



# SOBEY SCHOOL OF BUSINESS DEAN'S REPORT TO THE COMMUNITY 2018-2019





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## Dean's Introduction



This year, I have had the privilege to meet and speak with many alumni, students, donors and business partners of the Sobey School of Business. I am gratified by the affection and respect they hold for this institution. I enjoy sharing with all of them, and with you, some of the accomplishments we've made this year.

As a new academic year starts, the time is right to review what has happened over the last 12 months. It's been just over a year since I assumed the mantle of Dean of the Sobey School of Business, and what a year it has been, with research, teaching and learning, and service achievements, culminating with a humbling contribution from our generous patron.

The school was re-accredited by AACSB, which is a very large piece of work. I am proud of the effort put in by our faculty, community members, staff and students. We have made significant progress in developing our new strategic plan. Our Executive MBA has relaunched and plans are solidifying for other new academic program additions, including a new Executive Doctor of Business Administration.

Our first annual research symposium in partnership with Beijing Normal University in Zhuhai (BNUZ) helped grow and deepen collaborations between our institutions. A second symposium is scheduled for October in Halifax. Meanwhile, we retain a key role in the International Doctoral Consortium, launched 9 years ago at Saint Mary's, which was this year held at Anáhuac University in Mexico. Our research centres focussing on relevant areas like immigration economics, retail innovation, impact and innovation with relation to leadership, and co-operative businesses, have been actively pursuing the creation of knowledge as well as contributing to vibrant community partnerships.

*"The biggest news over the last year for many of us, especially in terms of future optimism, was the game-changing gift to the school."*



Our student groups continued to demonstrate global perspective and business acumen, whether it be our Enactus students presenting by invitation to a global restaurant convention in Dubai or our Venture Grade student-led venture capital investment fund group making their first investments in local start-ups.

The biggest news over the last year for many of us, especially in terms of future optimism, was the game-changing gift to the school. In March, we celebrated the largest gift in Saint Mary's history: a transformational gift of \$18 million from David Sobey and the Sobey family, the Sobey Foundation and Sobey's Inc. This

gift honours the longstanding relationship we have with the Sobey's, and will see significant investments in student life, scholarships, experiential learning opportunities, and faculty talent development.

Students entering this year will directly benefit from these investments.

Sobey School is fortunate in the generous amount of alumni engagement and support that the School receives throughout the year from mentoring, classroom speaking engagements to hosting events. I have enjoyed the opportunity to meet our alumni all over the world, and hear directly from them how proud they are of our work.

Looking forward, 2019-2020 promises more exciting developments: new programming developments, plans for new facilities to support research and entrepreneurship programming and student services, and more students creating their own impact.

With tremendous optimism for the future, I encourage you to read through this short review of the highlights of the Sobey School's last year, July 1, 2018 through June 30, 2019.

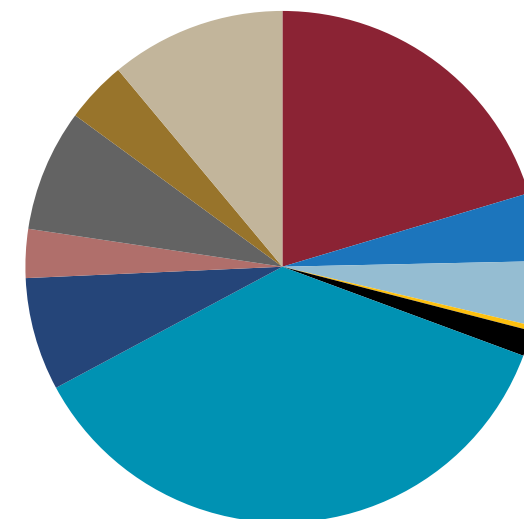
Sincerely,  
*Harjeet S. Bhabra, PhD*  
 Dean, Sobey School of Business

*“Students entering this year will directly benefit from these investments.”*

## Sobey School 2018 to 2019 By the Numbers

Total number of students enrolled in Sobey School programs	2757
Number of students on dean's list (GPA over 3.67)	240 in Halifax + 37 in China (BNUZ)
Percent of international students at the Sobey School	46%
Number of originating countries	83
Number of degree programs	9
Number of student meetings with BComm advisor	1947
Number of faculty	83
Percentage of Faculty with PhDs	98%
Number of Professors Emeritus	10
Number of student meetings with Graduate Career Services	588
Number of corporate tours led by Graduate Career Services	9
Number of companies visited by Corporate Tours	55
Other contacts with employers	65
Percentage of programs incorporating PRME principles	100
Number of students graduating from Sobey programs	170 graduate & 570 undergraduates
Number of Sobey School alumni around the world	21,000+
Number of Saint Mary's University alumni around the world	51,000+

## BComm Program Breakdown of Declared Majors

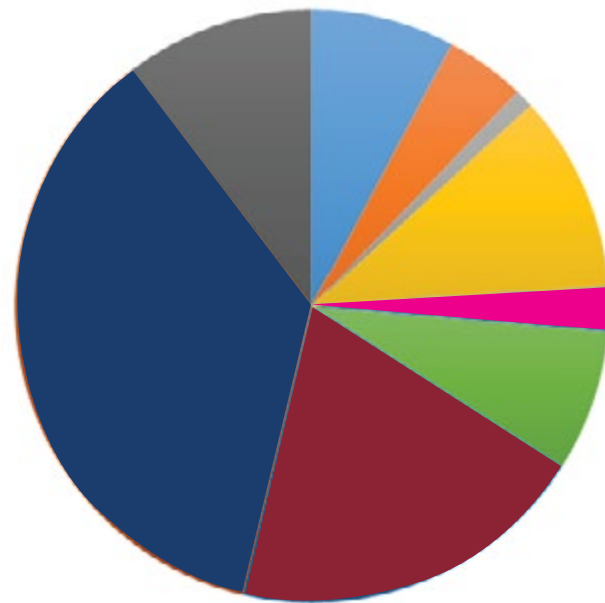


- ACCT - 20%
- CISK - 4%
- ECON - 4%
- ENTR - 1.6%
- FINA - 36.5%
- GBST - 7%
- GLBM - 3%
- HON ECON - 0.3%
- HR - 7.7%
- MGMT - 3.9%
- MKTG - 11%

1. There is some overlap: 148 students are enrolled in two or more majors.  
 2. Our BComm (Finance) program in BNUZ accounts for about 38% of the total number of Finance majors.

