



**ICRML**  
Institut canadien  
de recherche  
sur les minorités  
linguistiques

**CIRLM**  
Canadian Institute  
for Research  
on Linguistic  
Minorities

# The National Research Hub on Official Language Minority Communities

**Strategic Plan 2023-2028**



**March 2023**

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# INTRODUCTION

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Since its inception in 2002, the Canadian Institute for Research on Linguistic Minorities (CIRLM) has been guided by a strategic plan, which serves as a reference for developing an annual implementation plan. This new strategic plan is meant to guide the activities of the CIRLM over the coming five years, from 2023 to 2028, with an emphasis on mobilizing the scientific knowledge produced on official language minority communities (OLMCs) and promoting the expertise of the Institute.

The CIRLM Strategic Plan 2023–2028 will be implemented starting in 2023, when the Government of Canada will have modernized the *Official Languages Act* and launched the Action Plan for Official Languages 2023–2028. This will be a pivotal period for OLMCs. In implementing the five-year strategic plan of the CIRLM, particular attention will be paid to monitoring federal government measures on official languages and their impact on communities.

To help develop its strategic plan, in February 2022 the CIRLM conducted a survey of member organizations of the Forum of Leaders of the Fédération des communautés francophones et acadienne du Canada (FCFA). The purpose of the survey was to gain a greater understanding of the research needs of Francophone minority communities (FMCs). The vast majority of responding organizations stated that they would like to participate in an activity organized by the CIRLM to help facilitate the identification of research needs. On May 31, 2022, the CIRLM organized a three-hour discussion group on research and the Canadian Francophonie. In addition to representatives from member organizations of the Forum of Leaders of the FCFA, the Institute invited the Quebec English-Speaking Communities Research Network (QUESCREN) to participate in the meeting to bring a broader perspective to research on linguistic minorities.

# GENERAL DIRECTIONS

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## Vision

The CIRLM wants to be a leader in research on official-language minority communities (OLMCs) and the guide for government bodies and actors committed to the development of OLMCs.

## Mission

Through its research and knowledge mobilization activities, the CIRLM promotes greater knowledge of the situation of OLMCs and provides a better understanding of their priority issues.

## Values

*Excellence, relevance and collaborative research*

With a focus on research excellence, the CIRLM conducts research activities that are relevant to OLMCs by collaborating with researchers, stakeholders, and decision makers.<sup>1</sup>

# STRATEGIC GOALS OF THE CIRLM<sup>2</sup>

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1. Initiate, conduct and support research that contributes to the advancement of knowledge about OLMCs.
2. Initiate, conduct and support research that contributes to developing interventions and policies aimed at enhancing the vitality of OLMCs.
3. Work with OLMC organizations and government bodies concerned with official languages issues in Canada to promote research on OLMCs.
4. Create opportunities for exchange and collaboration between researchers, stakeholders, and decision makers interested in OLMC issues.
5. Stimulate interest in OLMC issues among postsecondary students and researchers.

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<sup>1</sup> Stakeholders include organizations dedicated to the development and vitality of OLMCs, whereas decision makers are political actors whose decisions have an impact on OLMCs.

<sup>2</sup> The goals were defined when the Institute was created, based on the funding agreement with Canadian Heritage signed on March 26, 2002.

# AREAS OF RESEARCH OF THE CIRLM

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As reflected in its mission statement, the CIRLM seeks to increase knowledge of the situation of Canada's OLMCs and gain a better understanding of the priority issues that affect these communities. It does so by focusing on their minority context. The issue that underpins all the research work of the Institute is that of the maintenance, development, growth and vitality of OLMCs. The Institute's research areas and themes reflect and provide a framework for its research activities.

The CIRLM conducts research on all Canadian OLMCs, namely Francophone communities outside Quebec and Anglophone communities in Quebec. In Quebec, the CIRLM has a research partnership with the Quebec English-Speaking Communities Research Network (QUESCREN). It addresses OLMC issues in the various sectors of activity that make up OLMCs (health, education, economy, arts and culture, media, etc.) and concern various population groups (youth, seniors, women, immigrants, etc.). It does so by surrounding itself with a network of associate researchers who contribute to carrying out the projects of the Institute.

