

## **DALHOUSIE COMMUNITY EXPERIENCE COMMITTEE (DCEC)**

### **TERMS OF REFERENCE**

January 2022

(Revised July 2024)

#### **Purpose**

The Dalhousie Community Experience Committee (DCEC) brings together a network of community developers from across Dalhousie University in support of the university's strategic plan goals of being a civic and community-engaged university. The DCEC convenes important discussions around broadening and encouraging public access to our university, building respectful and reciprocal relationships with community, and strengthening Dalhousie's impact in our communities.

The DCEC will support a community of practice for engagement professionals who will learn from each other and community partners, share information and resources, leverage opportunities to collaborate, address barriers, and nurture a strong culture of engagement at Dalhousie.

This will include such things as:

- Creating shared resources that support engagement at Dal such as engagement principles, stakeholder mapping, and living data-bases.
- Identifying and addressing barriers to Dalhousie programs, resource, activities and facilities by some communities through an EDIA lens.
- Discussing best practices, socially innovative engagement and different techniques/tools to engage communities whether they are traditional, digital or in-person.
- Gaining new ideas, new connections, and potentially new collaborations.
- Receiving relevant updates and holding a space for dialogue on shared interests with government, businesses and non-profits.
- Sharing internal case studies/projects for feedback from peers.
- Discussing best practices and tools for evaluation community impact/social responsibility.
- Sharing information on scheduled events, initiatives and campus animation.
- Future consideration as a body that oversees and supports an annual community engagement event at our Halifax campus (something similar which is already established at our Truro campus).

## Definitions

### 1) Community Engagement

...the process of working collaboratively with and through groups of people affiliated by geographic proximity, special interest, or similar situations to address issues affecting the wellbeing of those people. It is a powerful vehicle for bringing about environmental and behavioral changes that will improve the health of the community and its members. It often involves partnerships and coalitions that help mobilize resources and influence systems, change relationships among partners, and serve as catalysts for changing policies, programs, and practices (CDC, 1997, p. 9).

### 2) Experience

an event or occurrence that leaves an impression on someone.

### 3) Community

Dalhousie has many communities. The DCEC recognizes that Dalhousie has many diverse communities including students, faculty, staff, alumni, government, business, community partners and the broader public. Our discussions will be inclusive and reflective of Dalhousie's engagement with our various communities both internal and external. The DCEC will support the larger engagement eco-system at Dal where communities and partners work collaboratively to influence and achieve positive change.

## Membership

Membership is voluntary however, efforts will be made to reflect a broad and diverse audience of staff who do community engagement related work across Dalhousie's campuses. Representation from key units across campus will be strongly encouraged. This includes, but is not limited to, programmers, planners, relationship brokers, coordinators, advisors, etc.

External groups and partners will be invited to attend meetings to present or provide updates, but will **not** be considered regular members.

CMC will maintain a central list of members.

## Committee Operations

- The DECC will be led by Community Engagement staff from Communications, Marketing and Creative Services (CMC).

- A small steering committee to set priorities, help develop topics, arrange speakers and to support facilitation of the sessions.
- Meetings and agendas will be prepared by CMC Community Engagement staff with input from the advisory group. Sessions will likely be organized by themes/topics.
- Sessions will be 4 x year (spring, summer, fall and winter).
- They will be 90 mins in length and will roughly include three components: 1) external speaker/presentation , 2) 1-2 internal presentations/case studies and 3) action items/consultation with members on engagement related tools and processes.
- An inaugural meeting will take place in January 2022.

### Accountability and reporting structure

- As the lead facilitator, CMC Community Engagement staff will strive to be as accountable to the network through regular/transparent feedback mechanisms and clear process.
- They will aim to finalize and operationalize engagement tools that the network has supported and advised on through the development phase.

### Meeting Schedule

Winter Meeting	Planned agenda
Spring Meeting	Planned agenda
Summer Meeting	Social gathering
Fall Meeting	Planned agenda

### DCEC Membership and Stakeholder Connections

Dalhousie Unit, Faculty or Area	Constituent representation
CMC Community Engagement	Community-at-large
Global and Government Relations	Government(all levels)
Advancement	Alumni
Indigenous Community Relations	Indigenous communities
African Nova Scotian Community Relations	African Nova Scotian communities
Athletics	General community with recreation focus
Dal Arts Centre	General community with arts focus
Dal Libraries	General community access/support

Dalhousie Truro Campus	Truro representation
Dalhousie Open Learning	Community/academic partnerships
Student Affairs	Student engagement
Facilities Management	Placemaking and infrastructure engagement

Additional partners and connections are always welcome. Please contact [community.engagement@dal.ca](mailto:community.engagement@dal.ca) to connect regarding the DCEC.