## Graduate Program

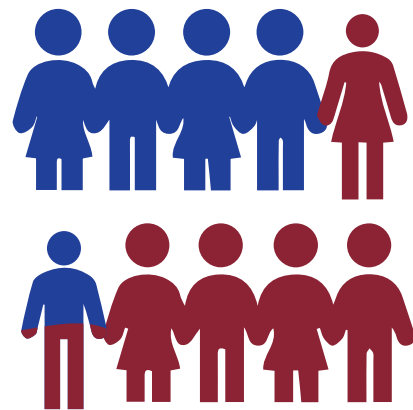
### Participation



- Master of Business Administration (MBA)
- MBA (CPA Stream)
- Executive MBA
- Master of Finance
- Master of Applied Economics
- Master of Technology Entrepreneurship & Innovation
- Master of Mgmt, Cooperatives & Credit Unions
- Graduate Diploma (Cooperatives Management)
- Doctor of Philosophy Management

## International

### 83 Countries of Origin

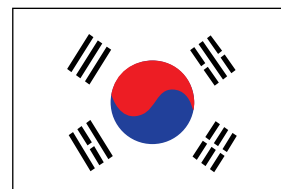


46% of our students come from outside Canada.



Top Countries of Origin for International Graduate and Undergraduate Students

- |                 |                      |
|-----------------|----------------------|
| 1. China        | 6. Antigua & Barbuda |
| 2. Saudi Arabia | 7. Bermuda           |
| 3. Bangladesh   | 8. Nigeria           |
| 4. India        | 9. USA               |
| 5. Bahamas      | 10. South Korea      |



## HISTORIC NEWS

### The Future From Here: \$18 Million Sobey Gift is a Game-Changer

Saint Mary's University and the Sobey School of Business received the largest gift in the 217-year history of the institution, an \$18 million philanthropic investment from members of the Sobey family, the Sobey Foundation and Sobey's.

This transformative gift, one of the largest donations ever to a university in Atlantic Canada, enables Saint Mary's Sobey School of Business to expand its role as a top educator of entrepreneurs and business leaders and advance its standing as a leading centre of research, innovation, growth and support for aspiring start-ups and established businesses and entrepreneurs.

The impactful and generous gift will make profound contributions to the Sobey School of Business, including:

- The Sobey Innovators Scholarship Program: this program will support 150 students over the next ten years with the goal of attracting the best and brightest graduate and undergraduate business students in the country to Saint Mary's University and the Sobey School of Business.
- Faculty talent development: this includes two endowed chairs, five professorships (one for every department of the Sobey School for 10 years), and two new post-doctoral fellows, furthering a commitment to attract and keep the highest-quality faculty and researchers.
- An alumni engagement program for Sobey scholarship recipients, new support for student competitions and entrepreneurship initiatives, and a distinguished speakers series.
- The Sobey's Entrepreneurship & Innovation Hub: a 43,000-square-foot expansion to the Sobey School of Business building, dedicated to entrepreneurship and research innovation, will be named in recognition of the company's gift.

Visit <https://news.smu.ca/future-from-here> to learn more details of this historic and exciting gift.



*Our gift is a deliberate reinvestment in the Sobey School of Business and Saint Mary's University inspired by our belief and confidence in the University, its leadership, its students and its bright future.*

– Dr. David Sobey



# TEACHING AND LEARNING AT THE SOBEY SCHOOL

Teaching and learning are at the heart of the university's mission, and at the Sobey School of Business we are focused on continuously improving the ways we prepare tomorrow's leaders. What follows are a few highlights of what's new in our academic programming.



*Dr. Wendy Carroll is the Program Co-ordinator for the Executive MBA Program*

## EMBA Renewed, EDBA Planned

The Sobey School of Business at Saint Mary's University aims to build on our position as an innovator and leader in business education. In recognition of significant market shifts, as well as the call for more online learning and a desire to finish faster, we have renewed our Executive MBA.

Our research on the EMBA market and consultation with business leaders in the

region led to the following changes to the EMBA program:

- **Hybrid delivery:** a combination of residency class sessions with online modules
- **Shorter timeframe:** 16 months in length, with summer break eliminated
- **International Trade Mission:** Strengthened and integrated with curriculum development
- **Evidence-based Certified:** Deeper integration with certification from the Centre for Evidence-Based Management (CEBMA)
- **Location change:** On campus for more access to faculty and research
- **Cohort model:** Intake every 18 months to two years

The program will continue to feature our world-class faculty and the exceptional innovative approach of our business school. Our program is designed for mid-level emerging leaders in Atlantic businesses, and we commit to maintain the calibre of classroom peer-to-peer learning.

A transformed Sobey School of Business Executive MBA will relaunch in January 2020 with these significant updates in format and curriculum.

## New Program Explored

The School is also exploring offering an Executive Doctor of Business Administration, a new credential that deepens practice-oriented research for senior professionals. We are in formal talks to be the first Canadian school to have our programs certified by the international Centre for Evidence-Based Management.

## In November, 2018, Sobey School's MBA was ranked #8 on the Corporate Knights Better World MBA list.



## Service Learning enforces social responsibility to student participants

Working with community partners to offer students hands-on service learning experiences in a philanthropic mindset has been embedded at the Sobey School of Business for many years. More recently, the concept has expanded across campus and become an important teaching tool for Saint Mary's at large.

This past year, students in the MBA Responsible Leadership classes worked on service-learning projects with the Halifax United Way, Halifax Hospice, and Welcome Housing and Support Services. Dr. Cathy Driscoll, one of the instructors of this course, reported how service-learning projects with deep and nested community connections can engender transformative learning, consciousness raising, ethical leadership, and a sense of civic responsibility among students in our programs. An understanding of community connectedness is increasingly important in the context of climate change and other social and environmental 21st century concerns.

One of Dr. Driscoll's students stated, "The service learning project really was a great way to feel a sense of social responsibility and will help us keep social responsibility in our minds as we go further in our careers."

In Spring 2019, students in Dr. Chantal Hervieux's *Social and Sustainable Entrepreneurship* course worked on several projects with the organization Common Good Solutions. Common Good helps develop social enterprises in the region. The students worked on process development and capacity building, exercising their management and business analysis skills, with the goal of enabling more social enterprise to flourish.

