivery. Colleges and institutes will have to be more attuned to the role of online platforms in internationalizing their educational offering, the impact of self-directed learning as an education option, and the potential of globally networked learning.

ADVOCATE

GOALS

Position CIGan members as the foremost providers of quality skills training in Canada and abroad.

Position members with GAC on 2017 Feminist International Assistance Policy and with other international funding institutions.

Support members' efforts at recruiting more international students and diversifying the international student body on their campuses.

CIGan's International Partnerships division advocates as the collective voice of colleges and institutes, working with government, industry, international funders and other stakeholders to support Canadian college and institute efforts to prepare their learners for success in an increasingly globalized world, recruit international students, develop new partnerships abroad, leverage their expertise in the context of development cooperation projects, internationalize their activities at home and generate additional revenues.

International education is a fast expanding sector in Canada. There will be intense competition for international students as other countries recognize the benefits of international education and pursue their own strategies to attract those learners. CIGan has supported international student recruitment by working collaboratively with IRCC to develop programs for faster and more efficient student visa processing.

Programs in India, China, Vietnam and the Philippines have led to significant growth in the number of international students recruited by colleges and institutes. CIGan will support continued growth but it will be about more than increasing the number of students. It will be about taking a targeted approach to bringing key students to key parts of the country and to support further diversification of the international student population. Based on what we heard during the member consultations and our assessment of existing potential, possible markets for further investigation and program development will include Sub-Saharan Africa (Nigeria, Ghana, Senegal, Cameroon, Kenya); the Americas (Brazil, Mexico, Colombia, Chile, Peru, Jamaica); Asia (Pakistan, Bangladesh, Thailand, Indonesia, Nepal); the Middle East/North Africa (Iran, Saudi Arabia, Morocco, Tunisia) and Europe (Ukraine, Russia, Turkey, France). And, as Cégeps and Francophone colleges and institutes develop plans to further prioritize international student recruitment, CIGan will focus more attention on addressing barriers, including visa processing, that impact recruitment in Francophone countries.

CIGan will also continue to champion members' interests with Global Affairs Canada (GAC). During the consultation, we heard that members want CIGan to provide different levels of support in assisting members to identify, apply for and implement development cooperation projects. The first will be to position members as key actors in the implementation of Canada's new Feminist International Assistance Policy, highlighting the prominent role that TVET and the role that Canadian colleges and institutes can play to reduce inequality, fight poverty, contribute to sustainability and advance the economic and social

empowerment of women. Another key role consists of proactively identifying opportunities, coordinating proposal development and implementing large and complex cooperation projects.

CICan will also seek to increase the profile of CICan members with other countries' development agencies, MDBs and other TVET cooperation funders, and more proactively pursue business development opportunities with those funders with a view to achieving a more diversified project portfolio (for further discussion see the "Partner" section).

Many members emphasized the importance of outbound student and faculty mobility, e.g., study abroad, international work placements, faculty exchanges. While important, this area is not currently a funding priority for our government partners. Recognizing that a "whole-of-Canada" approach involving colleges and institutes, employers and government might be the right way forward in developing outbound mobility partnerships and openings, CICan will devote some of its advocacy work to demonstrating the importance of student mobility to identify what could be done to further support it.

EMPOWER

GOALS

Provide CICan members with the information and knowledge they need to further their international goals.

Meet CICan members training, professional development and mentoring needs in support of their internationalization goals.

CICan's International Partnerships division seeks to empower its members by providing professional development and knowledge-sharing activities, nationally and internationally, to foster learning and networking for members. One of CICan's objectives is to provide its members with the tools to succeed internationally.

CICan plays a role in supporting the internationalization mandates of colleges and institutes, often in the form of training and professional development. Based on what we heard during the strategy consultations, we should be doing more of this kind of work. This could include webinars or training sessions on specific issues such as risk management or proposal development; dissemination of market intelligence via reports, webinars, or other meeting formats; or briefings on CICan's participation in international meetings, conferences, and/or with international organizations.

The strategy consultations also revealed a desire for more networking and knowledge-sharing. CICan conducted information sessions across Canada in 2017 for senior management as well as international staff to share knowledge and experience vis a vis our collective international work. CICan members want more opportunities like this to meet and more space to exchange best practice. CICan's annual congress provides some opportunities, but even more emphasis will be placed on bringing members together and highlighting the successes of individual colleges and institutes.

Finally, in developing approaches and initiatives to support its members, CIGan will seek a balanced approach that will respond to the needs of colleges and institutes whatever their profile, e.g., small/ large, rural/urban, and wherever they find themselves on the path to internationalization

RESEARCH

GOALS

Fill key knowledge gaps related to our members' internationalization goals

Ensure members have the strategic information they need to explore new markets and business opportunities

Raise awareness about college and institutes applied research expertise and its relevance in international markets

Consultations with members, staff and external stakeholders revealed that CIGan International Partnerships has a key role to play as a broker of information over a wide range of business areas. Whether it is obtaining intelligence about priority student recruitment markets, pulling together the state of knowledge on emerging trends in TVET or understanding the donor funding environment for international development projects, many see potential in our role as a conduit, supplying information and insight to our members and in support of their international agendas.

The International Partnerships division has produced or contributed to several publications that profile the Canadian college and institute system or explore emerging trends in high priority areas (education for sustainable development, women's empowerment) or inform CIGan's response to government policy. However, such initiatives have tended to be reactive in nature, e.g., most recent publications were developed as responses to changes in Global Affairs Canada policy. In addition, there is no Canadian counterpart to groups like the British Council or the National Centre for Vocational Education Research (NCVER) in Australia to fund, generate and disseminate research on the college and institute system.

