

# Global Engagement Strategy

2020/21 – 2023/24



St. Lawrence  
College

## SLC in Five

**SLC's Global Engagement Strategy directly supports and aligns with SLC's Vision.**

### Our Vision

**Rooted in our communities, we will be a globally recognized college delivering innovative learning opportunities and preparing career-ready graduates to be leaders in their fields.**

The launch of SLC in Five, the College's strategic plan (2019-2024), in spring 2019 laid the foundation for this Strategy to be formally built. Among other priorities, the strategy seeks to support global engagement in the strategic plan in the following priority areas:

**Employee Success:** Create opportunities to gain global perspectives

**Academic Excellence:** Prepare career-ready students

**Student Enrichment:** Connect our students to the world

**Operational Excellence:** Drive sustainability and improvements in operations

**Community Engagement:** Strengthen the SLC global alumni network

This strategy also supports and aligns with SLC's EDI & Belonging Initiative, the Academic Plan, Sustainability Plan, and other related and intersecting efforts taking place across the organization.

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**This inaugural Global Engagement Strategy for SLC emboldens our vision of being a globally recognized college by connecting our students to the world, providing our employees with opportunities to gain global perspectives, and supporting our efforts to build deeper, meaningful community connections, including with our global alumni network.”**

**- Glenn Vollebregt, President and CEO, St. Lawrence College**

## Land Acknowledgement

St. Lawrence College is situated on the traditional lands of the Anishinaabe and Haudenosaunee peoples. May we always be grateful to live and learn on these lands.



## Note from the President and CEO

There is no denying, perhaps more than ever before, that we live, learn, and work in a rapidly changing, complex, and interconnected world that requires us to respond to change with agility and care. Our ability to grow as a post-secondary institution and to prepare career-ready graduates is no exception. In these unprecedented times, we know that solutions to today's (and future) global challenges require increased global engagement - not less - signaling an even greater need to deepen St. Lawrence College's (SLC) strategic direction as a globally engaged college.

I'm proud to say that this inaugural **Global Engagement Strategy (2020/21 – 2023/24)** for SLC emboldens our vision of being a globally recognized college by connecting our students to the world, providing our employees with opportunities to gain global perspectives, and supporting our efforts to build deeper, meaningful community connections, including with our global alumni network. These ongoing efforts directly embody our corporate values of Students First, Teamwork, Innovation, Integrity, and Belonging.

The launch of SLC's strategic plan for 2019-2024, SLC in Five, laid the foundation for our Global Engagement Strategy to be built. The strategy's objectives and supporting initiatives are the direct result of not only the broad contributions we received when developing SLC in Five, but more specifically from a similarly comprehensive, tri-campus consultation process involving students, staff, faculty, administration, and our communities in support of our college-wide internationalization initiative. We heard you.

I want to thank all of you that contributed your valuable time, energy, and perspectives to this important process and for your ongoing efforts to advance our ability to be a globally recognized and engaged college.



Glenn Vollebregt is President and CEO of St. Lawrence College. He is passionate about the ongoing success and development of SLC students and graduates, and to working collaboratively with government and industry to benefit students and college education in Ontario.

## Note from the Vice President, International Education

For over two years, St. Lawrence College (SLC) has been actively consulting and connecting with students and our entire college community in relation to our internationalization initiative and the development of its supporting strategy. At the same time, we've been taking concrete, intentional actions to directly support this change at the college for all students, employees and our campus communities.

I am thrilled with the launch of our first Global Engagement Strategy. This comprehensive strategy further refines the concept of internationalization for SLC, making global engagement at both home and abroad our driving force. The strategy represents our collective vision for global engagement, our "one college, one student" philosophy and the strategic priorities to support a longer-term, proactive and unified approach.

The launch of this strategy also provides a timely roadmap for SLC as we navigate new, global challenges and their impact on post-secondary education in Canada, particularly for international education. The global pandemic has created challenges for all of us yet also created new opportunities to connect, explore new technologies and reimagine what it truly means to be globally engaged – taking us far beyond singular perceptions of international student enrolment or study abroad participation rates.