"Students find it rewarding to be working on real projects that have value for their community," reports Dr. Hervieux. "As for our community partner, Common Good Solutions, they were impressed by the work our students did, as well as their commitment and professionalism in providing timely, professional, and valuable work for their organization."

Projects like these achieve many goals for the Sobey School: they serve our students well and help them integrate classroom learning into their work. They underline our commitment to entrepreneurship and social enterprise. They serve to strengthen our bonds with the community. And, they help us meet our commitments to PRME, the UN's Principles of Responsible Management Education initiative.



*"The service learning project really was a great way to feel a sense of social responsibility and will help us keep social responsibility in our minds as we go further in our careers."*

## Second cohort graduates from Sobey School Finance program in China

On June 29, the second cohort of business students graduated from a unique program offered by Saint Mary's University and Beijing Normal University-Zhuhai (BNUZ).

Clad in academic caps and gowns, a total of 68 Chinese students received dual degrees that day: a Bachelor of Commerce from Saint Mary's and a Bachelor of Economics from BNUZ. Among them was 2019 Valedictorian Ms. Yushan Xie, who graduated summa cum laude.

Academics and administrators from both universities attended the ceremony to confer the degrees and celebrate the graduates. Prof. Ailan Fu, Vice-President, BNUZ and Dr. Malcolm Butler, Vice President, Academic and Research served as co-presiders of the convocation.

Dr. Harjeet Bhabra, Dean, Sobey School of Business with BNUZ counterpart Prof. Xin Zhong Dean, International Business Faculty presented the graduands, and President Prof. Qingyun Tu and Dr. Robert Summerby-Murray conferred the degrees.

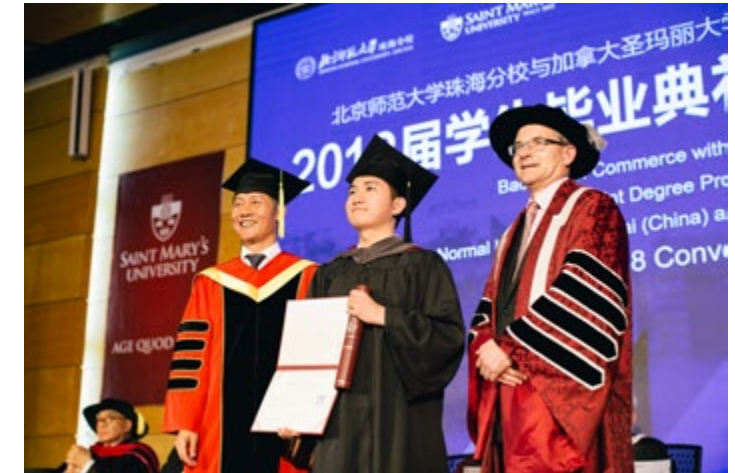
The presidents of both universities addressed their newest alumni, wishing them well and commenting on the successful academic partnership between the two institutions.

President Tu commented on the success achieved by the graduands, noting, "48 of you have received offers from the world's best-known universities."

He added, "Graduates, you are now part of the spirit, culture and history of BNUZ and SMU. I believe the ties between us and you will grow stronger over time."

"Your graduation today is a further reflection of the blossoming of our (historic, cross-border) partnership," said President Summerby-Murray in his remarks, speaking from a podium decorated with small Canadian and Chinese flags.

"You are uniquely positioned for global careers. You have experienced the thinking and the scholarship of both East and West as they relate to business and enterprise. And you value the person-to-person relationships, demonstrated here today, that are and will continue to be the foundation of successful cooperation between our countries, China and Canada."



*President Professor Qingyun Tu and Dr. Robert Summerby-Murray presented degrees to the graduates.*



## Report Examines Sobey School's Impact on Co-operative Businesses

In November 2018, the Sobey School of Business released a report demonstrating the global reach and impact of the school's education and research activities dealing with co-operative management, or affecting co-operative enterprises, credit unions and mutuals.

The School hosts two centres dedicated to co-operative businesses, the International Centre for Co-operative Management (ICCM) and the Centre of Excellence in Accounting and Reporting for Co-operatives (CEARC), along with a degree program, graduate diploma and executive education tailored for co-ops, mutuals and credit unions.

The report offered qualitative and quantitative data, and modeled a new approach the School is pursuing in measuring impact.

"Co-operative businesses are different: they are values-based and bring unique social value," said Dr. Sonja Novkovic, the Academic Director of the ICCM at Sobey School. "We are proud of our research into co-operative business models and our influence within the academy, but ultimately, our impact is in people's stories. It's what students do with our education that matters."

"The presence of the International Centre for Co-operative Management in our business school is a differentiator for us," said Dr. Harjeet Bhabra, Dean of the Sobey School of Business. "It reflects our commitment to responsible, ethical management and it offers our students and researchers a perspective they might not otherwise see. For instance, the research conducted by CEARC on ways to measure sustainability outcomes offers insight for any business pursuing a triple bottom line."

Highlights of the findings include powerful impact stories about students like Me'Lea Connelly of Minneapolis, who was named a 2018 Bush Fellow; Tracey Kliensch of Vancity, British Columbia; and Josh Noble of Unity Credit Union, Saskatchewan, who put together Well Capitalized, a podcast about co-operatives.

Download the report at [https://smu.ca/webfiles/8555\\_SSB\\_Co-opReport\\_Email.pdf](https://smu.ca/webfiles/8555_SSB_Co-opReport_Email.pdf)



*Co-operative Management Education students gathered in Halifax last year.*

## Sobey Students: Going Places

Estonia is an emerging centre of entrepreneurship. Helsinki is the busiest passenger port in Europe. Copenhagen is home to a waste mountain converted to a ski hill.

These are some of the facts our students learned first-hand in the last year. One of the key elements in the Sobey experience is the international education we are able to offer our students, through both experience of other students' cultures in the classroom and directly, through travel and study.

Many of our graduate programs embed travel in one form or another. This year, travel experiences were an important part of the learning in our Executive MBA, MBA, and Co-operative Management Education programs. The Venture Grade, Enactus and Impact student groups travelled for education and competitions, both within Canada and internationally.

