



INSTITUT
THOMAS MORE
INSTITUTE

2021/22 ANNUAL REPORT



Lifelong
Learning
in the Liberal
Arts

Éducation en
arts libéraux
tout au long de
la vie



UNIVERSITÉ
BISHOP'S
UNIVERSITY

Québec 



OUR MANDATE

Founded in 1945, The Thomas More Institute (TMI) is a secular, liberal arts academic institution that offers adults of all ages opportunities to explore a wide variety of topics in university-level discussion courses.

TMI is dedicated to the principle that learning is a lifelong process and that people learn best from each other by listening, questioning, and discussing in an environment where all perspectives are welcome.

Our outreach programs and special education events are designed to nurture curiosity, learning, and social engagement, particularly for those who may feel socially isolated or who are seeking

a different approach to education. TMI's varied courses and activities are offered with the belief that intelligent inquiry and critical reflection are central to community and well-being.

Students who seek an alternative method of education have the opportunity to earn a Comprehensive Certificate from TMI or a Bachelor of Arts degree through TMI's affiliation with Bishop's University. Whether taking courses for credit or for pleasure, participants develop a stronger sense of community, a new or renewed passion for lifelong learning, and an understanding of other perspectives.



The 2021/22 year has been another busy one at the Thomas More Institute, marked by the change and evolution that has characterized the broader landscape in recent times. This year, May was significant not only because it marked the close of our financial year, but also because we welcomed the TMI community back for our first in-person event in 2 ½ years. Although most participants at the May *Volunteer Appreciation and Digital Archives Launch* chose to join the event online, seeing some of you at TMI in person was a heart-warming signal that a return to more “normal” conditions was on the horizon.

Alongside changes in the external context, transitions were taking place at TMI. In September, we bid farewell to Executive Director Dina Souleiman. Her exemplary leadership through the pandemic was key in transitioning TMI and its community to a digital learning format and we are deeply grateful to her. In December, we welcomed incoming Executive Director Madeleine Colaço who took up the reins on the many fronts. Amidst this transition, and with the help of our outstanding staff and volunteers, the TMI community delivered another year rich in accomplishments and learning. From developing and delivering academic programming and cultural events to implementing innovative projects and operational improvements, the strength and versatility of the TMI community was in full force.

As we embark on a new year, and a new context, we take pride that the Institute is continuing its over 75-year-old project of education for adults with courses from literature to psychology to social science to writing designed to offer a place where adults can come together in a community to think deeply about the world in which we find ourselves and the meaning that opens for us when we reflect on it. While one may be able to find marvellous lectures on YouTube, download rich audiobooks, access culture by streaming it on a tablet, TMI offers learning in a community, with our fellow readers, questioners, and seekers, that is, with our neighbours and friends.

We look forward to working with you and for you in the coming year as we continue to shape our future in an evolving context. And we thank you for your unwavering support and commitment.

Carol Fiedler,
Chair of the Institute

Madeleine Colaço,
Executive Director

OUR PROGRAMMING

ACADEMIC COURSES 2021/22

TMI – A VERSATILE COMMUNITY OF LEARNERS

The 2021/22 academic year was once again held online. Although we had started the year with the hope that we might be able to resume fully in-person classes, the continued pandemic context ruled this out. To explore future options, a hybrid course format with both online and in-person participants was held in the spring. Throughout the year, community members demonstrated their adaptability to a changing context and the extent to which they had mastered the digital learning format.

The online context did not deter participation in our diverse programming. **In total we had over 465 registrants in the 39 courses offered at our Montreal and Gatineau locations, including close to 70 new students.**



This year, TMI's website was translated into French and our programming was expanded to include a total of five courses that were bilingual or in French. These initiatives are part of an ongoing effort to expand TMI's presence by reaching out to the francophone community.

We thank the **Ministère de l'enseignement supérieur du Québec** as a key and longstanding funding partner for our academic programming and volunteer development.



VOLUNTEER TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

Volunteers are at the heart of TMI. Most have an academic profile, are retired professionals or still teach and lecture at educational institutions in Montreal.

