Centre for International
Governance Innovation

2018 -2022 External Evaluation Recommendations & CIGI Management Response

Overview

The Centre for International Governance and Innovation (CIGI) has defined itself through groundbreaking policy approaches since its founding in 2001, dedicated to the idea that better global governance can improve people's lives. Building on this legacy, CIGI will soon begin developing its next strategic vision and plan, covering 2025 to 2030. We anticipate that this plan will be ambitious, embarking on a new chapter that builds on CIGI's almost twenty-five-year history, driving creative recommendations for our dynamic and everchanging geopolitical context, and further establishing CIGI as a thought leader in the digital era.

To help understand potential lessons learned and opportunities for future growth, CIGI enlisted Harry Cummings & Associates, LLC, to conduct an independent review of CIGI's activities and impact from 2018 through 2022. This report is attached here, and focuses on CIGI's relevance, effectiveness, and impact during that time period. Additional documentation of our activities, outputs, and impact can also be found through CIGI's annual reports. The completion of this five-year external review is aligned with requirements from Global Affairs Canada and is independently valuable for CIGI senior management as we look ahead to our next phase. CIGI will also continue to build on the recommendations from the last evaluation completed in 2018, for example with its continued commitment to Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion.

CIGI's impact during the evaluation period has been driven by organizational resilience. Between 2018 and 2022, CIGI underwent a significant amount of change. Prior to the global challenges faced by the COVID-19 pandemic, CIGI also faced significant external budget cuts resulting in large decreases in programming and staff. Despite these significant disruptions to the organization, CIGI was nonetheless able to develop a prescient strategic plan for the 2020 to 2025 timeframe and adapted as an institution to deliver against that new vision with a renewed focus on governance in the digital era. This strategic focus has only proved more relevant and imperative throughout the evaluation period, and CIGI's contributions to this policy space have been noteworthy given the challenges faced globally and institutionally during this period.

As policy makers globally shift away from reacting to pandemic and reorient again towards a rapidly evolving future, CIGI will draw on the lessons learned, insights gained, and direct recommendations in this evaluation to take firm steps forward. This report and our response below lead towards the new vision we will define as we look forward, which we will further refine through our forthcoming 2025 strategic plan.

Management Response to Recommendations:

Note on CIGI Planning Cycles: The timeframes below reference Quarters aligned to the CIGI fiscal year, which begins on August 1. For reference:

- Q1 2024: August 1, 2023 to October 31, 2023
- Q2 2024: November 1, 2023 to January 31, 2024
- Q3 2024: February 1, 2024 to April 30, 2024
- Q4 2024: May 1, 2024 to July 31, 2024

Recommendation 1: It is recommended that CIGI develop a strategy to more closely integrate the research with policy outcomes. The project/ research agenda could benefit from the development of simple logic models that are specific about the policy impacts being targeted. A project workplan would then have an explicit strategy designed for knowledge translation of research results to policy. The logic models could also then serve to facilitate development of outcomes for evaluation.

Management Response:

Context:

- CIGI acknowledges the critical importance of connecting our policy research closely with policy outcomes, and the value of rigorous program design – including logic models – in making these connections as strong as possible.
- CIGI believes it is worth noting the strength of established networks relationships with government decision makers and is regularly invited to support the policy making process through consultations, expert round tables, and Parliamentary and Senate sessions. The program logic revealed in logic models is often implicit in our activities, but we recognize the value of strengthening that thinking through an explicit strategic planning process for our programs.
- During the evaluation period, CIG established a "Project/Program Charter" to start this design process formally.

Action Steps:

- Following the period of evaluation, in 2023, CIGI created a new "Director of Program Management" position within the Senior Management Team, and consolidated Program Managers under this Director. A key initiative of this new Director is integrating a "Theory of Change" design model into CIGI research programs, to align activities with strategic goals explicitly at a program level and provide an opportunity to test and strengthen the implicit logic in previously conceived programs. Theories of Change can be visualized in a variety of tools, including logic models, and supports a monitoring framework to increase measurement and evaluation of impact.
- The recent integration of Government Relations into Public Affairs and the planned integration of Public Affairs into the Theory of Change based program design process will also support whole of CIGI planning to mobilize knowledge effectively towards policy outcomes. CIGI Senior Management is also consulting with other public policy focused non-profit and charitable organizations to understand best practices for public policy advocacy in the sector.
- The Program Management team is exploring the work of Research Impact Canada, to learn from their best practices for knowledge mobilization and evaluation of research-driven public impact.