CIGan will develop a more strategic approach to research and knowledge mobilization, recognizing both that members need information and analysis to support a range of different international activities and that most of the priorities that will emerge from the International Strategy will have research or knowledge sharing components.

Our main goals and priorities under the "Research" pillar is, therefore, largely defined by the needs of the other pillars, in particular *Advocate*, *Empower* and *Partner*. CIGan will develop a data and information management strategy that will align available research capacity with members' and other stakeholders' information needs. This will lead to initiatives and ongoing activities that will help to:

- Promote our members' capacities, e.g., with external audiences such as donors)

- Provide our members with market intelligence, e.g., donor funding opportunities, developments in key recruitment markets
- Develop content for professional development activities
- Build up good evidence on the effectiveness of the Canadian applied education and applied research models, and their relevance in the international context.

PARTNER

GOALS

Support skills development efforts with international assistance project partners.

Provide members with access to a range of international partnership models (private and public) suited to their specific needs.

Advance Canada's international agenda vis a vis education, student recruitment, and economic development.

The International Strategy seeks to provide opportunities for members to work with domestic and international partners to foster and advance professional and technical education and training in Canada and abroad.

During the consultation, CIGan members, key informants, and staff indicated that CIGan's approach to partnerships has been generally effective at supporting members' internationalization agendas. However, there is a desire, particularly from members, to expand partnerships with MDBs, the private sector, and other funding sources. Moreover, members would like CIGan to offer a broader range of services to assist with internationalization.

Partnerships with the private sector and private sector foundations are increasingly important for international activity. They differ from traditional funders, such as the Government of Canada, because their interests are often more context-specific. These types of partnerships increase the credibility of our development projects and provide CIGan members with direct access to the local private sector, which could create additional business opportunities, such as corporate training.

PRIORITY SECTORS & MARKETS

During the consultations, respondents mentioned, women and girls, entrepreneurship, climate change, sustainable development, energy and mines, information and communication technology and food production and agriculture as primary sectors of focus. While CIGan would continue to monitor opportunities to leverage the full breadth of expertise in its membership, it could focus on the primary sectors above as its filter for what to pursue proactively.

Geographically, the ASEAN region was identified as a priority. There is tremendous potential for student recruitment in the ASEAN region and it also provides opportunities for international cooperation projects

and consultancy contracts. Most of the ASEAN countries have also identified TVET strengthening as a priority, and this region is a priority for Canada's foreign policy.

Cooperation with China will continue to bring opportunities and challenges. With China's economic and technological growth come important social challenges which Canadian college and institute expertise can help tackle. Priorities will include: intensification of cooperation in quality assurance and leadership development; development of regional partnerships in parts of the country where CIG members are not currently present; supporting the development of applied research partnerships.

CIG will also pay attention to markets where there are several business development opportunities for its members:

- Francophone Africa will be a priority. Development cooperation projects remain important, and there is additional support needed for more timely and efficient student visa processing
- CIG will continue building upon its work in English-speaking Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean, prioritizing long-term involvement in regions and countries where we are already present for increased impact
- Support members' efforts to send Canadian learners to Europe, and to develop research partnerships with European partners and seize opportunities related to several European countries that are now prioritizing TVET in the face of significant youth unemployment

EXCEL

GOALS

Ensure our projects, programs and other activities respond to the needs and priorities communicated to us by our members.

Effectively manage our partnerships.

Ensure we have the international staff capacity to meet our members needs and priorities.

CIG International Partnerships will continuously strive for organizational excellence by ensuring the effective management of current and future projects and fine tuning its approach to engaging and consulting member colleges and institutes. Our international activities have always been financially self-sustaining, and this will continue to be our operating principle.

The specific actions to be taken will be in line with the goals and initiatives in the Advocate, Empower and Partner pillars, but consultations with members, staff and other stakeholders point to a clear need to both streamline the way we do things currently while building up partnership management and business development capacity sufficiently flexible to accommodate our members' different internationalization profiles. For CIG to excel in this area, it will need to optimize its staff complement and its administrative procedures, especially with respect to partnerships with its members.

The International Partnerships division can build on the solid foundation of a highly skilled and competent staff covering many areas of expertise. Certain business development models will require rebalancing certain responsibilities, hiring certain specialists and offering professional development to staff to develop areas of functional expertise to support business development, research, and project and financial management in line with evolving roles.

At the same time, CIGan will also continue to improve organizational effectiveness and efficiency in the way services are delivered to members. This will build on existing mechanisms within International Partnerships. This will be a continuous process, and the present International Strategy reinforces the need to ensure that such mechanisms continue to function and that the solutions developed are implemented in a timely manner.

Consulting with and engaging members *effectively* will continue to be a cornerstone of how we define organizational excellence. Over the past few years, CIGan has gradually built up its ability to dialogue with members through many formal consultative mechanisms and through informal and ongoing contact between members and staff (e.g. the International Advisory Committee, regional consultations, meetings with members' consortia on specific projects). Early in the International Strategy implementation, CIGan will review its approach to member engagement and consultation to streamline and improve these various activities. As part of this we will also provide guidance as to how CIGan will mobilize members' knowledge and expertise in support of business development activities.

CIGan will also ensure that new and existing administrative tools and procedures will support organizational excellence as defined here. The newly acquired Client Relations Management system and the Monitoring and Evaluation data management platform will be exploited to maximum potential to support business development, member engagement and good project management.