As always TMI's volunteer course leaders and designers enthusiastically participated in the various training and development activities offered by TMI to support their active engagement.

THANK YOU TO OUR VOLUNTEERS!

This year over 100 volunteers devoted their time to developing and delivering TMI's academic programming

- 3 leader refresher workshops
- 3 research guides to support course design:
 - Archival Research Guide
 - Oral History Research Guide
 - Internet Sources Research Guide
- A "Curiosity Forum" for designers to explore their ideas
- Ongoing digital literacy support

CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT 2022/23

In line with the directives of the 2021-26 Strategic Plan, the Curriculum Committee worked with leaders and designers to develop the courses for the upcoming year. These courses include efforts to expand the curriculum including introducing more diversity in the subject matter as well as offering expanded timeslots. A key consideration was also the mix of in-person and online courses to offer participants the chance to take a course based on their preference and comfort. We look forward to welcoming the community back in the upcoming year whether in person or online.

SENIORS OUTREACH PROGRAM

Since 1975, TMI has offered the Seniors Outreach Program which is designed to reach English-speaking seniors in the Montreal community. The program's goals are to help seniors reinforce their cognitive skills, break isolation, and forge new friendships, all the while supporting TMI's approach to lifelong learning. TMI is grateful to the **Lindsay Memorial Foundation** for its longstanding partnership in this program.

THE SENIORS OUTREACH PROGRAM WAS DELIVERED BY OVER 25 VOLUNTEERS WHO DEVOTED OVER 1,500 HOURS OF TIME TO THE COMMUNITY.

The topic for 2021/2022 was "Exploring Canada through the Arts" and the course was held in a total of 13 locations with 269 registrations. There was a gradual return to in-person meetings after the previous year on Zoom. Some places opted for Zoom the entire year; others met in person in the autumn and on

Zoom in winter. One result of the pandemic is that we will offer an on-line course each year for those not wishing or able to join an in-person group.

ACADEMIC, CULTURAL, AND SOCIAL EVENTS

While the pandemic may have kept us indoors, we continued to provide the community and broader public with opportunities to engage with each other and to socialize.

TMI INTERVIEW SERIES

In the tradition of the Interview Series, the broader public was invited to engage on issues of public interest through three webinars which attracted over 350 registrants.

REFUGEE EXPERIENCES: STORIES AT THE GRASSROOTS (NOVEMBER 2021)

LAND BACK AS INDIGENOUS CLIMATE JUSTICE AND COMMUNITY RESURGENCE (FEBRUARY 2022)

TRACING TIME IN P. B. SHELLEY'S POETRY 200 YEARS LATER (JUNE 2022)

"LEARNING FROM SENIORS" ONLINE CONFERENCE (March 2022)

Participants, leaders, and administrators from TMI's seniors' activities shared their findings on the challenges and opportunities of online activities.

THE WRITERS EXCHANGE

A series of 12 weekly sessions starting in September provided writers with an opportunity to gather for stimulation and support.

LITERARY EXCURSIONS

An eclectic reading-discussion experience brought together booklovers on a monthly basis to speak about their favourite books by a prolific author.

THE TMI STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS ALSO ORGANISED:

OPEN HOUSES September, January, March

ANNUAL FEAST OF LIGHTS CELEBRATION December

VOLUNTEER APPRECIATION & DIGITAL ARCHIVES LAUNCH May

INNOVATIVE PROJECTS

PAST AND PRESENT COME TOGETHER IN TMI'S DIGITAL ARCHIVES

In 2021, the Thomas More Institute was awarded a grant from the **Canadian Council of Archives** to hire students to work alongside our dedicated volunteers on reorganizing our archives and creating an online exhibit which can be accessed from our website. A look at the treasures available on this digital platform introduces one to the thoughtful and inspired founders of TMI. In the summer of 2022, "TMI Backstories", a social media campaign on Instagram and Facebook, featured snippets from the archives to raise awareness and curiosity around TMI's rich history and offerings, past and present.

