Centre for Research in Regional Planning and Development (CRAD)

The Centre for Research on Planning and Development (CRAD) offers a research environment that integrates aspects of human and social sciences, natural sciences, engineering, and uniquely, creative research. This cutting-edge laboratory’s interdisciplinary—even cross-disciplinary—approach is further strengthened by its ties to the health sciences sector, making it an ideal forum for the development and dissemination of knowledge and the transfer of knowledge to practice communities.

CENTRE DESCRIPTION

CRAD is an interdisciplinary centre that brings together researchers and students around four key issues in sustainable urban and rural planning and development: urban transformation, regional viability, sustainable development and environmental protection, and practice improvements and innovation.

CRAD researchers have backgrounds in geography, sociology, economics, biology, civil engineering, architecture, political science, and urban studies and excel in applied and basic research as well as in planning and design.

A number of research projects are conducted in collaboration with ministries, municipalities, and local organizations, making CRAD an important partner in the community.

MISSION

CRAD strives to

- Advance knowledge by analyzing and synthesizing morphological, ecological, economic, and social changes associated with land use
- Train top-notch graduate researchers and provide a framework for urban studies research
- Provide decision making support for regional planning and development
- Guide physical development policies and projects by implementing participatory, partnership-based approaches

CENTRE STATISTICS AT 1 JUNE 2013

35 regular researchers and 18 associate researchers
10 research professionals
68 students
CRAD researchers contribute significantly to the advancement of knowledge by publishing their research findings in leading international journals such as Water Research, Desalination, Diversity and Distributions, Transportation Research Part A, and Epidemiology. Three collective works were also recently published: Modelling Urban Dynamics: Mobility, Accessibility and Real Estate Value, edited by Marius Thériault and François Des Rosiers and published by ISTE-Wiley; La banlieue s'étale, edited by Andrée Fortin, Carole Després, and Geneviève Vachon and published by Nota Bene; and Survey Methods: Best Practice for Decision Making, edited by Martin Lee-Gosselin et al. and published by Emerald.

CRAD researchers secured over $5.3 million in grants and contracts to fund their research for the 2010–2012 period. Manuel Rodriguez is part of a team that was awarded a major grant by CFI to establish the Laboratoire sur le développement durable des infrastructures publiques. CRAD is also a key partner in the strategic Villes Régions Monde interuniversity network. In 2011, another CRAD researcher, François Des Rosiers, received the International Real Estate Society Achievement Award in recognition of his life’s work.

The dissemination and transfer of knowledge is a priority for CRAD researchers, as evidenced by the brief submitted by CRAD during the public consultation on the City of Québec’s Sustainable Mobility Plan, Jean Séroudes’ general-audience book on drinking water, and “15 ans et la ville devant soi,” an exhibition that blends conventional and creative research in urban design. Research conducted at CRAD has had a direct impact on society. For example, based on CRAD research, Quebec City-based Communauto recently decided to open up its carshare service to OPUS transit card holders, encouraging intermodal transportation.

Students are an integral part of CRAD’s vibrant scientific and social community, participating in scientific activities such as lunch-and-learn talks, forums, and the annual multidisciplinary student symposium. In its 18th edition in 2013, the symposium is entirely organized by a student committee with support from CRAD. Students have a say in CRAD’s operations through their representative on the board of directors, and can also attend general meetings. They also organize regular social activities and participate in the Internet forum created to encourage dialogue and support among CRAD members.

Most CRAD students obtain financial support from their research teams to carry out their work. Many are jointly supervised by members of different research teams and coauthor publications allowing them to integrate specific subject knowledge with new methodological expertise. At CRAD, over 40% of peer-reviewed journal articles are coauthored by students, with students as the lead author in many cases. Student researchers assist in giving two-thirds (66%) of papers and present nearly one-fourth (22%) themselves. CRAD students also enjoy scientific and technical support from research professionals and administrative staff, as well as access to the Villes Régions Monde interuniversity network, which organizes a variety of major scientific training activities and events.

Université Laval in the heart of Québec City is one of Canada’s top research universities, with nearly 230 graduate programs. A global leader in numerous cutting-edge disciplines, Université Laval educates tomorrow’s leaders and prepares them to face current and future challenges in every field of knowledge.

Learn more about Université Laval programs at ulaval.ca/futurestudents.

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