

### **Call for Proposals**

## **Restoring Trust, Strengthening Relationships: Identity, Diversity, and Social Harmony in Canada**

Submission deadline: June 15th, 2026

Canada's identity, historically shaped by defining pillars such as indigeneity, francophonie, immigration, and diversity, is facing a moment of uncertainty. Today, a convergence of challenges is testing long-held narratives and raising new questions about unity, trust, and harmony.

Debates around separation in Quebec and Alberta, changing views on immigration, and reduced migration targets reanimate reflection on Canada's identity, its economic vitality, and the narratives Canadians tell about themselves. Even as many acknowledge these uncertainties, Canadians continue to express pride in the country's reputation as an open and welcoming society.

Conversations about history, belonging, and the foundations of Canadian identity have also been shaped by Indigenous identity affirmation and reconciliation. Alongside the enduring role of francophone communities and institutions, these dynamics remind us that Canada's identity is not singular but evolving and often contested.

These questions unfold within an international context marked by heightened geopolitical tensions and growing concerns about prejudice and hate—including racism, antisemitism, islamophobia and other forms of discrimination. Addressing these challenges requires not only vigilance and effective policy responses, but also renewed efforts to restore trust and strengthen relationships across communities.

There is also growing recognition that the language used to describe diversity and identity—cohesion, multiculturalism, interculturalism, integration, pluralism, and belonging—does not always capture the complexity of current realities. Though central to policy and public debate, these terms are interpreted differently across regions and communities, even as research suggests that the attitudes associated with them often overlap.

This summit will bring together scholars, policymakers, community leaders, journalists, educators, and practitioners to reflect on these developments and to explore how Canada can restore trust, strengthen relationships, and sustain social harmony in an era of demographic change, political tension, and evolving identity discourse.

## Themes for Submission

We invite proposals that explore the evolving nature of identity, belonging, reconciliation, intergroup relations, social harmony and nation-building.

### **1. Canada's Narrative at a Moment of Uncertainty**

Canada's national story has long emphasized immigration, pluralism, and the coexistence of diverse identities within a shared framework. Yet current debates raise questions about how this narrative is evolving.

Possible topics include:

- Immigration and Canada's demographic future
- The implications of reduced immigration levels
- Regional tensions and debates about the future of the federation
- The evolution of Canada's national narrative
- Identity and unity in a diverse federation
- The Canada we believe in

### **2. History of Immigration and Refugees in Canada**

Canada's identity has been profoundly shaped by successive waves of immigration and the arrival of refugees from diverse regions of the world. Historical perspectives help illuminate how policies, public attitudes, and global events have influenced patterns of inclusion, exclusion, and nation-building.

Possible topics include:

- Historical waves of immigration and refugee resettlement
- The evolution of Canadian immigration and refugee policy
- Experiences of specific immigrant and refugee communities over time
- Historical perspectives on exclusion, discrimination, and inclusion
- The role of memory, commemoration, and historical narratives in shaping contemporary debates

### **3. Immigration, Diversity, and Intercultural Interaction**

Research indicates that Canadians generally express comfort with cultural diversity and cross-cultural interaction, though levels of enthusiasm vary across regions and demographic groups.

Possible topics include:

- Attitudes toward immigration and diversity
- Intercultural interaction and trust across communities
- Regional and generational differences in perceptions of diversity

- Integration, belonging, and civic participation
- The role of diasporas in shaping intercultural relations within Canada and transnationally

#### **4. Canada–United States Relations and Their Impact on Identity and Diversity**

Canada’s relationship with the United States has long influenced its economic, political, and cultural development. In an era of shifting geopolitical dynamics, this relationship continues to shape Canadian perspectives on identity, immigration, security, and social cohesion.

Possible topics include:

- Cross-border migration and policy coordination
- Comparative approaches to diversity, integration, and multiculturalism
- The influence of U.S. political and social trends on Canadian discourse
- Border regions and transnational communities
- Canada–U.S. relations in the context of global geopolitical change

#### **5. Rethinking the Language of Diversity**

The vocabulary used to describe diversity in Canada continues to evolve. Concepts such as multiculturalism, interculturalism are contested and often interpreted differently in policy and public debate.

