

Inspiring From Within (IFW) Conference and Committee

Terms of Reference

Mission Statement

The purpose of the Conference is to strengthen and encourage the career and personal growth of all McMaster employees by exploring ideas, suggestions and strategies based on the theme entitled 'Inspiring from Within'. It is tied to the Refining Directions goal, "To build an inclusive community with a shared purpose."

Conference Format

The current IFW Conference is comprised of, but not limited to, the following elements:

- An annual event held during the Winter
- a welcoming, retreat-like ambiance
- opening and closing keynote speakers
- concurrent sessions throughout the day
- conference materials
- lunch and nutrition breaks
- networking opportunities

Purpose of the Committee

The IFW Conference Committee (IFWCC) is responsible for the high-level planning, coordination and implementation of the Conference. The Chair reports to the Working at McMaster Steering Committee.

Committee Membership

1. The Committee is comprised of no less than thirteen (13) McMaster employees, as representative of the employee population as possible, which includes future campuses, who contribute their time on a voluntary basis. Membership on the Committee is for a minimum of two years and will not exceed five years.
2. Previous members can reapply for membership following an absence of two years.
3. Should a committee member withdraw during their term, they will not be replaced until the following cycle. The Committee will proceed towards conference preparation as planned with fewer members.
4. When a position becomes vacant, a Call for Participation will be emailed to all McMaster employees, normally between April and July. Interested candidates will be asked to submit a short paragraph indicating their relevant experience, skills and attributes for this position. The decision will be made by the IFWCC Committee, and will take place prior to the launch of planning for the following year. Applications will be kept on file for one year.
5. One additional non-voting member from Human Resources Services provides administrative and facilitation support to the Committee.
6. The Committee is guided by a Chair who is nominated and voted by members of the IFWCC. The term of the Chair is one year. A vice-chair will be elected to assist the Chair with committee responsibilities throughout the year. The term is also one year.
7. Each member will demonstrate a commitment to the success of the Conference by attending meetings, participating in discussions, working collegially, and being fair and equitable in the distribution of work.

IFWCC Terms of Reference

8. Within the IFWCC are four sub-committees:
 - a. Marketing—publicity (electronic and hard copy)
 - b. Facilities/Food—room scheduling, technology requirements, menus, table arrangements
 - c. Promotions—conference materials
 - d. Volunteers/Registration—arranging for volunteers and identifying event registration process.

Sub-committees will be comprised of at least four members of the IFWCC, one of whom is appointed as Chair. The sub-committee reports regularly to the IFWCC and should consider suggestions made by the IFWCC regarding the direction and completion of their task.

Frequency of Meetings

From August to December, the Committee meets on a monthly basis. In January, the Committee meets bi-weekly and this moves to weekly in February until the Conference takes place. Sub-committees meet regularly between these times, providing progress reports to the main Committee.

Every effort is made to hold these meetings during the lunch hour (12:00 noon to 1:30 pm). Although participation is voluntary, a committee member may need to make arrangements with their supervisor to attend the meetings. Supervisors are encouraged to make these arrangements work wherever operationally feasible.

Committee Activities

The IFWCC identifies a theme for each year based on the suggestions and comments of past participants as well as current trends in professional and personal development. The keynote speakers and workshop leaders should present topics that complement the theme.

Role of Facilitator

The non-voting member from Human Resources Services is an integral and valued part of the IFWCC. They are responsible for the following administrative tasks:

- Arranging IFWCC meetings
- Meeting with the Chair prior to each meeting to plan the agenda
- Printing of conference materials, if necessary
- Electronic conference registration
- Updating and maintaining the conference website
- Arranging speaker contracts
- Payment of conference expenses
- Accountable for budget and management of funds
- Completing the final report in collaboration with the Chair
- Other duties as assigned by the IFWCC

Conference Resources

Since its inception, the Conference has been, and continues to be, self-supporting through registration fees. Monies are allocated to five main areas of expense: food and refreshments, promotional materials, speakers, marketing, venue and equipment. The distribution of resources may change from year to year depending on conference requirements and committee decisions. Continue to seek funding from University Leaders (Vice-Presidents, Deans, Chairs, Directors etc.) to reinforce their commitment to professional development of all McMaster employees, and make the Conference viable and accessible.