### Business Abroad: in Europe

The Executive MBA features an International Trade Mission in the second year of the program. Students prepare in teams to represent an Atlantic Canadian business, and engage in information-gathering and relationship-building meetings in the chosen country, with the long-term goal of helping build export business. In March, the student cohort travelled to Belgium and then Denmark, visiting a chocolate factory, a brewing plant and a major pharmaceutical company, meeting with diplomats and numerous business contacts. Even the seasoned business professionals in our Executive MBA program report that this trip is challenging and pushes them outside their comfort zone. You can read more about the trip at the Sobey Impact Blog, [sobey.smu.ca/impactblog](http://sobey.smu.ca/impactblog).

The Sobey MBA has, since 2016, featured an international immersion experience. This is a mandatory course that takes place overseas. This year, Sobey took students to Finland and Estonia, destinations guaranteed to be new to our entire MBA class, even the international students. Students visited an entrepreneurship hub in Estonia called Lift 99 to compare to Halifax's innovation hub, Volta. They also visited the Port of Helsinki to compare the business activities to the Port of Halifax. There were stops at StoraEnso, diplomatic offices and Nokia, among others. You can view the highlights of their trip on Sobey School SMU on Twitter, as students took over our account.



*Both Executive MBA and MBA students visited local businesses while on their trips.*



## Cultural Immersions for Personal Development

Both the Executive MBA and MBA students also experienced cultural immersions on their travels. The Executive MBA group visited important war memorial sites in Passchendaele and Vimy to pay homage to Canada's shared heritage in the region. MBA students took part in cooking classes in Tallinn and some donned costumes to join in a medieval fair. Cultural immersions offer opportunities for deeper personal engagement and development, as well as sensory stimulation that embeds knowledge learned in different ways.

The International Centre for Co-operative Management at Saint Mary's each year sponsors a study tour to a world centre of co-operative business. The co-operative study tour is open to students in our Co-operative Management Education programs as well as interested members of the public. In November 2018, the group travelled to Bologna, Italy to learn about established and unique co-operative models.



## Competitions and More: United States

Our Venture Grade student group is comprised of both graduate and undergraduate students, who learn about entrepreneurship through financing and valuation, a unique perspective that prepares them to engage in the growing world of startups. The VCIC (Venture Capital Investment Challenge) is the primary competition for these students. Sobeys School is proud to have hosted the Canadian regional competition for the second year in a row, but as hosts, our students could not compete here. Therefore, a group of the Venture Grade students travelled to Boston to compete in the New England regionals, placing second. Another group travelled to Silicon Valley to

participate in and learn at the nationals, after their second place win last year.

Our Impact students, a more traditional investment fund group, travelled to New York for the Quinnipiac G.A.M.E. Forum, an annual competition and conference. Another group of Impact students joined with Master of Finance students to travel to New York to visit the NASDAQ, meet with banks and financial service centres.

Enactus Saint Mary's, a group comprised of business, arts and science students that uses business principles to address thorny social challenges, travelled to the Enactus Nationals Expo in Vancouver, placing in the top four in competition. In the fall, a group presented the Square Roots project at Enactus Worlds in London, England, and just a few months later, travelled to Dubai, UAE by invitation to present again, this time at a world restaurateurs and foodservice conference.

We are proud of the global perspective our students develop at the Sobeys School of Business, and we are grateful that they are making a global impact.

*Graduate and undergraduate Finance students travelled to New York in spring 2019 with Dr. Najah Attig.*

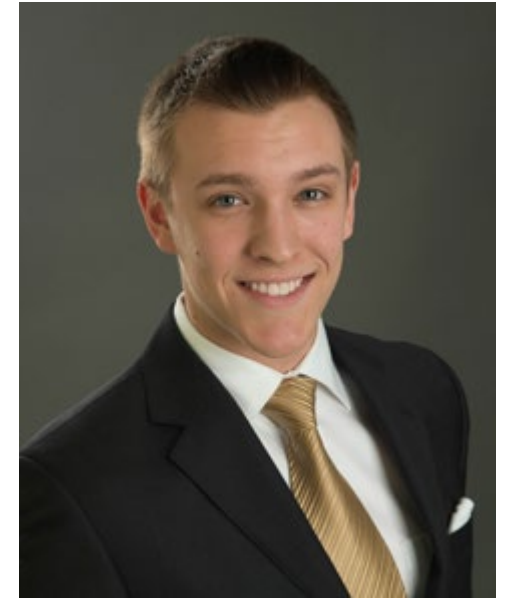
## Co-op student and entrepreneur takes prestigious \$25,000 Sobeys prize

Spencer Wiechert says following his passion has opened doors for him. The fifth-year Accounting student established his video production business while still participating in sports, societies and completing two co-op terms, and has parlayed that determination and drive into a Frank H. Sobeys Award worth \$25,000.

"I have learned a lot about leadership, determination and creative problem-solving," he said. Financially, the award will allow him to focus on his studies, and, he added, "It has had a great deal of impact on my confidence as a young professional."

Dr. Harjeet Bhabra nominated Spencer after a rigorous process of considering a field of seven candidates. "While selection was hard, since there were so many qualified, excellent candidates, Spencer's leadership qualities shone through in his application," noted Dr. Bhabra. "He has had such a positive effect on so many areas of Saint Mary's."

Learn more at <https://smu.ca/academics/sobey/wiechert-wins-frank-h-sobey.html>.



*Past Frank H. Sobeys winner and alumna Stephanie Fitzer was one of the Sobeys School heroes profiled in a video series celebrating the historic gift from the Sobeys family.*





## Graduate Career Services Builds Impact through Connection

In recognition of the value our students place on their career preparation and prospects post-graduation, the Sobey School of Business has worked to build a Graduate Career Services office with the capacity to help each student achieve their goals.

Last year, the centre provided 578 hours of career advising appointments with students in our MBA, MTEI, MAE and MFin programs, plus alumni. They led 86 hands-on skills bootcamps with students. In addition, they led 9 corporate tours on visits to 55 companies, with 158 student attendees.

## Executive Education Highlight: Directors' Education Program

In partnership with Rotman School of Business and the Institute of Corporate Directors, Sobey School offered the fourth session of the Directors' Education Program in Halifax from March to November, 2018.