Possible topics include:

- The meanings and interpretations of multiculturalism, interculturalism and social cohesion
- Regional variations in diversity discourse
- The role of language in shaping perceptions of belonging and identity
- How public discourse can better reflect Canada’s complex realities
- How many nations are there in Canada

#### **6. Racism, Hate, Prejudice and the Challenge of Building Trust**

Recent years have brought renewed concern about racism, hate and widening forms of prejudice. In a period of heightened global tension, these challenges require thoughtful responses and sustained engagement.

Possible topics include:

- Contemporary manifestations of racism, hate and prejudice
- Community experiences and responses to prejudice

- Strategies for preventing and combating discrimination
- The role of education, civil society, and public institutions
- Approaches to building trust and understanding across communities

## **7. Indigeneity, Identity Affirmation, and Reconciliation**

Indigenous cultures, histories, and identities play a central role in shaping Canada's understanding of itself. Ongoing processes of truth-telling, reconciliation, and self-determination continue to redefine relationships between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples. These developments invite deeper reflection on historical injustices, contemporary realities, and future pathways toward meaningful coexistence.

Possible topics include:

- Indigenous perspectives on Canadian identity
- Identity affirmation and reconciliation
- Indigenous contributions to contemporary identity discourse
- Dialogue between Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities

## **8. The Future of Canada's Francophonie**

Canada's francophonie remains a central pillar of its identity, with distinct expressions across Quebec, minority francophone communities, and immigrant francophone populations. In a context of demographic, cultural, and political change, questions arise about the future vitality, diversity, and role of francophone communities in Canada.

Possible topics include:

- The evolution of francophone identities in Canada
- The role of immigration in shaping francophone communities
- Minority francophone communities and institutional vitality
- Language, identity, and belonging
- The place of francophonie in Canada's broader identity narrative

## **Submission Criteria**

Proposals should include:

- Title of presentation or session  
*Optional: for sessions and workshops given by a team, title of individual presentation*
- Abstract (50 words - Will be included in the program)

# 9th Metropolis Identities Summit

Sheraton Fallsview Hotel  
Niagara Falls, Ontario  
22-23 October, 2026



- Format:
  - Session
  - Poster
- Submission theme (one of the 8 detailed in previous pages)
- Names, affiliation/organization, and role/job titles of participants
- Each participant must be marked as either an organizer, presenter, moderator, or contributor
  - **Organizer:** Main contact person for the submission. They are responsible for coordinating the presentation and the presenters, and for communicating with the Metropolis Institute Events team (for example, providing any session updates as soon as possible) as well as with the presenters. The organizer must inform all participants that the proposal is accepted and ensure that they register.  
*If an organizer is also a presenter, they must also include themselves in the 'presenter' section of the form. Otherwise their name will not be included on the program.*
  - **Moderator** (or session Chair) (optional): Facilitates and manages the presentation. They introduce the presenters, manage speaking time among presenters, prepare questions and guide the discussion with the audience.
  - **Presenter:** Prepares and delivers a presentation.
  - **Contributor:** Contributed to the presentation or the research being presented but will not be presenting and may not be in attendance at the conference. They will be credited, but not involved in logistics or communications leading up to the event.
- For workshops and roundtables only, select one of the following session categories:
  - **Panel discussion** (multiple speakers sharing diverse perspectives)
  - **Research presentation** (overview of a specific study or project)
  - **Educational lecture or keynote talk** (informative and conceptual)
  - **Practical workshop** (hands-on learning or skill development)
  - **Roundtable discussion** (interactive, participant-driven exchange)

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- **Case study or best practice session** (real-world examples and lessons learned)
- **Program/Policy Changes** (government department updates the sector on a new program or changes to existing policy or programs)

Interdisciplinary perspectives and collaborations between practitioners, policy makers and researchers are encouraged.

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