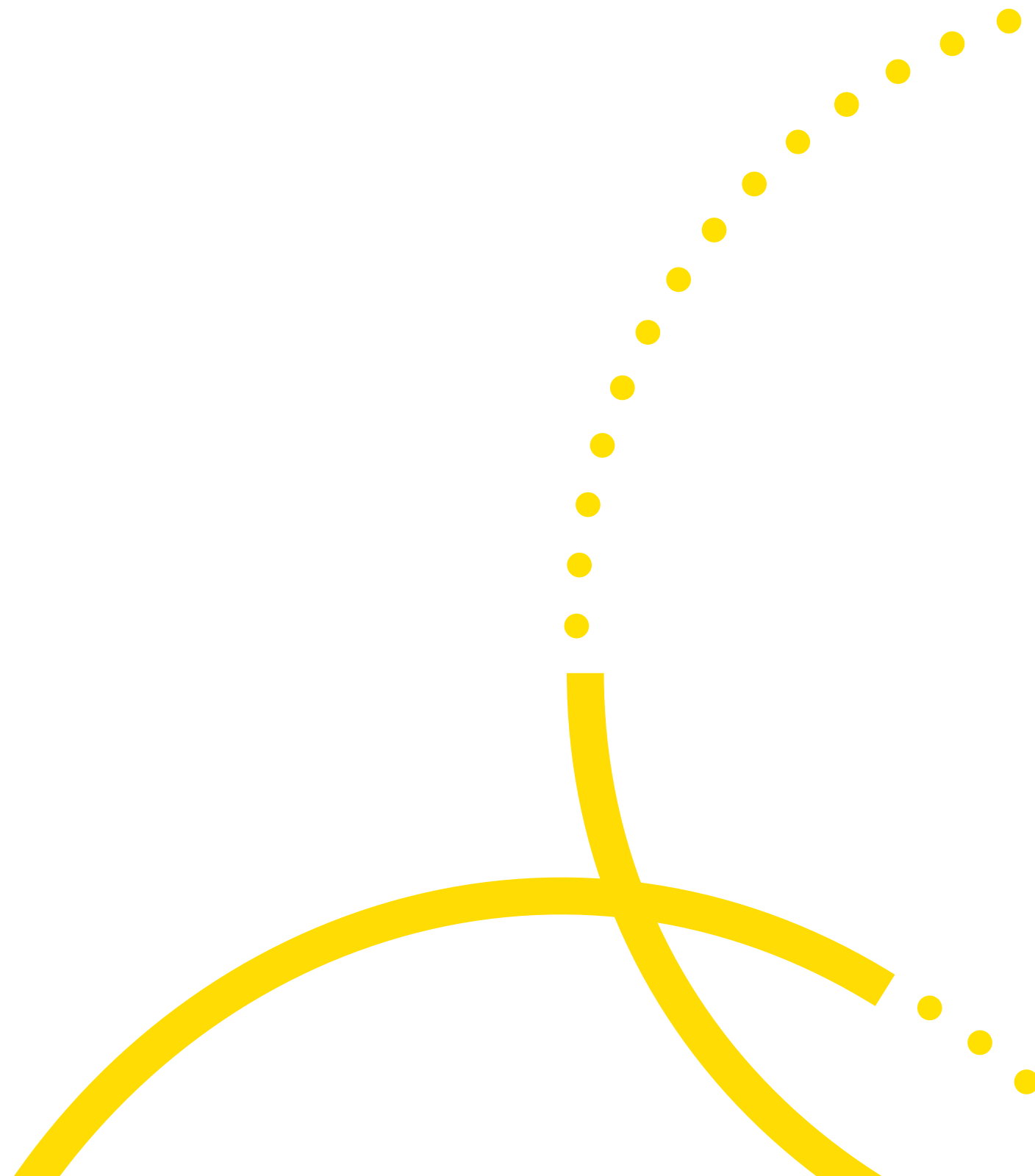




# 2020-2021 **IMPACT REPORT**

 DALHOUSIE UNIVERSITY | [insight.circle@dal.ca](mailto:insight.circle@dal.ca)  
ALUMNI





# THANK YOU!

The Dal Insight Circle was born from the knowledge that our work in the Office of Advancement begins and ends with our alumni and community. Our mission is to strengthen and build on existing relationships, discover and highlight shared interests, secure support for the university and create connections with Dal's worldwide community of more than 150,000 alumni.

The Dal Insight Circle is our first-ever borderless, flexible, and digital alumni volunteer program, and your support and enthusiasm this year made it our largest and most successful alumni volunteer initiative in our 200-year history.

In our inaugural year, more than 540 volunteers responded to 11 surveys surrounding a variety of strategic initiatives and questions for the Office of Advancement and our campus partners. You shared your time, voice, experiences and expertise with us, and in turn influenced important university decisions— creating a shared vision for our future.

On behalf of the Office of Advancement and the broader Dalhousie community, we thank you for your insights.