I want to express my sincere thanks to all those involved in the consultation process, offering immensely valuable insights – the vast majority of which I'm confident you'll see reflected herein. Thank you as well to all of you who have supported these efforts, including the project's 50+ Change Champions from across the College, our Internationalization Advisory Group and members of our supportive and engaged campus communities. This work would not be possible without you.



Shelley Aylesworth-Spink, PhD is Vice President of International Education for St. Lawrence College. Shelley is a passionate advocate for international education, recognizing its value for all students, employees and campus communities.

## Context for Global Engagement

Internationalization efforts formally began at SLC in February 2018, though this process has been taking place across service and academic departments at the College for a number of years. The internationalization of SLC and the development of a formalized strategy is a response to changing demographics, trends in post-secondary education across Canada and preparing students for success in a global environment while simultaneously remaining in support of our campus communities' in-migration efforts and employer partner needs. The internationalization of post-secondary education can broadly be described as:

*...the process of integrating international, intercultural, and global dimensions and perspectives into the purpose, functions and delivery of education. It shapes institutional values, influences external relations and partnerships, and impacts upon the entire educational enterprise.*

*Additionally, internationalization aims to educate students as global citizens, including attributes of openness to and understanding of other worldviews, empathy for people with different backgrounds and experience to oneself, the capacity to value diversity, and respect for indigenous peoples and knowledge. (CBIE, 2014)<sup>1</sup>*

In other words, these efforts aim to positively impact the entire institution, including all students, staff, faculty and management, as well as each of our campus communities. SLC has been taking intentional and focused actions to support the broad success of internationalization and to develop and launch its first comprehensive strategy to support this work that further refines the concept of internationalization for SLC - making global engagement

our central focus. The launch of **SLC in Five**, the College's strategic plan (2019-2024), in spring 2019 laid the foundation for our Global Engagement Strategy to be formally built. This strategy also supports and aligns with SLC's Equity, Diversity, Inclusion (EDI) & Belonging Initiative, the Academic Plan, Sustainability Plan, and other related and intersecting efforts taking place across the institution.

We are elated to launch our inaugural Global Engagement Strategy (2020/21 – 2023/24) that is firmly grounded in SLC's values of Students First, Teamwork, Innovation, Integrity, and Belonging.



<sup>1</sup> [cbie.ca/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/Internationalization-Principles-for-Canadian-Institutions-EN.pdf](https://cbie.ca/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/Internationalization-Principles-for-Canadian-Institutions-EN.pdf)



# Global Engagement at SLC

Beginning with two employees and few international students, SLC's International Education department was established nearly 20 years ago in order to recruit and welcome international students to our campuses and increase institutional partnerships. Since that time, the department has grown sizably in its number of staff, programs, and global reach along with the growth in enrolment of international students and first generation Canadians, in step with the vast majority of post-secondary institutions across Canada. This growth is, in part, a means of offsetting declining domestic enrolment across the country while simultaneously offering world class learning opportunities to international students and enhancing a pathway to immigration for many newcomers. In concert with our increasingly diverse student body, this initiative also supports the linkage between significant matters of equity, diversity, and inclusion, SLC's new corporate value of Belonging as well as the social and financial sustainability of our institution.

At present, we are immensely proud to welcome over 1,600 students from over 40 countries around the globe to our College, our campus communities, and our country. Internationalization not only enriches life at SLC but enhances the social and cultural fabric of our communities – all while having a positive impact on our regional economy. For these reasons, SLC adheres to its aspirations and efforts to increase international student enrolment as part of an in-migration strategy for our communities. According to [Canada's International Education Strategy \(2019-2024\)](#) in 2018 international students in Canada contributed an estimated \$21.6 billion to the country's economy and supported almost 170,000 jobs. This impact is certainly felt in our campus communities of Kingston, Brockville, and Cornwall.



The [Canadian Bureau of International Education \(CBIE\)](#) identifies that nearly 650,000 international students chose to study in Canada at all levels in 2019. This level of growth demonstrated the need for institutions like SLC to approach the entirety of international education from a broader, more strategic perspective. At the same time, the current global pandemic has created disruption and pause in all sectors and organizations and international education at SLC is no exception – demonstrating an even greater need to deepen our strategic direction as a globally engaged college, both at home and abroad.