The program was offered in four modules and the number of participants per module ranged from 35 to 40. Represented among the attendees were representatives of crown corporations, financial institutions, transportation authorities, legal firms, natural resource firms, government, retail and universities.

The Directors' Education Program helps corporate directors deepen their understanding of this important role. The modules covered are Guiding Strategic Direction and Risks, Monitoring Financial Strategy, Risks and Disclosure, Guiding Human Performance and Assessing Enterprise Risk and Directing Extreme and Unique Events.

Corporate directors, as members of a board, generally hold responsibility for the business affairs of a corporation.

Sobey School of Business offers a variety of development opportunities for corporate executives, directors and leaders.

*"[Graduate] Career Services ... helped me learn to self-reflect, discover my passions and interests, and have the confidence to go after what I want for myself and my career."*

*-Jana Buchanan  
[MBA Candidate 2019]*

## RESEARCH AND KNOWLEDGE MOBILIZATION AT THE SOBEY SCHOOL OF BUSINESS

In 2018, faculty in the Sobey School published more than 70 peer-reviewed articles, including in prestigious journals such as Contemporary Accounting Research, Journal of Consumer Psychology, Organizational Research Methods, Long Range Planning, Labour History, Journal of Business Research and Journal of Management History. Researchers were also active presenting their work in international, national and regional conferences, such as the Academy of Management, American Accounting Association Meetings, Canadian Economic Association Meetings, Financial Management Association, Administrative Sciences Association of Canada, European Association for Consumer Research Conference and European Conference for Operations Research.

The school received more than \$667,000 in research funding from government agencies like SSHRC and NSERC, foundations and other sources.

Whether through pure or applied research, our faculty help move the practice of business forward and deepen our collective understanding of the processes and outcomes of business activities. We endeavour to share the important results of our research, not just with others in the research community, but with the business community through knowledge mobilization efforts such as our research video series. We aim to make our research accessible to have an impact on the work of professionals across the business spectrum. Later this year we will share a brief profile of our research activities. For now, we present the following highlights.

*The researchers below contributed videos to our research video series this summer. View these videos from Drs. Ethan Pancer, Hong Fan, Vurain Tabvuma, and Claudia DeFuentes at the Sobey Impact Blog, [sobey.smu.ca/impactblog](http://sobey.smu.ca/impactblog).*



## BNUZ-SMU Research and Academic Skill Building Symposium

In November, 2018, researchers from the Sobey School of Business travelled to Zhuhai, China for a robust research exchange symposium, reflecting the expanding partnership between the two institutions.

The party of researchers attending from Saint Mary's comprised:

- Dr. Malcolm Butler, Vice President Academic and Research
- Dr. Harjeet S. Bhabra, Dean, Sobey School of Business
- Dr. Catherine Loughlin, Associate Dean, Research and Knowledge Mobilization
- Dr. Mohammad Rahaman, Canada Research Chair in International Finance and Competitiveness
- Dr. Miguel Morales, BComm Coordinator (Zhuhai)
- Dr. Ethan Pancer, Marketing
- Dr. Karen Grandy, Marketing
- Dr. Rahman Khokhar, Finance
- Dr. Jie Dai, Finance
- Dr. Florian Muenkel, Finance
- Dr. Ellen Farrell, Management

*Dr. Mohammad Rahaman, CRC in International Finance and Competitiveness*



The topics examined represented a broad cross-section of Sobey School's research interests, and included entrepreneurship and CSR; entrepreneurial ecosystems; migration of young women in China; China's low-end manufacturing capacity output; computer vision predicting new product adoption; media coverage of Apple and Google's 'egg-freezing' employee benefit; pricing interest rate derivatives; informed trading; the financial technology of "robo advisors"; and political risk and external financing.

The skill-building took the shape of pedagogical examinations of bilingual teaching of business

students; an open discussion on research methods; and literature sources, data collecting and econometric application.

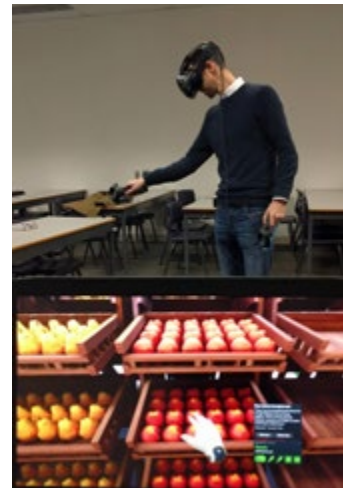
The goal was to cross-pollinate ideas and explore alignment for future bilateral research opportunities. The event was planned and executed with a small group of faculty from each university. The Sobey School lead was Dr. Rahman Khokhar.

A follow-up Symposium is planned to be held on the Saint Mary's University campus in October 2019.

## Research Centres' Activities

### David Sobey Centre for Innovation in Retailing and Services

- **RISE Program 2019** - The Retail Innovation, Strategy & Excellence (RISE) program at the David Sobey Centre is designed to provide retail leaders with the skills, tools and insights they need to stay ahead of the curve in today's ever-changing, competitive retail industry. RISE 2019 brought together retail leaders from across Canada as they deepened their knowledge on this year's theme of leadership and fostering a culture of innovation.
- **eBay's Retail Revival Halifax Partnership** - The David Sobey Centre is the first-ever research partner for eBay's Retail Revival program. Over the course of twelve months, we will closely follow the program and its 70 participating retailers to see how the program impacts the participant's businesses over time.
- **Retail Awards** - November 2nd, 2018 marked the second annual National Retail Innovation Awards in Halifax, NS. The Awards are a celebration to recognize three of Canada's most innovative, up and coming businesses who show potential to be disruptors in the Canadian retail industry.
- **Virtual Reality Store** - In collaboration with Nanuk Technologies, founded by Sobey School alumni Mike Cyr, current Saint Mary's student Diogo Farinho and Dalhousie student Jake Moore, the Centre is developing an innovative research software for retail using virtual reality.
- **Retail Robot** - In collaboration with Dr. Adel Merabet and a team of his students from the engineering department, the David Sobey Centre has completed a prototype of a retail robot. This robot is designed to move autonomously through a retail store to scan shelves and barcodes to more efficiently count inventory and detect holes in shelves that need to be filled with product. The information is gathered by the robot and relayed to store employees who will be notified of the report so they can replace product where needed.
- **Retail Club** - For the 2019 school year, the David Sobey Centre has launched the Retail Club and already has over 65 students registered. The club was created to show SMU students that there's more to retail than they think. The club will help engage students with DSC activities and offer opportunities to network with retail executives and gain a deeper understanding of the retail industry and all it has to offer.