Telephone Program (1982 to 1986)

Before Zoom courses, TMI devised telephone distance courses for individuals who could not participate in person due to illness, physical impairment or disability. 1-hour sessions were held over Bell Telephone Conference lines. Course material was available in the form of audio tapes or printed matter, prepared by volunteers at the Institute with assistance from volunteers at the Montreal Association for the Blind. The telephone course ended in 1986 due to the prohibitive Bell network charges.



Digital Literacy and Learning from Seniors

Funded under a one-year grant from the federal government's **New Horizons for Seniors Program** individuals in two residences learned the digital literacy skills necessary to connect online to family, friends, courses, and activities. With training taking place through a variety of formats, participants greatly increased their confidence in using digital tools. The initiative culminated with an online conference entitled "Learning from Seniors". The video of the conference highlights effective approaches to use when working with seniors.

OUR TEAM

WE WOULD LIKE TO THANK OUR OUTSTANDING VOLUNTEERS, STAFF,
AND BOARD OF DIRECTORS FOR THEIR COMMITMENT TO TMI!
YOUR STEADFAST SUPPORT, TALENTS AND TIME ARE THE
BEDROCK OF OUR INSTITUTION.

A TRANSITIONAL YEAR FOR OUR STAFF

This year, TMI's staff again demonstrated exceptional versatility as they navigated the ongoing variabilities of pandemic restrictions and changes on the staffing front. While in the preceding year significant progress was made in implementing online classrooms along with associated technologies and training, this year, work continued on digitizing TMI's operations with a move to more cloud-based systems, facilitating remote work and office efficiencies.

In the fall, Executive Director Dina Souleiman left TMI for new challenges and TMI's accountant Rebekah Bradley left on maternity leave. We thank Board Chair Carol Fiedler who assumed the interim role of Executive Director until the arrival of incoming Executive Director Madeleine Colaço, and John Shecter who took on the interim accounting role.

During this period of significant change, the excellent work of staff members Joseph Vietri, Zoe Shaw, Katie Hautakoski, Bridget Anthony and Seniors Outreach Program Coordinator Jennifer MacGregor allowed TMI's multiple projects to continue apace. In this they received valuable support from dedicated volunteers who provided assistance in areas such as office administration, reception and translation.

Staff

Madeleine Colaço, Executive Director (Dina Souleiman)

Joseph Vietri, Manager of Academic Affairs

Zoe Shaw, Administrative Services Coordinator

Jennifer MacGregor, Seniors Outreach Program Coordinator

Rebekah Bradley, Accountant (John Shecter, interim)

Bridget Anthony, Administrative Assistant

Katie Hautakoski, Administrative Assistant

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

As always the TMI Board was active and engaged in the work of the Institute. All Board members serve on a working committee in addition to contributing in many other ways. Thank you to our Board members for their tremendous commitment.

Carol Fiedler, Ph. D., Chair

Len Richman, M.A., Vice-Chair

David Dussault, B.A. Treasurer

Martin Baenninger, B.A., Secretary

Anne Fitzpatrick, Ph. D.

Clare Hallward, B.A.

Christine Jamieson, Ph. D.

Judy Macdonald, B.A., B. Ed., M.Ed.

Brian McDonough, B.A., B.C.L., M.A.

Anthony Rustin, Ph. D.

Daniel Schouela, M.A.

Shernaz Choksi, Ph. D.

Madeleine Colaço, M.B.A. ex officio



2021/22 INTERNS

Throughout the year, TMI benefitted from the energy and fresh perspectives of student interns. Their talents contributed to numerous areas including fundraising, data management, educational research, marketing, and TMI's digital archives project. Our thanks to **Employment and Social Development Canada**, the **Canadian Council of Archives**, and **Concordia's Humanities + program** who provided the funding for this support.