A greater global perspective allows us to better prepare for, and be responsive to, international and global events and issues. An increased focus on global engagement also ensures that our students are more aware of global issues and equipped with the intercultural knowledge and skills needed for successful careers in a rapidly changing environment. For instance, according to [RBC's 2018 Humans Wanted Report](#), in order to remain competitive and resilient in the Canadian labour market, “global competencies like cultural awareness, language and adaptability will be in demand.” Perhaps more than ever before, responding to global issues requires strong global engagement and intercultural knowledge and skills. According to [UNESCO's Global Education First Initiative](#), global citizenship not only prepares students to be successful in the workplace of the 21st century but also “provides the understanding, skills and values students need to cooperate in resolving the interconnected challenges of the 21st century” such as climate change, conflict, poverty, issues of equity, sustainability, and more.



## Consultation & Engagement - We Listened



From the outset, this initiative has sought to be inclusive, transparent, consultative, and evidence-based, in alignment with best practices in change management.

An essential step in SLC's internationalization process to date has been to establish a deep understanding of the current perspectives and experiences of our students, faculty, staff, administration, and campus communities in relation to global engagement, while raising broad awareness of the initiative.

Our comprehensive, tri-campus approach to consultation related to this inaugural strategy was far-reaching and highly intentional in order to ensure that we are heading in

this direction together, that all voices were heard and reflected in the strategy. The strategy is also directly rooted in, and in response to, **SLC in Five** and its wide-ranging consultation across our communities.

The internationalization-specific outreach included interviews with senior leadership, student and employee surveys, student pop-up events, focus groups, consultation cafés, social hackathons, the formation of the Internationalization Advisory Group (IAG) and the creation of Internationalization Change Champions, to name a few. For more detailed information on our consultation and engagement process, please see [Appendix A](#).



## Objectives & Supporting Initiatives - We Heard You

**While continuing our ongoing efforts to support the internationalization process, we listened deeply throughout the last two years and we heard you loud and clear. The following five pillars, or objectives, and sample supporting initiatives represent the collective input we received during this process and our resulting direction.**

1. Create a distinctive global culture at SLC encompassing the daily academic and student life activities of staff, students, faculty, and alumni.

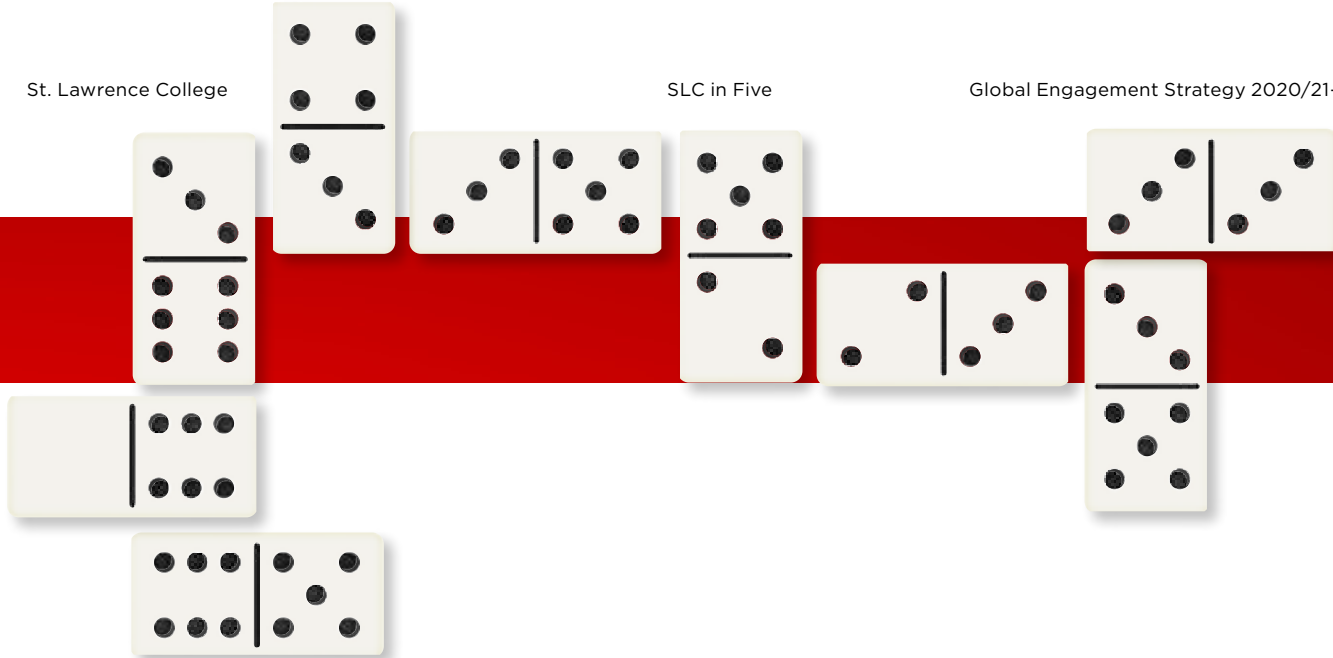
### Sample Initiatives:

