

Dr. Margaret Dechman Community-Engaged Research Champion Award

‘Be the change you want to see in the world’

Nominations are solicited for the Dr. Margaret Dechman-Community-Engaged Research Champion Award. This annual award may be presented to an individual, group or collaborative team of community-engaged researchers, based at Cape Breton University and/or the broader community. Individuals can win only once.

Award Description

Our colleague Dr. Margaret Dechman was an outstanding academic, community member and researcher. She was well-known as a champion for social justice, a tireless advocate for the socially excluded and a compassionate neighbour who recognized people’s humanity. This Award recognizes community-engaged scholars and community representatives who demonstrate a commitment to equity, diversity and inclusion, and are working within meaningful community partnerships to initiate, develop and support research that both services social goals and benefits scholarship.

Celebration

A recognition event will be held in March. The celebration of the award winner(s) will be organized by the Office of Research & Graduate Studies in consultation with the office of the President. The award winner(s) will be presented a certificate in recognition of this major accomplishment. The winner’s name(s) will be added to a plaque to be prominently displayed within the University.

Eligibility

Nominations for this award can be put forward by CBU students, faculty, staff, community representatives and partners. For the purpose of this award, community partners are defined as any partner that is not another post-secondary institution. Community representatives may be from public, not-for-profits, advocacy groups, private or public sector organizations.

Nominees may be:

- members of community-based organizations serving or representing communities
- members of peer-driven advocacy organizations
- community-led research participants-champions
- CBU faculty or staff engaged in community-led research
- emerging CBU researchers, students and/or non-academic practitioners, who have strong relationships in the community and are supported by an experienced researcher familiar with community-based research

Members of senior administration (e.g., Associate Deans, Deans, and Vice-Presidents) are ineligible to be nominated for the award.

Nomination Committee Procedures

CBU's Research Committee of Senate invites nominators to submit a nomination package by November 1, 2024.

The nomination should include the following:

- a) Nomination Submission from the nominator. Any of the following formats are welcome:
 - a. Written submission (maximum 2 pages)
 - b. Video submission (maximum 5 minutes)
 - c. Audio submission (maximum 5 minutes)

In the nomination submission, please clearly state the nominee's name, description of the nominee's community-based involvement, names of the community partners and illustrate how the nominee meets the selection criteria listed below.

- b) Letter(s) of support from a CBU faculty member.
- c) Letter(s) of support from the external community members or organizations.

The support letters should detail why the individual, relative to their field and solely in terms of the selection criteria below, feels the nominee has set themselves apart from other faculty and deserves to be recognized with a community-engaged research award and can be in written, video or audio form.

- d) If applicable, include the nominee's CV, or a list of some of their major accomplishments.

Nomination packages may be sent to research@cbu.ca (Subject: Dr. Margaret Dechman Community-Engaged Research Champion Award) by November 1, 2024. For more information about the Award and the nomination process, please contact research@cbu.ca.

Selection Criteria

The award is adjudicated by the Senate Research Committee using the selection criteria outlined below. The Committee may seek whatever external advice it deems appropriate. Committee members in a conflict shall recuse themselves from all discussions and all voting surrounding the ranking of the nominees.

The Research Committee of Senate will make a recommendation to the President by December 1, 2024. The President will make the final decision.

The recipient of Dr. Margaret Dechman Community-Engaged Research Champion Award demonstrates a commitment to equity, diversity and inclusion and shows a record of active engagement with the community members whose lives are affected by the issue being studied.

The selection criteria below are to be followed by both those writing a letter of nomination or support and Research Committee members:

- 1) **Research program:** Nominee’s research program is community-led, culturally safe, participatory, action-oriented and centred on lived and living experience.
- 2) **Meaningful collaborations:** Nominee fosters meaningful collaborations with local and/or global community-based or peer-driven organizations.
- 3) **Needs of the communities:** Nominee’s work is attuned to the questions that communities want addressed and uses methodologies or approaches that best meet the needs of the communities they are working in.
- 4) **Knowledge mobilization:** Nominee must demonstrate that knowledge gained from their research has a positive impact and benefits the community directly.
- 5) **Social change:** Nominee has a record of substantial impact on positive social change and their research partnerships have supported and inspired positive change in the community where the partnership is working.
- 6) **Enhanced capacity:** Nominee’s research program increases the capacity of the community to engage, initiate and lead research activities that benefit all of their community members.
- 7) **Future impact:** Nominee’s work has potential for new research directions.