- CIGI will also be integrating Theory of Change based design into its organizational strategic vision for the 2025-2030 Strategic Plan.

Ownership & Timeframe:

- The new Program Management Team has responsibility for leading this effort, and the Senior Management Team has accountability to implement.
- The Program Management Team is currently working to develop Theories of Change for priority programs outlined in the recently approved Program of Work and Budget through Q1 and Q2 of 2024. In Q3 and Q4 2024, the PM team will lead efforts to develop Theories of Change ahead of submitting the next Program of Work and Budget.
- We expect this process to be iterative, introducing the process this year and then working to improve, strengthen, and refine our Theories of Change in future years.

Recommendation 2: It is recommended that CIGI increase its work on research reports to ensure that they all include a plain language, policy-related message for the reader outside of academia. CIGI's research publications are very credible and important but frequently are not partnered with clear plain language communication tools.

Management Response:

Context:

- CIGI always seeks to ensure our research is accessible to a variety of audiences including technical experts, policy makers and the engaged public.
- Where possible, we frequently launch new research products through events to socialize the key findings and recommendations with decision makers and policy influencers.
- During the evaluation period, CIGI supported this priority through a series of organizational, editorial, and process elements:
  - *Explainer Videos*: The Multimedia team within Public Affairs frequently produces "explainer videos" which maintain the integrity of the material while expanding engaged public audience reach with accessible content. During the evaluation period, these have generated millions of views across CIGI platforms. Our explainer videos are embedded in our website content but can be found consolidated here. In addition, here are a few specific examples:
    - Blockchain Explained – Link here (Over 2 million views across CIGI platforms)
    - History of the G20 – Link here
    - Technological Threats to Our Freedom of Thought – Link here
    - Exploring Four Policy Domains that Address the Power of Digital Giants – Link here
    - Competition Policy Explained – Link here
  - *Differentiated audiences and products:* CIGI's Publication Guide outlines a series of products with specific use cases, depending on the audience, purpose, and intended impact of the research project. This guide will be used heavily as CIGI develops more explicit theories of change to align its activities to its strategic goals. During the evaluation period, this guide helped the Research team select products that were fit for purpose, to include:

- Policy Memos: Very short, no more than 1,000 words or two pages, intended for high-level decision makers who have limited time to read. Delivered in high-level, face-to-face meetings.
- Policy Briefs: Short, under 3,000 words. Presents clear recommendations, including 3 or 4 bulleted key points for policy makers, journalists, and other influencers. Can accompany longer CIGI research products or stand alone.
- Digital Essays and Opinions: Short pieces published by CIGIOnline or placed externally to reach a broader audience.
- Essay Series: A series of up to 16 shorter essays, each under 2,000 words, bringing together an interdisciplinary set of authors to provide fresh insight as a collection.
- Conference Reports: Medium length, under 5,000 words, synthesizing main ideas, findings, and recommendations from significant conferences or meetings organized or co-sponsored by CIGI, at which policy makers are often in attendance.
- Papers: Medium length, generally at least 7,000 words. Must include an executive summary under 250 words with key points accessible to well-informed policy specialists in government, think tanks, universities, and business.
- Special Reports: Robust reports generally used to cover lengthy projects, demonstrating the depth of analysis and research covered. Often paired with shorter pieces including Policy Briefs, Op-Eds, or multi-media tools such as videos.
  - *Dedicated Publications Team:* Within Public Affairs, the Publications team is dedicated to delivering clearly written policy research projects that are aligned with the intended audience as defined by the Research team.
- CIGI has also been externally recognized by the Canadian Online Publishing Awards for consistently award-winning design and research output for a general audience, during the evaluation period:
  - 2022 – Best Blog Column/Opinion Writing – Silver – Elizabeth Renieris Opinion Articles
  - 2022 – Best Service Article – Gold – 4 Domains Essay Series and video
  - 2021 – Best B2C Website – Gold – CIGIOnline
  - 2018 – Best Investigative Reporting – Gold – Open Canada