- Support strategic enrolment management goals, including the diversification of international student enrolment.
- Build on international aspects of teaching and learning by supporting professional standards established and promoted through the Academic division. These standards will include enhanced and intentional culturally inclusive and interdisciplinary teaching and learning opportunities.
- Under the leadership of the Alumni and Development Office, support the development and growth of the College's global alumni relations initiatives to ensure all students remain connected and engaged with SLC.

2. Develop and support global citizenship among students, staff, faculty and alumni.

### Sample Initiatives:

- Work with Human Resources and the School of Contemporary Teaching and Learning to create an intercultural training level of achievement.
- Develop global citizenship training as part of "new employee orientation," including general onboarding, the Leadership Development Program (LDP) and the Contemporary Educator Program (CEP) for new faculty.
- Support the development of a Global Citizenship Certificate for students that recognizes a high level of intercultural competence, global perspective and social responsibility.
- Align global engagement activities to SLC's social and environmental sustainability initiatives, including with Indigenous Ways of Knowing and Being, the EDI & Belonging Initiative and related institutional efforts.



**3. Champion both the transition for international students to SLC and Canada along with an enriched intercultural learning experience for all students.**

**Sample Initiatives:**

- Align policies, programs, and co-curricular initiatives with a globally and interculturally-oriented perspective.
- Increase transparency and formalize financial supports plan, including scholarships, emergency bursaries, and on-campus employment for international students and financial supports for domestic students seeking study abroad/exchange opportunities.
- Co-create exceptional career services for international students that begins at the point of enrolment and continues throughout their academic program to their first professional job in our communities.

**4. Create and nurture excellence in academic opportunities and partnerships in Canada and abroad.**

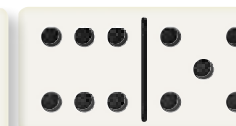
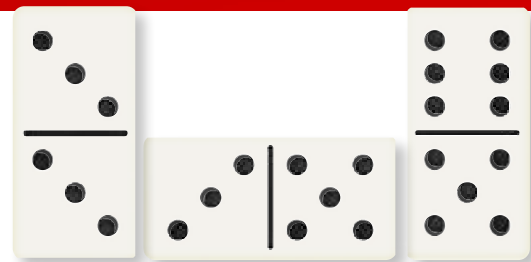
**Sample Initiatives:**

- Develop an international partnership framework to engage with new international academic partners, ensure academic quality for program offerings and refine existing partnerships.
- Ensure a focus on improving equity of access to global learning opportunities for all students through travel or virtual means, particularly for students from Indigenous, racialized, first-generation and other underrepresented groups.
- Research and develop short-term global engagement customized contract learning to be delivered on campuses or online.

## 5. Work in our SLC campus communities to support intercultural awareness and meet immigration needs.

### Sample Initiatives:

- Become a leader in community-led coalitions focused on immigration strategies, identifying barriers, and overcoming these issues.
- Connect international students to key community organizations, and close the gap in community services for students in our communities.
- Work collaboratively at the point of international student recruitment to connect potential students to careers in SLC communities.
- Support intercultural awareness and competency among all students.