*A virtual reality store and the eBay Retail Revival Halifax Partnership are among this year's achievements for the David Sobey Centre.*



### Atlantic Research Group on Economics of Immigration, Aging and Diversity

- **Who stays, who goes and why** - Dr. Ather Akbari has been engaged to undertake a survey report for the Nova Scotia Office of Immigration on mobility motivations of immigrants for Nova Scotia.
- **National immigration conference** - The centre sponsored and Drs. Howard Ramos and Ather Akbari were actively engaged in helping organize the national Metropolis Conference, "Doing Immigration Differently", which hosted about 1000 participants at the Nova Centre. Presentations dealt with how immigrants' stories are told in the news, how policy is shaped, research findings on immigrants' economic integration and more. Dean Harjeet Bhabra moderated a panel titled "Immigration on the Margins".
- **Research newsletters** - The centre produced two information-rich research newsletters with topics including inflows of permanent residency; diversity supports; rural New Brunswick & Prince Edward Island; recent trends in immigration; and a snapshot of immigrant profile in Nova Scotia.

### Centre for Leadership Excellence

- **Conferences and Journal** - The CLE was one of the research centres that organized the 5th International CSR Conference - Pro-Social Innovations: From Responsible Finance to Social Entrepreneurship, held Casablanca, Morocco, June 27-28th 2018. The Centre has successfully negotiated a partnership with the journal Management International for a special issue attached to the conference.
- **Development of measures** - CLE continued work on social impact measurement (development of measures). The first measurement model has been published in the Social Enterprise Journal. The second measurement model was presented at the International Social Innovation Research Conference 2019 conference in Scotland.
- **Applied Social Impact Assessment** - The Centre is currently working on larger more complex projects. In addition to working with partners to do Impact assessment, the Centre is also building development indicators and measures specific to the organization. These measures are adapted from the models mentioned above.

CLE is working with three community partners to do impact assessments and are negotiating work with a fourth organization.



*"We have also developed a strong partnership with Common Goods Solutions, doing impact assessment and developing organization-specific measures. This has strengthened our impact in Nova Scotia, and for the students involved in the CLE."*

*- Dr. Chantal Hervieux*

### Centre of Excellence in Accounting and Reporting for Co-operatives

- **MeasureSmart**: Developed "MeasureSmart," an interactive online tool for co-operatives and academics, which compiles over 80 measurement frameworks currently used by co-operatives globally. It includes a brief description of each measurement framework, examples of types of organizations using it and a link to the respective websites for each framework. <http://measuresmart.coop/>
- **Projects funded**: CEARC received a SSHRC grant to conduct a national research project on Sustainability Development Goals (SDGs) for Co-operatives. Plus, the Centre received two grants from Co-operatives and Mutuals Canada (CMC) to study:
  1. SDG measurement tools that currently exist and how/if co-ops are using them.
  2. economic sustainability and job retention in co-operative enterprises versus traditional businesses.
- **Co-operative Performance Indicators Project**: Successfully completed the first phase of a national pilot project to develop key performance indicators for co-operatives. Phase 2 starts in Fall 2019.

### International Centre for Co-operative Management

- **Governance Project**. An ICCM research project, "Governance of cooperative enterprises under pressure: A multilevel and holistic approach," was awarded a joint grant with KU Leuven, worth 2.4 mil Euro total. The project is slated to run 2019 - 2022.
- **Leadership on UN SDGs**. The Centre continues to demonstrate leadership on the United Nations' Sustainability Development Goals, including integrating these into the CanadaDE program content and framework. The CanadaDE program was held in June, 2019 and hosted 38 participants from 10 countries. Dr. Sonja Novkovic presented on Co-operatives and UN SDGs at the UNRISD conference in Geneva (June 3-4), and the EMES conference, in Sheffield June 24-27.
- **International partnerships are on fire.**
  1. ICCM is proud to have built a partnership with ACCOSCA (Africa), hosting their CEO at the CanadaDE program.
  2. ICCM will participate in the upcoming World CU Conference, offering a workshop led by Managing Director Karen Miner and two alumni of the Master of Management, Co-operatives and Credit Unions program.
  3. Through a partnership with the USA and NCBA CLUSA co-op organization, ICCM was the official pre-conference course in October 2018 on capital and finance. This October, ICCM will offer the pre-conference course on leadership & management excellence.



*Co-operative professionals benefit from ICCM's part-time, online graduate programs specifically designed for the unique co-operative business model.*

## Applied Research through OICE

Through the Office of Innovation and Community Engagement, our researchers partner with industry to grapple with real problems and apply their research findings.

### Personalizing the retail experience: Partnership with RetailDeep

RetailDeep uses facial recognition software to enhance the shopping experience in stores, collect data from clients, and pinpoint opportunities to innovate within the retail space.

The Halifax-based startup's first prototype was a smart kiosk placed at The Shelf, a joint venture between the David Sobey Centre for Innovation and Retailing and the Halifax Seaport Farmers Market. SMU student Zhenni Ge was sponsored to work on product research.

### GreyLit: Searching for help from academia

GreyLit was created as a practical tool for publishing, searching, and reviewing health-related literature that has not been published through the traditional academic, peer-reviewed process. Dr. Ethan Pancer, Assistant Professor of Marketing at the Sobey School of Business, offered advice on effectively reaching audiences and Assistant Professor in the Department of Mathematics and Computing Science improved the search and share functions of the web platform.

### Using data to detect dental defects early at Lansing Dental

The team at Lansing Dental, a Toronto-based dentistry company specializing in cosmetics and implant dentistry, consists of experienced university instructors.

The company needed to create a unique software solution for better patient care in the future. Dr. Hai Wang is currently working on a project that involves machine learning and data analytics.

### Giving non-energy benefits a boost: EfficiencyOne

To study the non-energy benefits of saving energy, EfficiencyOne partnered with Dr. Mark Raymond, an expert on environmental economics. EfficiencyOne administers a variety of energy efficiency and conservation services.

Dr. Raymond's research produced quantifiable results, which will allow the organization to design more effective, cost-efficient programs and initiatives.