Action Steps:

- Within CIGI, the Public Affairs and Program Management teams will work to remove barriers, support Research, and ensure full integration of the Public Affairs teams with Research. This will support the targeted use of specific publication types aligned with CIGI's programmatic goals, aligned to the Theory of Change based design outlined above. It will also support adherence to best practices for each publication type to ensure the best opportunity for impact.
- Public Affairs will assess the effectiveness of our current outputs – while looking to expand our offerings targeted to public audiences. This could include audio storytelling, podcasts, mini documentaries, etc. Program Management will also support ongoing monitoring of research programs with policy makers. CIGI will then increase the frequency of what is demonstrated to draw a policy and/or engaged public audience.

Ownership & Timeframe:

- Public Affairs will have accountability for these items in partnership with the Program Management and Research Teams.

- Public Affairs and Program Management are working in Q1 and Q2 of 2024 to identify opportunities for strategic alignment early in the design process for Research programs and activities. In the formation of Theories of Change for the next Program of Work and Budget, the Program Management, Research, and Public Affairs Team will work closely on integrated planning to ensure that the right products are selected for the desired impact per program. This will occur primarily in Q3 and Q4 of 2024.

Recommendation 3: It is recommended that CIGI develop a strategy to maintain and increase CIGI's presence in Ottawa. There have been several recent important projects where an Ottawa presence has been key. However, there is a belief that Ottawa turns to organizations outside of Canada for advice when CIGI could be the source of such information.

Management Response:

Context:

- CIGI fully agrees that we would like to see Ottawa's integration of our analysis and recommendations increase, especially compared to foreign think tanks when designing Canadian policy. In general, CIGI is quite proud of the targeted and strategic relationships we have developed in Ottawa, which often provide significant influence if sometimes behind closed doors. That said, we always welcome advice and recommendations to increase this.
- It is worth noting a few examples of where we do have established expertise and networks in Ottawa:
    - CIGI's President is part-time in Ottawa and Managing Director for Digital Economy is based in Ottawa, frequently engaging key contacts on a formal and informal basis and participating in Ottawa-based events.
    - CIGI Research Directors and Fellows are frequently invited to participate in Parliamentary and Senate processes where policy priorities align with CIGI expertise (e.g., recent testimony before the Senate Banking Committee).
    - Post-COVID-19 lockdown, CIGI has returned to hosting Ottawa focused launches for key research reports such as "Supporting Safer Digital Spaces" and closed-door roundtables on timely issues such as the creation of a foreign agent registry.
    - CIGI Research Directors and Fellows frequently support training at the Canada School of Public Service, or host Ottawa-based organizations at CIGI in Waterloo (e.g., Horizon's Canada medium term planning session or the Certificate Program in Public Sector Leadership and Governance).

Action Items:

- Building on this track record, CIGI will undertake additional Ottawa-based engagement, especially given the opportunity to hold more in-person meetings and gatherings following the end of the COVID-19 pandemic phase. A near-term example is the November Board Meeting, which will include networking and substantive engagement with key government decision makers, including expert panels.

- Following the evaluation period, CIGI began our new Global AI Risks Initiative focused on decision making in Ottawa, with key staff based there including the Executive Director.

Ownership & Timeframe:

- This will be the collective accountability of the Senior Management Team.
- SMT will immediately look for new opportunities to undertake Ottawa-based engagements. In addition, Program Management, Public Affairs, and Events will look to incorporate Ottawa events and engagement into Theories of Change developed in Q3 and Q4 of 2024 for the next Program of Work and Budget.

Recommendation 4: It is recommended that CIGI establish partnerships with the Waterloo tech sector. Many of CIGI's initiatives have a strong technology component. These include AI, cyber security and digitalization of payments and currency. Tech partners in Waterloo could make an important contribution to work in these areas.