The research activities of the CIRLM include four areas that were revised and adopted in 2023: (1) Populations and Contexts, (2) Identity and Diversity, (3) Voices and Actions, and (4) Development and Growth. In addition, the EDI-D approach is favoured in each of these areas by integrating the principles defined by the [Canadian Research Coordinating Committee](#) (CRCC).<sup>3</sup>

The focus of the **Populations and Contexts** research area is on creating demographic portraits of OLMCs to better understand social dynamics, including the behaviours and needs of various segments of the population. Here are a few examples of themes that may be explored in this area:

- Population composition
- Generational and geographic dimensions
- Rurality and urbanity
- Migratory movements
- Immigration

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<sup>3</sup> The CRCC oversees the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada (NSERC), the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC) and the Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR). For more information about EDI at the CRCC, please visit this web page: <https://www.canada.ca/en/research-coordinating-committee/priorities/equity-diversity-inclusion-research.html>

The **Identity and Diversity** research area targets societal phenomena that shape the construction and evolution of expressions of identity in OLMCs, both collectively and individually. Here are a few examples of themes that can be explored in this area:

- Language acquisition and transmission and language behaviours
- Artistic and cultural expression
- Memory and heritage
- Multiculturalism and decolonization
- Integration and inclusion (gender, ethnocultural groups, economic disparity, etc.).

The focus of the **Voices and Actions** research area is on the engagement, mobilization and organization of citizens in OLMCs and their recognition, as well as on the implementation of language legislation. Here are a few examples of themes that could be explored in this area:

- Citizen participation in community life
- Representation and representativity and community-level media exposure
- Community perspectives and external discourses about OLMCs
- Organizational practices and governance
- Respect for language rights

The **Development and Growth** research area examines factors influencing the evolution of the vitality of memory, and the cultural, social and economic vitality of OLMCs. Here are a few examples of themes that may be explored in this area:

- Access to quality services in communities
- Institutional completeness
- Community support and financing
- Community innovation and transformation
- Prosperity and resilience of communities

# KNOWLEDGE MOBILIZATION

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Knowledge mobilization is at the heart of the activities of the CIRLM. It is based on:

1. monitoring research on OLMCs (knowledge of research that has been and is being conducted on OLMCs);
2. producing new knowledge on OLMC issues;
3. disseminating results in academic, community and government environments; and
4. collaborative research and co-producing knowledge with researchers and community and government partners.

## 1. MONITORING OLMC RESEARCH AND EMERGING ISSUES

The CIRLM team compiles a list of research carried out on OLMCs. This research watch is used to identify issues and needs related to research on OLMCs as well as the most innovative research application practices. By participating in the Forum of Leaders and various consultation committees, CIRLM team members are able to take stock of emerging issues in OLMCs. This provides an opportunity to update our knowledge of OLMCs and conduct research that is aligned with the most recent studies on these communities. This watch ensures that research approaches are relevant to the OLMC context and lead to knowledge advancement.

## 2. PRODUCING NEW KNOWLEDGE ON THE ISSUES FACED BY OLMCS AND OTHER LINGUISTIC MINORITIES

By focusing on research excellence, relevance and commitment, the CIRLM carries out sponsored projects and initiates independent projects based on its different areas of research. The CIRLM brings a critical dimension to its work and knowledge dissemination activities that reflects its independence and reinforces its credibility. Over time, the CIRLM has developed expertise that can be used to understand the challenges faced by other minority language groups in Canada and elsewhere in the world. The Institute can, in return, provide OLMCs with an understanding of the sociolinguistic dynamics of these groups. Moreover, this comparative perspective contributes to social innovation in the area of linguistic vitality and the development of OLMCs.