*“One advantage of liaising industry and academia is that it creates a two-way street of knowledge transfer. The less obvious, but perhaps more important advantage is gaining critical insights and practical strategies to improve your business.”*

– Cora Cole, Founder and CEO, GreyLit



Left, Dr. Hai Wang, and right, Maninder Kaur Baria (student)

You can find these stories at <https://news.smu.ca/news/2019/4/8/saint-marys-research-projects-with-big-industry-impact>

## COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT



### Alumni Outreach

The Dean travelled with the members of the Saint Mary's University Alumni team to events in Calgary, Toronto, Florida and Hong Kong over the last year, meeting more than 200 alumni in person. In addition, he has met many Nova Scotian alumni at events on and off campus, and travelled to Zhuhai, China to meet with our students and new alumni there.

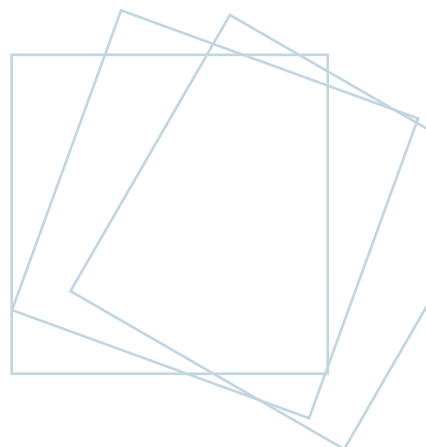
Dean Harjeet Bhabra, left, and senior development officer Rhonda Harrington, right, at a Calgary alumni reception in February, pose with Jennifer McCarthy (BComm'94), Joe Myatt (BComm'92), and Trina Myatt, (BComm'94), and Janel Anthony, (BComm'15).

### RBC Talent Hub

On Thursday, Feb. 14, 2019, Saint Mary's University announced the establishment of the RBC Talent Hub at the Saint Mary's University Entrepreneurship Centre. The innovative new pilot program was made possible by a gift of \$695,000 over three years from the RBC Foundation in support of RBC Future Launch. The new RBC Talent Hub will encompass four initiatives designed to expand cooperative education and entrepreneurship opportunities for Saint Mary's students:

- Entrepreneur-in-Residence (EIR) program;
- Entrepreneurial Mindset Success Certificate;
- Student Consultant Team;
- Talent Fund.

To learn more, visit <https://news.smu.ca/news-stream> and scroll to February 14, 2019.





## Cluster Employment Plus Co-op Students Equals Good Business



Story and photo courtesy of NS Labour & Advanced Education

Azhar Raman, a Sobey School of Business Bachelor of Commerce student from Mauritius, spent his co-op placement last summer working for 3 different employers at the same time: one in HRM, and the other two in rural Nova Scotia.

"This is an opportunity like nothing else," he says. "As a business student, my placement includes activities related to everything I am studying, from marketing to financial management. My first co-op placement was with a large corporation where I had a singular role, but this experience is giving me variety and the chance to become confident in a number of different skill areas."

Metroworks, an HRM-based social enterprise, looped arms with Rural Roots Market and New Ross Country Stay to share the cost and the efforts of a single co-op student, one with talent and skillsets that they typically don't have access to.

"Sharing a co-op student across multiple employers provides a wonderful opportunity, because as a non-profit, over-head costs are tight. By sharing the financial burden, we all end up paying a small portion of Azhar's wage," says Dave Rideout, Executive

Director and CEO of Metroworks. "and, in return we're all benefiting from his capabilities and knowledge."

"Sometimes employers like us are not even aware of what we need, until someone younger with knowledge we don't have introduces us to something new that can better our company," says Dave.

The concept of multiple employers joining forces to hire a co-op student - or a permanent employee - was developed by Placemaking4G, an Atlantic Canadian talent-matching agency that's working to attach diverse youth to meaningful careers in welcoming communities. They call this approach "cluster employment".

"We came up with this concept as a way of creating stable, full-time positions for young people, while also helping multiple employers who share a common business need to acquire top talent," says Matt Thomson, Co-founder of Placemaking4G. "Opportunities like this are going to offer a unique range of work experiences, which will no doubt contribute to the professional growth of students."

The Sobey School of Business is into its 3rd year of strategic efforts to connect their students with the thriving business community in the South Shore. Each fall, their South Shore Corporate Tour allows students to learn about potential opportunities for living and working in the region.

## Canada China Business Summit

In June 2019, Saint Mary's hosted the 2nd annual Canada China Business Summit in partnership with the China Canada Business Council. The event offered workshops, panel talks and information sessions directed by the Canada China Business Council, topics such as e-commerce and payments, partnerships and social responsibility in the Chinese context and areas of interest to businesses hoping to venture into the Chinese market.

A panel on *China's Economy* featured Canada Research Chair in International Finance and Competitiveness, Dr. Mohammad Rahaman, and was moderated by finance professor Dr. Najah Attig.

## Entrepreneurship Outreach

### Saint Mary's University Entrepreneurship Open House: Academic Presentations and Venture Grade

In December, Dr. Ellen Farrell hosted an Entrepreneurship open house at the Sobey School of the Business. MTEI student projects were featured, as a milestone on their path to earning Durland Innovation Funding; BComm and BA undergraduates presented their projects; and Venture Grade team delivered a presentation on their investments. Crib Cut, a startup partly founded by Sobey School alumni Blair Ryan, was on hand offering haircuts as they received an investment from the Sobey School Venture Grade team. This was the second investment by Venture Grade, following on their \$15k backing of Trip Ninja in summer 2018.



### Volta Partnership

Saint Mary's University signed a partnership agreement with Volta, becoming the first university to have a dedicated location within the innovation hub that is clearly marked as a Saint Mary's outpost. This partnership opens up new opportunities for our students, staff and faculty to engage in community-based and start-up research. <https://news.smu.ca/news/2019/8/9/new-smu-space-at-volta-open-for-business>



### Saint Mary's University Entrepreneurship Centre (SMUEC)

The SMUEC has blossomed into a vibrant hub of entrepreneurial activity for the campus and the city. They provide services to students like developing a credit course teaching entrepreneurial mindset and leadership, connecting students to employment, or offering a structured program to help students develop their own startups. They provide employers access to wage subsidies and talent identification. And they build strong relationships with the business startup community. Read more about the programs and incredible accomplishments of this group by visiting their website, <http://www.smuec.ca>.