Management Response:

Context:

- CIGI's current Fellows and Board members include representatives from the private sector. Given CIGI's activity in the local community and our reputation, some tech-focused events with local partners are held on the CIGI campus such as the recent ETH Global in June 2023 which created opportunities for informal meetings. Some steps could be taken to do more with local tech partners while avoiding risks of conflict of interest.

Action items:

- CIGI will confirm if there is high interest from tech partners in holding an annual event where CIGI would outline its view on the state of the world and CIGI priorities and seek input and views from partners. Further potential collaboration points could be identified, as appropriate, through this event.

Ownership & Timeframe:

- This will be led by CIGI President with support from the Public Affairs team.
- Consultations Q2 and Q3 2024; potential event in Q4 2024.

Recommendation 5: It is recommended that CIGI continue to promote its role as an independent, financially stable think tank based outside of Ottawa, Washington, and New York. This space occupied by CIGI promotes an alternative, independent viewpoint.

Management Response:

Context:

- CIGI sees the value in strategically leveraging our location outside Ottawa, Washington and New York. For example, when we are able to create momentum for high-level participation on-site, we are able to benefit from longer visits with more dedicated attention from our visitors.
- It is worth further noting that our Fellows are geographically diverse, with 75% based outside Ottawa, Washington, and New York, including rural areas of Virginia, Texas, and British Colombia in addition to Fellows based globally. This helps CIGI avoid some of the "group think" that can occur in main power centers.
- CIGI is well connected internationally outside of these cities. CIGI staff participate actively in many different international fora, while our global network of Fellows also represent CIGI in events in different jurisdictions. CIGI has well established connections with many different international organizations including the IMF, OECD, UNCTAD and the WTO as well as other organizations, for example RightsCon, and the Global Data Barometer. CIGI has also held an annual conference in Rome related to financial sector developments and been a regular co-chair at annual T20 meetings.
- Our consistent ascent in the Global Go To Think Tank Index Rankings, moving from 32nd in 2012 to 25th in 2020 for "Top Think Tanks Worldwide (Non-US)," underscores our commitment to impactful, independent research from outside the United States. We will continue to champion our distinctive perspective, ensuring our research and collaborations drive global discourse.
- CIGI's reputation as well as its secure funding base were positive factors in receiving external funding for the International Digital Governance Network and for the work on data valuation.

Action items:

- The Senior Management Team will continue to review opportunities in this area, including through our hiring of staff and fellows, identification of partners, and selection of key events, while maintaining CIGI's financial sustainability.

Ownership & Timeframe:

- The Senior Management Team will be accountable for leveraging our location as an organizational asset.
- Program Management, Public Affairs, and Research will integrate this into our planning in Q3 and Q4 of 2024 for the year ahead.

Recommendation 6: It is recommended that CIGI add to and strengthen its full-time research team. Currently with eight full-time equivalents it is limited in its ability to initiate and complete new research. On occasion, this leads to a prolonged time from completion of research to its release. Current research team members are putting in long hours in reviewing research reports. This has led to an excellent, well-respected product. However, it is often delayed in its release. The important role of the 100 fellows in supporting the research team is acknowledged.

Management Response:

Context:

- It is worth noting that CIGI's research capacity is comprised of two groups: The internal team that drives the research agenda, initiates programs, and supports the completion of work and the broad network of Fellows and Contributors whose research and writing fills out CIGI's body of work. This distinction between the internal and the Fellows/Contributors needs to be clearly communicated and understood by all stakeholders.
- CIGI does reinforce the crucial role played by the Research Directors (RDs) in the final review of research, ensuring accountability and incorporating diverse perspectives.

