

## INTRODUCTION

In 2017 CFIC produced an ambitious strategic plan. In the subsequent four years we achieved many of our goals, learned a lot and became a powerful, cohesive team. Our challenge for the next four or five years is to expand on the excellent work we've done and take the organization in directions that will allow us to expand our reach and achieve even more.

We delayed work on our new strategic plan while we put all of our resources into coping with the pandemic. We quickly moved programming online and created excellent content to help people understand the emerging science of COVID-19.

We resumed our planning work early in 2021 when we surveyed our membership and donors to find out what they valued about CFIC, what concerned them and where they wanted us to go. Our 2022-2026 plan incorporates this feedback.



## Strategic Plan 2022-2026

### *Report to our membership*

### Mission

We are a community of critical thinkers. Science, compassion, and freedom of inquiry inform our personal and collective choices. Our programs, services and tools support people, organizations and governments to make evidence-based decisions that improve lives in Canada and around the world.

### Vision

A world where evidence and critical thinking are valued, where superstition and prejudice are eliminated, and where science and compassion guide public policy.

### Values

#### Curious Rationality

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Answers to questions are best found by looking at sound evidence, critical thinking, and robust dialogue. This is how people can have confidence in the answers to all kinds of questions, from the practical to the philosophical.

#### Diversity and Inclusion

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We invest in our extraordinary and diverse community of individuals. We rely on those individual perspectives and voices to achieve our mission.

#### Compassionate Active Citizenship

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We work to build a community based on humanist values and a desire to help others to do the same in their own communities. Our members connect and engage others with kindness and fairness.

#### Transparent Humility

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We embrace clear and open communications rooted in mutual respect and good intentions. We recognize that there is an inherent beauty in diversity of opinions and perspectives within an evolving society.



## Focus of this Strategic Plan: **Action**

### **Advocacy and Education**

CFIC will be focusing on advocacy and education in each of our core areas. We will look for opportunities to change the status quo through the overlapping actions of public education and advocacy.

### **Expanding and Diversifying Leadership**

CFIC recognizes that expanding our leadership team means that we can accomplish more and that diversifying our leadership team means that we will hear new ideas that will lead to a stronger organization.

### **Value to members**

CFIC has always and will continue to offer value to our members by providing meaningful opportunities to learn new things and be engaged in a secular community.



## Core Areas of Focus

### Critical Thinking

Critical thinking is the heart of CFIC. Our members are hungry to hone their own critical thinking skills while encouraging others to consider the benefits of critical thought and offer helpful suggestions and resources. CFIC will make critical thinking more accessible by promoting the benefits and providing easy-to-understand and use resources to assist with the process of critical thinking.

#### ***Our goals:***

CFIC will focus on critical thinking as an activity of daily life. We will provide, easy to read and understand information and resources that make critical thinking accessible including:

1. A monthly critical thinking for everyday life column in *Critical Links*
2. Collating and publishing the best of critical thinking for everyday life
3. An online, searchable library of critical thinking resources

### Secularism

CFIC will work with our partners to identify areas in which Canada fails to provide secular governance and take action to increase awareness and create change through public education and advocacy.

#### ***Our goals:***

1. CFIC will pursue partnerships that will promote government neutrality in matters of religion including:
  - a. Setting the stage for a change to the Census question about religion (currently “*What is this person’s religion? Indicate a specific denomination or religion even if this person is not currently a practicing member of that group.*”)
  - b. Creating proposed questions related to secularism for candidates in elections
  - c. Petitioning for changes to laws that discriminate against non-religious populations (for example Less Complex Claims)
  - d. Other opportunities as they present themselves
2. CFIC will provide public education about the cost (financial and social) of government policies that favour religious organizations including, but not limited to:
  - a. The cost of Advancement of Religion as a charitable purpose
  - b. The public funding of religious schools, hospitals and other organizations
3. CFIC will seek opportunities to be involved in changing laws that violate the human rights of individuals by applying religious dictates including looking for opportunities to act as intervenors in court challenges

## Scientific Inquiry

CFIC will support the scientific community by promoting excellence in science and providing public education that supports the use of science to understand the world and to make good choices.

### ***Our goals:***

1. Focus science education on
  - Differentiation between science and pseudoscience
  - Environmental concerns
  - Health, with a specific focus on vaccinations
2. Identify and promote science influencers
3. Recruit an environmental scientist for *Critical Links* articles
4. To continuously use the Is It Science? Infographic to demonstrate how people can assess the validity of scientific information being presented online

## Human Rights

CFIC will work on an individual and collective level to improve human rights, with a focus on creed. We will do this in partnership with Canadian and International organizations. We will assist individuals through our Assistance for Apostates program and groups through advocacy and public education.

### ***Our goals:***

1. Continue to support Omer (an apostate fleeing religious persecution) until he arrives in Canada and look for other opportunities to assist apostates
2. Create online resources for apostates fleeing persecution
3. Lobby governments and United Nations to ensure that refugees being persecuted for apostacy receive the same treatment as those being persecuted for other religious beliefs
4. Provide public education about the plight of apostates

## Building Community

Branches in Communities and our virtual branch are an important source of community for our members and an important source of members and volunteers for our national organization. Over the next 3 years, CFIC will support and strengthen our branches to allow them to grow and meet the needs of their membership, while creating increased alignment with national goals and strategies.

### ***Our goals:***

1. The Virtual Branch has been the lifeline of CFIC through the pandemic. As we (hopefully) emerge, we must re-envision this branch. We must focus on expanding the leadership team and create more opportunities for a permanent and connected membership
2. We must build on the work of community branches by assisting them to expand their leadership teams and offer more regular programming that allows members to connect with one another



## Enabling Activities

**Diversified and Expanded Leadership:** CFIC will continue to expand and diversify its leadership. Our decentralized model of governance means that many voices contribute to the organization. CFIC encourages diverse viewpoints and acknowledges that since our members do not share a single opinion, neither will our leadership team.

**Partnerships:** Our community is stronger together. CFIC will continue to work with partners wherever possible to advance joint purposes. In some instances, partnership activities will be embedded in established goals, however emerging partnerships will be nurtured and applied whenever collaboration will advance the goals of CFIC.

**Communications:** The CFIC communications team will continue to build the strength of the organization and to share information related to our mandate.

**Administrative modernization:** CFIC will:

- update letters patent to better reflect its current and desired future activities,
- review and amend its by-laws, and
- formalize its policy and procedure manual.