## Implementation & Measuring Success

Throughout the consultation process and the development of this strategy, we have been in close contact and discussion with our partners across the college, ensuring we can effectively meet these and other initiatives together.

The implementation of these efforts will also require taking campus and community-specific differences into account, while ensuring an overall cohesive approach. As we work together to achieve these objectives and supporting initiatives we will be working within a transparent, evaluative framework. In other words, we will set indicators that align with our supporting initiatives and work with our partners to demonstrate our progress throughout the strategy's duration.

We are deeply committed to the evaluation and assessment of all aspects of this work, to ensure results are achieved.

## A Shared Global Future

The expected outcomes of our collective efforts will connect our students to the world, prepare career-ready graduates for a competitive global environment, enhance opportunities for employees to gain global perspectives and strengthen the SLC global alumni network.

This Global Engagement Strategy will further position SLC to better serve all of our students, employees, and alumni and to connect with our communities in new, socially sustainable and innovative ways.

As we embark on this journey together, we will all be better equipped to respond with agility and care in an ever-changing global environment.



# Acknowledgements

**The development of SLC's Global Engagement Strategy was made possible by the contributions of our entire community. Particular contributions requiring sincere thanks and acknowledgement include:**

## **Strategic Initiative Project Team**

Ining Chao, Associate Dean,  
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Richard Webster,  
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## **SLC's Internationalization Advisory Group (IAG) Members (Past & Present):**

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Carolina Palmer

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Cheryl Robinson

Christina Chrysler

Christina Decarie

Claudio Righetto

Curtis Runions

Danielle D'Souza

David Chau

Denise Nielsen

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Sarah Hannah  
Shelley Aylesworth-Spink  
Stacy Gall  
Stephen Finnagan  
Wendy Whitehead

**This work would also not be possible without the dedicated and thoughtful contributions provided by our students, staff, faculty, senior leadership, and community partners throughout this entire process.**

**Thank you.**



## Appendix A

### Arriving Here Together

**Throughout the consultation process, the Internationalization Project Team has sought to engage and consult students, staff, faculty, administration, and our communities in authentic and meaningful ways, with the critical goal being that all those involved in the process would see themselves represented within SLC's Global Engagement Strategy and our ongoing efforts to support this work.**

Examples of the comprehensive nature of the project's tri-campus consultation and engagement process, include:

- One-on-one interviews with all members of College Leadership Team;
- Student survey (nearly 600 responses);
- Employee survey (over 300 responses);
- Employee consultation café events (x8);
- Student consultation pop-up events (x7);
- Faculty Union and Support Staff Union engagement meetings (x2);
- 50+ tri-campus Internationalization Change Champions;
- Creation of internal Internationalization Advisory Group (IAG);
- IAG Strategy Development Workshop;
- Social Hackathons (x3);
- Program Coordinator discussions on Internationalization during World Café; and
- International Education Department Visioning Sessions.

Overarching themes that emerged throughout the duration of the consultation process included (but not limited to):

- Increase awareness of internationalization, including the college-wide rationale
- Diversification of international student recruitment
- Internationalization/interculturalization of the curriculum, including enhanced and intentional culturally inclusive and interdisciplinary teaching and learning opportunities, where applicable
- Enhance related professional development opportunities for staff and faculty, at home and abroad
- Develop an intercultural competence qualification for students in order to compliment current in-class and on campus opportunities
- Further enhance international student supports
- Diversify on-campus food offerings to better represent the diverse dietary and cultural needs of our student body and employees

- Celebrate successes of our faculty, staff and students as they relate to internationalization
- Increase study abroad opportunities along with financial supports to better address barriers for all students to participate
- Develop a readily available financial supports plan for international students
- Housing availability, namely for international students on Kingston campus
- Review SLC policies and physical spaces to ensure needs of all students and employees are being met
- Directly support and facilitate stronger intercultural integration for all students
- Increase English language supports available to international and newcomer students
- Enhance information and opportunity related to applied research funding related to internationalization projects
- Connect employers and placement partners with international students in more intentional and meaningful ways
- Establish a Community Engagement Plan in relation to SLC's internationalization efforts to support broader social integration of students





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