Action Items:

- Just following the review period, CIGI created the centralized Program Management team to support driving work forward, creating efficiencies, and avoiding bottlenecks where possible. This team is led by the newly created Director of Program Management, adding an additional FTE to this function at a senior management level.
- Since March 2023, the new Program Management team has reorganized the assignment of work, allowing Program Managers to have full ownership of specific files, whereas previously these Managers organized their work through a combination of different functions (ex. Contracting, budget planning) and triage based on what was most pressing. This change aims to create efficiency and scalability, while empowering Program Managers and increasing the capacity of Research Directors, who previously would have been the sole "owners" of each individual file. It also enables other staff members with available capacity to manage specific research program portfolios, while continuing their other duties, also supporting our ability to scale.
- Since the end of the review period, CIGI also began the process of recruiting an additional research director, which will augment internal capacity. This recruitment is currently underway.
- In September 2023, following the evaluation period, CIGI launched the Digital Policy Hub, through which Undergraduate, Masters, Ph.D, and Post-Doctoral level Fellows produce research on a diverse array of topics aligned to CIGI's core areas. In addition to review by experts in the CIGI network such as our Fellows, this program will also leverage the expertise the Hub Fellows' external academic supervisors.
- CIGI management also plans to add an additional FTE to the Program Management team, primarily to focus on Africa programming. This addition aims to rejuvenate this area of research and potentially manage a few other smaller programs.

- The Program Management team is also undergoing a comprehensive review of processes to enhance the scalability of research programs. For example, one area of focus is improving contract management and the implementation of a CIGI-wide program management software tool.

Ownership & Timeframe:

- Director of Program Management in collaboration with the Senior Management Team.
- The implementation of the new portfolios for Program Managers is largely completed. The review and improvement of processes utilized by these Program Managers is expected to be ongoing throughout 2024 and 2025.
- The addition of the FTE for program management of the Africa program, and other files as appropriate, will likely be in Q3 and Q4 of 2024.

Recommendation 7: It is recommended that work be continued on the effort to coordinate the research of diverse fellows more closely. It is acknowledged that the new President has made this a priority. HCA strongly supports that work. Fellows often work independently on research and/or opinion pieces and there tends to be limited awareness of the broader strategic objective of the research and how it fits with ongoing work. It would be beneficial to inform fellows and other contributors how their work aligns with the broader plan so that they can better understand the value of their contribution and any crucial timing considerations if the work is feeding into other events.

Management Response:

Context:

- As noted by the evaluation team, this is a priority for the current President and is embraced by the Senior Management Team.
- The global pandemic disrupted many of these collaborative initiatives, but as the situation stabilizes, there is a renewed focus on scaling up these efforts.
- Targeted meetings have been initiated to foster collaboration and ensure alignment with the broader strategic objectives. For example, in 2019, there was a joint meeting between the International Law Program & Global Economy teams to address overlapping research issues, showcasing the potential of collaborative efforts.
- There is a notable cross-engagement of Fellows between various themes and Research Directors, particularly in areas like National Security and Platform Governance.

Action Items:

- Following the evaluation period, CIGI organized an all-inclusive meeting with all Fellows in April 2024, which provided a platform for open dialogue and feedback.
- Based on feedback, CIGI created a dedicated Slack channel for Fellows to facilitate real-time communication and collaboration. This serves as a centralized digital platform where Fellows can access ongoing research projects, upcoming events, and other relevant resources. It also encourages cross-collaboration by setting up interdisciplinary teams for specific research projects, ensuring diverse perspectives are considered.

- Based on additional feedback from Fellows, CIGI is organizing more in-person meet-ups starting this Fall, allowing Fellows to interact and brainstorm collectively.
- The President is sending more regular email updates to keep Fellows informed about organizational priorities and updates.
- CIGI Senior Management recently revamped the Executive Assistant position to include a "community management" component, ensuring better engagement and support for the Fellows. This position is in active recruitment.
- CIGI will Organize quarterly workshops or webinars to keep Fellows updated on the broader strategic objectives and how their individual contributions fit into the bigger picture.

Ownership & Timeframe:

- The initiative will be overseen by the President and Director of Program Management in collaboration with the Research Directors.
- As noted above, a number of these action items are already completed or underway. The additional action items will be integrated in planning undertaken in Q3 and Q4, to be rolled out progressively throughout 2024.