*“As an alumnus with a busy life, it is hard to find ways to stay in touch with what is happening at Dal. The Dal Insight Circle helps me be connected to Dal, doesn't require a huge time commitment and allows me to give back in another way. It is a nice addition to the other ways I still contribute to the Dal community.”*

*— Natalie Borden (BScPh'94)*



## QUICK FACTS

**11**

QUESTIONNAIRES

**543**

SURVEY  
RESPONDENTS

NEARLY

**4,000**

SURVEY  
RESPONSES

MORE THAN

**63,000**

UNIQUE DATA  
POINTS

*“The Dal Insight Circle is an easy way to make a meaningful contribution to the future of Dalhousie. The university has found an effective way to leverage alumni voices for input on strategic priorities. I am a graduate of two other universities that should be following Dal’s example!”*

*— Justin Fox (MLIS’95)*



# 10 CORE THEMES & SUBSEQUENT IMPACT

## SEPTEMBER – EQUITY, DIVERSITY & INCLUSION

- Garnered a better understanding of the diversity within our alumni community
- Introduced new intercultural competency workshops based on your feedback
- Adapting new practices to support equity, diversity, inclusion and accessibility for our boards and committees

## OCTOBER – DIGITAL COMMUNICATIONS

- Reinforced a digital-first approach for alumni communications
- Identified audience profiles and use of various digital and social platforms
- Identified core subject interests and storytelling opportunities

## NOVEMBER – ALUMNI EVENTS

- Discovered an appetite and preference for online events that we explored for our Open Dialogue Live series
- Applied insights on the affect of the COVID-19 pandemic on event interests to our future plans
- Evaluated our platforms for digital events against the feedback you provided

*“The Dal Insight Circle has been one of, if not the most innovative volunteer initiative that I have ever seen. I have consulted the data a lot over the past year and the findings are so valuable to our work in Development and Advancement overall.”*

*— Ben McIsaac,  
Assistant Vice-president, Development*

# 10 CORE THEMES & SUBSEQUENT IMPACT (CONTINUED)

## DECEMBER – CAREER SERVICES & PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

- Launching an alumni-to-alumni mentorship program in response to 83% of young professional respondents indicating interest in being mentored alongside 50% of all respondents willing to be a mentor
- Partnered with internal and external providers to curate more workshops and professional development opportunities for alumni at all career stages
- Exploring connection opportunities beyond mentorship to help young alumni grow their professional networks

## JANUARY – SUPPORT OF CAUSES

- Utilized your insights to evaluate, change, and/or reinforce various philanthropic activities and donor relations activities
- Identified areas of interest and made new potential donor connections based off your responses
- Learned more about the causes and initiatives most important to you

## FEBRUARY – MID-YEAR REVIEW

- Translated your desire for more diverse and robust questionnaires into partnerships with other departments and stakeholders in the Dalhousie community to expand the breadth of topics
- Addressed some performance inefficiencies in our technologies
- Applied your feedback to early-stage planning for our second year

*“I loved attending Dalhousie and during my studies I was involved in many student committees and campus opportunities. As an alumnus the sense of pride and enjoyment returns through the Dal Insight Circle because it affords me time to reflect on my past, on the university and to focus on the needs of today’s students and programming for their support and success.”*

*— Marianne Gianacopoulos (BA’86)*

# 10 CORE THEMES & SUBSEQUENT IMPACT (CONTINUED)

## **MARCH – VOLUNTEERISM**

- Confirmed significant interest in a mentorship platform for both mentors and mentees
- Actively applying respondents' feedback that they are looking for more digital volunteer opportunities to our future program planning, including the mentorship program
- Learned that flexibility to engage on your own time is the most influential factor to volunteer engagement

## **APRIL – INTERNATIONAL CONNECTIONS & GLOBAL RANKINGS**

- Enhanced our understanding of alumni mobility and international connections post-graduation
- Identified a group of highly-interested participants for future involvement with global university ranking initiatives
- Identified greater opportunity for international alumni storytelling and connections

## **MAY – DEMONSTRATING IMPACT**

- Identified room for us to improve awareness of Dal's Research priorities
- Further defined audience interests in impact story themes and profiles
- Applied your desires and preferences for the demonstration of impact to future volunteer and donor stewardship plans

## **JUNE – DALOPEN & BARRIERS TO ACCESS AND ENTRY**

- The Faculty of Open Learning & Career Development is actively exploring responses and data from this questionnaire, establishing the foundational planning of the DalOpen initiative. We look forward to more detailed updates in future!

*“We engaged the Dal Insight Circle to gather alumni perspectives on an initiative we have under way, DalOpen. The feedback we received from the questionnaire was invaluable. The alumni participants represent a wide range of backgrounds, sectors and life journeys, giving us an equally wide range of perspectives on the questions posed. This diversity in perspectives provides us with a rich set of data upon which to base our decision-making. Thanks to the Dal Insight Circle for helping us find answers to our questions and better plan for our initiative!”*

*— Dianne Tyers, Dean,  
Faculty of Open Learning  
& Career Development*

## GRAND PRIZE

This year's Grand Prize of the Taste of Nova Scotia Collection, valued at \$250, has been generously provided by our partners Taste of Nova Scotia. This hand-picked selection of food and beverage products from Nova Scotian producers is on its way to our lucky winner, Kaveen (BA'18), Dal Insight Circle member since August 2020!



## 2021 BEST VOLUNTEER INITIATIVE

This Spring, the Dal Insight Circle was awarded the 2021 Gold Medal for the Best Volunteer Initiative in the Canadian Council for the Advancement of Education (CCAEE) Prix D'Excellence awards! CCAEE is an organization that promotes excellence in the advancement of education across 132 member institutions in Canada, and your support and involvement helped the Dal Insight Circle stand out from our national competition!





## JOIN US FOR YEAR TWO!

We are actively recruiting for the 2021-2022 Dal Insight Circle, commencing in September 2021. If you have not already confirmed your participation for the coming year and wish to do so or have any questions, please contact us at [insight.circle@dal.ca](mailto:insight.circle@dal.ca) or 902-494-6857.

*“The work of Advancement centers around you, our alumni, donors and community. Through the Dal Insight Circle you bring your voices and perspectives to this work in a formative way with significant impact on our engagement strategies, programs, future planning and successes—a unique value that is attracting the support and partnership of colleagues and departments across our institution. Your thoughtful responses each month have not only elevated the first year of this program, but extend deep into the current and future successes of important Dalhousie initiatives and decisions and we are tremendously grateful for these contributions.”*

— Peter G. Fardy,  
Vice-president, Advancement