TMI COMMITTEES

THE WORK AT TMI WOULD NOT BE POSSIBLE IF IT WERE NOT FOR THE DEDICATION AND VISION PROVIDED BY OUR NUMEROUS COMMITTEES AND THEIR CHAIRPERSONS. EACH TMI COMMITTEE IS MANDATED TO CONTRIBUTE TO THE GROWTH AND SUCCESS OF TMI IN ITS PARTICULAR DOMAIN.

CURRICULUM,

Charged with developing our annual academic program and supporting over 100 volunteer academic positions. This year the Committee's work was dedicated to encouraging and supporting designers in the development of their courses. Sending out four calls for proposals, meeting with prospective designers and hosting brainstorming session in January 2022, the TMI designers managed to produce 43 courses for the upcoming academic year.

ACCREDITATION,

Focused on advising our credit students on their path to attaining a Bachelor of Arts in Liberal Arts, in association with Bishop's University, or a Comprehensive Certificate on a subject of interest. This year the committee reviewed our academic policies and developed a handbook for incoming credit students.

INTERVIEW COMMITTEE,

The committee hosts webinars in which TMI volunteers interview authors, professors, or public speakers on the issues of our times. This year, the members organised three Zoom webinars, showcasing TMI's approach to shared inquiry.

NOMINATION,

Responsible for ensuring the continuity of our Board of Directors by identifying potential Board members who capture and cultivate the TMI spirit and who are able to contribute to achieving the goals of the organization. This year the committee identified three prospective members to fill positions that will be vacated at the end of the year.

FUNDRAISING,

Charged with supporting our annual fundraising campaign and communicating to our community about our financial needs. This year we raised \$86,000 and tried out new graphic approaches as well as conducting calls to support the email and written campaigns.

FINANCE,

Responsible for developing, reviewing, and overseeing a financial action plan that will address TMI's financial deficit and ensure the long-term viability of TMI. This year saw the development of long-range scenarios to address the deficit situation.

MARKETING,

Focused on promoting TMI in the community. This year, the Committee met to review the status of actions outlined in the Strategic Plan and identify next steps.

GRANTS,

Charged with researching and applying for grants in tandem with the Executive Director. This year the committee was active in implementing the federal government's "New Horizons for Seniors" grant secured in 2021. It also identified potential new grants that could be applied for and launched the digital archives project.



OUR FINANCES

	2022 \$	2021 \$
REVENUES		
GRANTS		
Ministère de l'enseignement supérieur du Québec	120,500	120,500
Canada Wage Subsidy	36,010	53,550
Employment and Social Development Canada - <i>Canada Summer Jobs</i>	25,060	20,001
Employment and Social Development Canada - <i>New Horizons for Seniors Program*</i>	13,106	3,208
Canadian Council of Archives	8,542	-
Concordia University - Humanities +	2,457	-
Lindsay Memorial Foundation	10,000	7,500
Donations	121,069	92,954
Courses and administrative fees	55,512	51,548
Other revenues	5,565	4,944
	<u>397,821</u>	<u>354,205</u>
EXPENSES		
Salaries and social charges	278,140	274,826
Website and computer equipment	15,364	11,199
Office expenses	15,079	13,137
Classroom material and supplies	14,997	10,823
Seniors Outreach Program	13,582	13,938
Mail charges and prospectus	10,967	10,181
Interest and bank charges	10,935	9,567
Occupancy costs	10,221	10,146
Depreciation of fixed assets	8,630	7,648
Lecturers and facilitators	7,870	7,245
Energy	7,090	5,302
Professional fees	5,921	5,347
Taxes and insurance	5,399	4,704
Publicity	5,399	4,074
Maintenance and repairs	4,387	3,303
New Horizons program*	4,202	3,208
Telecommunications	2,509	2,424
Others	119	23
	<u>420,811</u>	<u>397,095</u>
DEFICIENCY OF REVENUES OVER EXPENSES BEFORE UNREALIZED LOSS (GAIN) ON INVESTMENTS	(22,990)	(42,890)
UNREALIZED LOSS (GAIN) ON INVESTMENTS	<u>28,345</u>	<u>(131,237)</u>
(DEFICIENCY) EXCESS OF REVENUES OVER EXPENSES	<u>(51,335)</u>	<u>88,347</u>

OUR FUNDERS & DONORS

TMI is a registered charity mandated to provide imaginative, rigorous, convivial lifelong learning opportunities to adults. THANK YOU to our donors for your tremendous support. Your generosity provides vital funding for this mission.