Recommendations 8: It is recommended that a policy be developed to deal with CIGI and its contractual or other relationships with fellows. There is confusion among fellows about who gets paid for work and how. In the interviews it was reported that some fellows and contributors get paid for writing while some fellows just do it because they value the CIGI connection.

Management Response:

Context:

- CIGI management acknowledges that there has been inconsistency in the past regarding the relationships with Fellows. In some cases, this does reflect intentional flexibility in our arrangements, seniority of the Fellow, or the level of effort required for a product, however there are opportunities for consistency and transparency that CIGI management will pursue.
- It is also noteworthy that some fellows opt to redirect their compensation to charitable causes rather than receiving payment.

Action Items:

- There is an ongoing evaluation of existing contract mechanisms with the aim of simplifying and standardizing the process, improving clarity and transparency for all parties involved.
- CIGI management will find appropriate mechanisms to socialize new contract mechanisms with Fellows to increase transparency and comfort with new practices.
- CIGI management will continue to provide an option for Fellows to redirect payments to charitable causes, with clear guidelines on how this can be facilitated.

Ownership & Timeframe:

- The initiative will be overseen by the Director of Program Management in collaboration with the Finance and Legal teams.

- The review process and development of the new processes are expected to be completed inQ2 2024. Implementation and communication to all Fellows will begin by Q3 2024.

Recommendation 9: It is recommended that CIGI provide a website link between topics and projects to allow users to fully utilize research results.

Management Response:

Context:

- Historically, CIGI's website had links connecting topics and programs, but over time, changes have led to either an overemphasis or underrepresentation of these connections. CIGI management acknowledges that striking a balance is essential for user navigation and comprehension, as the Public Affairs team strives to create an effective experience for a variety of audiences.

Action Items:

- A dedicated team is analyzing the current website structure to identify gaps and areas of improvement. Initial feedback from users is being collected to understand their navigation challenges and preferences.
- Public Affairs anticipates a number of likely action items from this analysis:
  - Enhancing the website's user interface to cater to multiple audiences, ensuring that each segment can access and interpret the research results effectively.
  - Implementing a revised tagging system that links content to specific programs, making it easier for users to find related research and projects. This may be particularly important for partners who are invested in particular programs via funding or research contributions.
  - Introduction of an interactive graphic or visualization on the website that illustrates the interconnections between various programs, while also delineating their unique attributes.

Ownership & Timeframe:

- The project will be spearheaded by Public Affairs in collaboration with Program Management.
- The initial phase of analysis and feedback collection is set to conclude in Q2 2024. Based on this feedback, implementation of changes and enhancements will be launched on CIGIonline.org in Q3 2024.

Recommendation 10: It is recommended that Public Affairs work closely with fellows and research projects from the initial phases to ensure that maximum policy impact is achieved.

Management Response:

Context:

- While the collaboration between Public Affairs and research fellows is already in place, there is always room for enhancement to ensure more streamlined and impactful outcomes.
- The Publications Manual, with its specific use cases, serves as a guiding document for this collaboration, emphasizing the importance of early and consistent engagement.

Action Items:

- The Theory of Change process in development will further integrate Public Affairs from the inception of program design. This ensures that the communication, outreach, and government relations strategies align with the research goals and objectives, maximizing policy impact.
- Ongoing program implementation and monitoring meetings will assess the effectiveness of the collaboration and make necessary adjustments.
- The Program Management team is also developing a program tracking platform where both teams can share updates, feedback, and insights in real-time.
- The Directors of Program Management and Public Affairs will continue to coordinate closely to make sure that planning is integrated both across and within both departments.

Ownership & Timeframe:

- This integration will be a partnership between the Directors of Public Affairs and Program Management, with the support of the Research Directors.
- In the formation of Theories of Change for the next Program of Work and Budget, the Program Management, Research, and Public Affairs Team will work closely on integrated planning to ensure. This will occur primarily in Q3 and Q4 of 2024.

Recommendation 11: It is recommended that CIGI be more aspirational in establishing a long-term agenda for research and policy work (e.g., 10 - 15 years).