## OTHER SCHOOL NEWS

### Sobey reports on Sustainable Development Goals-related work



The Sobey School of Business is proud to be a signatory to the PRME initiative. The Principles for Responsible Management Education provide a framework for academic institutions to advance the broader cause of corporate social responsibility and incorporate universal values into curricula and research.

The Sobey School reports annually on the ways we have incorporated the principles of PRME into our curriculum, research, and daily work.

Download our latest report from the PRME site, here: <https://www.unprme.org/participants>

## Student accomplishments

### Sobey student Hajar Abdessamie travels to APEC, meets PM

The Sobey School was proud to sponsor student Hajar Abdessamie to attend the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation Summit 2018 in Papua, New Guinea. During the summit, among other opportunities, Ms. Abdessamie met with PM Justin Trudeau.

### Saint Mary's students make their first venture capital investment in international travel startup

Saint Mary's University's Venture Grade Fund, a student-led venture capital group, made their first investment, \$15,000 to local travel startup Trip Ninja.

### Boston competition winners applauded by premier

A team of Sobey students recently took second place in the Venture Capital Investment Competition (New England region). In the fall, they were congratulated personally by Nova Scotia Premier Stephen McNeil.

## School accomplishments

### Re-accreditation achieved

The School's efforts in continuous improvement and mission alignment were recognized when the Sobey School of Business was re-accredited by the AACSB in Spring 2019.

### Saint Mary's University youth employment program named best in North America

The International Education Business Partnership Network named Access-Ability the top program in North American in developing Youth Employability Skills in 2018.

### Spark Zone recognized as world's best in entrepreneurship skills

The Spark Zone, a sandbox to foster social innovations and business ideas, was recognized as the world's best in enterprise and entrepreneurship skill-building in 2018.

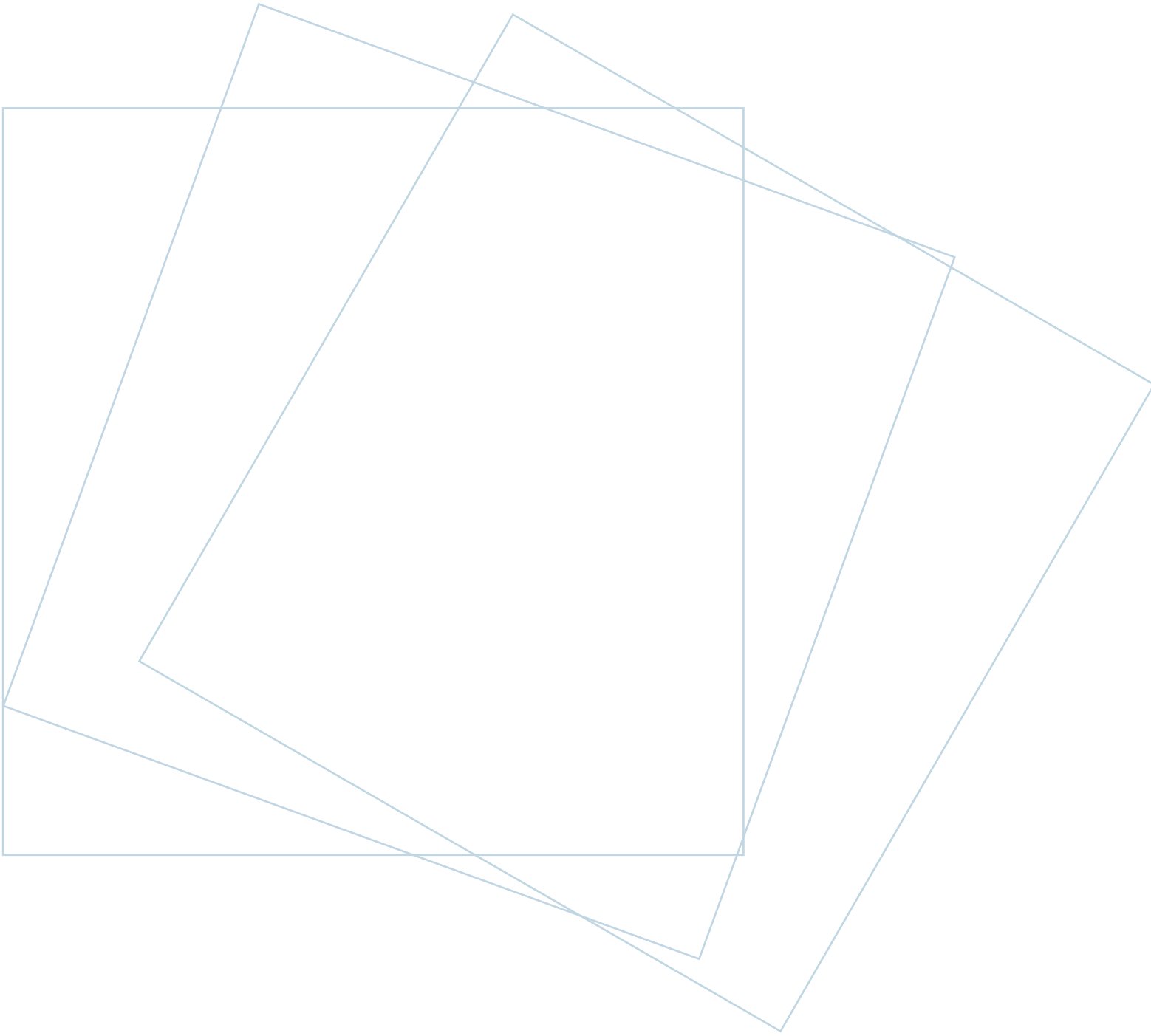
### Women in Capital Markets event celebrates importance of diversity in business

Sobey School's Women in Capital Markets, an event held in March 2019, featured speakers and networking designed to explore how the fields of finance and capital markets can become more welcoming to women and minorities.

### Community Report on Strategic Plan Released

In December, Sobey School released a community report on achievements over the last five years. That report is online at <http://sobeyreport.smu.ca>. The plan was structured around three main pillars, Internationalization, Growth and Development, and Engagement.





**PRME**  
an initiative of the  
United Nations Global Compact