### **3. DISSEMINATING RESULTS IN ACADEMIC, COMMUNITY AND GOVERNMENT ENVIRONMENTS**

Advancing and disseminating knowledge in the research areas of the CIRLM contributes to a better understanding of OLMC development issues in academic, community and government environments. The Institute is committed to disseminating its work in these three sectors in order to:

- | advance the understanding of development issues among researchers and stakeholders;
- | foster the use of knowledge generated by stakeholders;
- | promote the design of public policies that support OLMC development;
- | raise public awareness about the issues facing OLMCs; and
- | stimulate research by integrating emerging researchers into CIRLM projects.

### **4. COLLABORATIVE RESEARCH WITH RESEARCHERS AND COMMUNITY AND GOVERNMENT PARTNERS**

The CIRLM conducts its research and knowledge dissemination projects by forging collaborative links with people from other institutions, and with government and community partners. These links are at the heart of the Institute's success. They provide the best conditions for producing research that is relevant to OLMCs, and that illuminates and inspires the practices of its actors. These people can obtain the status of researcher or associate researcher within the Institute.

## **BENEFITS FROM THE ACTIVITIES OF THE CIRLM**

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New knowledge about OLMCs that:

- | contributes to debate in research environments and in these communities;
- | informs and raises awareness among the general public, decision makers and stakeholders about the issues facing OLMC communities; and
- | guides community action and public policy concerning these communities.

The strategic plan is accompanied by an implementation plan that lists projects based on indicators used to monitor their progress and their alignment with the objectives of the plan.



# COMMITMENT OF THE CIRLM TO EQUITY, DIVERSITY, INCLUSION AND DECOLONIZATION (EDI-D)

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The CIRLM is dedicated to studying minority language communities, as part of an approach aimed at understanding the social dynamics of the interaction between majority and minority groups. It pays particular attention to issues related to the equity, diversity, inclusion and decolonization (EDI-D) of groups that are under-represented in Canadian society and OLMCs. Among the groups identified as under-represented are women, First Nations, Inuit and Métis communities, racialized people, people with disabilities, and 2SLGBTQ+ communities.<sup>4</sup>

In its research and knowledge mobilization work, the CIRLM mainly approaches EDI-D from three angles:

- 1) **Research methodologies**, by adopting approaches such as GBA+ and intersectional analysis, which allows for greater equity in the collection of data on the different designated groups.
- 2) **Research issues**, by developing a better understanding of situations of social injustice and processes of discrimination, but also of the resilience and resistance of designated groups within OLMCs.
- 3) **Knowledge co-construction and dissemination**, by participating in or organizing activities involving and encouraging the expression of members belonging to designated groups within OLMCs.

In addition, the CIRLM is committed to respecting the values of EDI-D within its organizational structure, so that the people who work at the Institute and who belong to under-represented groups in Canadian society and OLMCs may benefit from a living and working environment that respects the development of their full potential.

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<sup>4</sup> In accordance with the statement of the three Canadian granting agencies (Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council, Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council, and Institutes of Health Research), which can be consulted here: [https://www.nserc-crsng.gc.ca/InterAgency-Interorganismes/EDI-EDI/Index\\_eng.asp](https://www.nserc-crsng.gc.ca/InterAgency-Interorganismes/EDI-EDI/Index_eng.asp) and the commitment of Université de Moncton to EDI and its adherence to the Dimensions Charter, an initiative of the three federal agencies cited above.

# APPENDIX

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## Process

- | Approval by the Board of Directors to develop a five-year strategic plan for the CIRLM.
- | Consultations with community organizations (winter and spring 2022).
- | Discussion with the members of the Program Committee (spring 2022).
- | Reflection within the CIRLM team (spring and fall 2022, survey of organizations and discussion group, Program Committee discussion).
- | Preparation of a discussion document and distribution to the Board of Directors (December 2022).
- | Draft strategic plan presented to the Board of Directors (December 2022).
- | Final version of the strategic plan drafted and presented to the Board of Directors: December 5 2023.
- | Strategic plan adopted by the Board of Directors on December 5 2023.

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The Canadian Institute for Research on Linguistic Minorities is an independent, non-profit research organization created with funding from Canadian Heritage. Its role is that of leading, bringing together and partnering with researchers, community organizations and government bodies to promote greater knowledge of the situation of Canada's official language minorities and a better understanding of the priority issues that are of concern to OLMs.

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