Management Response:

Context:

- The realm of research and policy work is constantly and rapidly evolving, much like the technology it seeks to govern, necessitating a proactive and forward-thinking approach. In the face of global challenges and opportunities, a long-term perspective is essential to ensure that CIGI remains at the forefront of impactful research and policy formulation.
- This is imperative but can also make anticipating key issues over a long-term horizon challenging.
- CIGI's 2020-2025 strategic plan was both visionary and robust, setting a precedent for future planning. CIGI is proud of the ways this plan was able to anticipate key issues of the relevant period.
- CIGI's Global Scenarios analysis will provide insights for dissemination over the next year. This will help set the context for shaping CIGI's long-term strategic direction.

Action Items:

- The upcoming strategic plan is on the horizon, and CIGI management is strongly inclined to incorporate a more extended vision into it.
- While the immediate plan will cover the period 2025-2030, it will also lay the groundwork for a broader vision extending up to 15 years, ensuring CIGI remains aligned with long-term global trends and challenges, while remaining adaptive to pressing and timely issues.

- To further this long-term vision, CIGI is also preparing global scenarios work as part of our core research programs, which projects as far ahead as 2040. This work will provide valuable insights and frameworks for CIGI's extended strategic vision.

Ownership & Timeframe:

- The Senior Management Team, in collaboration with the Board of Directors, is tasked with the responsibility of crafting the next strategic plan, with the process set to commence in calendar year 2024, integrating the findings of this review, to be implemented in calendar year 2025.

Recommendation 12: It is recommended that CIGI increase its visibility in the Waterloo community. CIGI has been present in the Waterloo region since its inception. Prior to COVID, CIGI hosted many well-attended events, often based in the auditorium on the CIGI campus. These stopped by necessity during COVID. It is suggested that programming for the Waterloo region be increased and promoted to attract University and other community participants.

Management Response:

Context:

- The post-COVID era has ushered in a new norm of hybrid and online events, enabling wider participation at a fraction of the cost of traditional in-person events. While there are recommendations to expand outreach to other locations like Ottawa and Washington for a more extensive policy maker reach, local engagement remains important because it fosters genuine community connections and reinforces the organization's commitment to Waterloo Region.
- Prior to the pandemic, CIGI had become increasingly strategic in its approach, ensuring that local engagements align with research priorities, while emphasizing our role as a community partner. CIGI management agrees this is important as momentum for in-person events rebuilds.
- The Senior Management Team and other employees are actively involved in initiatives like "Doors Open," participating in local boards and appeals tribunals, and fostering a strong relationship with the City of Waterloo.
- Collaborations with entities like BSIA have been instrumental in creating research-centric local events. As BSIA delves deeper into Technology Governance, it's anticipated that their alignment with CIGI's research will strengthen even further.
- Local volunteers have been an integral part of CIGI events, showcasing the organization's commitment to community involvement.
- Tenants within the CIGI Campus have also played a role in enhancing the vibrancy of these events, to include the Perimeter Institute on Quantum Intelligence.
- The importance of local engagement is also evident in initiatives like the Waterloo Security Dialogue (WSD), completed after the period of evaluation. This initiative, with a primary focus on cybersecurity, convened major stakeholders: the City of Waterloo, e-Sentire, Magnet Forensics, the University of Waterloo, and the Cyber Privacy Institute. The WSD is an example of CIGI's commitment to not just engage with the community but to do so in a manner that aligns with its core policy objectives.
- The auditorium, a hub for many of these engagements, is available for rentals, further facilitating community interactions.

Action Items:

- In January 2023, just after the evaluation period, the auditorium underwent a technological upgrade to better accommodate hybrid events, reflecting CIGI's commitment to adaptability and inclusivity.
- Moving forward, CIGI management will assess the effectiveness and reach of past and current local engagements and explore potential collaborations with other local tech and research entities.

Ownership & Timeframe:

- Engagement with the Waterloo community will be spearheaded by the Public Affairs team in collaboration with the rest of the Senior Management Team.
- The Senior Management Team will integrate this into our planning in Q3 and Q4 of 2024 for the year ahead.