We also wish to gratefully acknowledge the ongoing support of the Ministère de l'enseignement supérieur du Québec and Employment and Social Development Canada as well as those corporations, partners and individuals who responded in the past year to our appeals.



\$5,000 +

Anonymous
George and Sylvia
Aikins Foundation
Paris Arnopoulos
Estate of Donna
Willow Thompson
Clare Hallward
Cole Foundation
Lindsay Memorial
Foundation

\$2,000 +

Kathleen Dunn
David Dussault
Aaron and Wally Fish
Family Foundation
Carol Fiedler
Anthony Rustin

\$1,000 - \$1,999

Madlyn Ferrier
William Fiedler
Judith MacDonald
Daniel Schouela
Thomas Tutsch

\$500 - \$999

Anonymous
Martin Baenninger
Marlene Bourque
Imogen Brian
Andrew Byers
Laurier Carpentier
Madeleine Colaço
Barry Cole &
Sylvie Plouffe
Andrew Dias
Anne Fitzpatrick
Anthony Joseph
Ellen Kom
Antoine Leuzi
Brian McDonough
Susan Perreault
Sara Bohl Pistolessi &
Donald Pistolessi
Sharon Poissant
Pratt & Whitney Canada
Stephanie Scherzer

\$250 - \$499

Anonymous
Munirah Amra
Mimi M. Belmonte
Foundation
Linda Benguigui
Ian and Pam Butler
Shernaz Choksi
James Cullen
Charlotte de Neeve
Nicholas de Takacsy
Ron Domachevsky
Louis Gadboury
Stuart Iversen
Marilyn Kaplow
John McGee
Diane Moreau
Veronica Noble
Michael O'Brien
Anthony Pantazopoulos
Francis Parfitt
Greg Peace
Roger Perrault
Wakeham D.C. Pilot
Margaret Piton
Olga Pubolz
Erika Romwalter
Christian Roy
Anne Stevens

UP TO \$249

Anonymous
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Susan Anastasopoulos
Jennifer Anstead
Josefina Balacruz
Siegmar Baltuch
Gregory Barkovich
Lenore Beitel
Paul Billette
Wilma Brown
Nora Burnier
Sandra Burrige
Anna Bushell
Moiria Carley
Martin Carnegie
Carole Channer
Gloria Cherney

Sarah Cohen
Pamela Coon
Sarah Cooper
Marthe Couture
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Marlene Danies
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Margaret Griffin
Ada Hainey
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June Kousaie
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Lois Manton
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Michael Tritt
Isabelle Turin
Dominic Varvaro
Françoise Vien
Sam Wendel
Debrah White
Grace Zenone

THANK YOU

Every donation is a concrete gesture of support for better listening, more dialogue, and sharper curiosity.



« The salient mark of TMI for adult learning is the conviction that a truly human education is not, in its aim, instrumental, a fattening-up for the marketplace, but rather a manifestation of the desire to know, a desire to make curiosity the center of one's life, a launching of oneself on the large uncharted seas of the world and oneself. The second mark is the fact that this adventure is not undertaken alone but in the company of other adventurers in a kind of convoy... The third mark ... is not only the actual, vocal, stimulating presence of fellow voyagers, but the logbooks of other seekers of the present or of former ages [available in the texts we read and discuss together] ... »

Gerald MacGuigan "Discussion Leading at TMI: Handbook for Leaders"

GET INVOLVED

There are many ways to support TMI.

Please reach out to our team to discuss the best way to get involved.

DONATE

BECOME A
DISCUSSION
LEADER

DESIGN A
COURSE

ACTIVITIES
& EVENTS

TMI
COMMITTEES

Visit our website for more information

THOMASMORE.QC.CA

