

CANSES 2nd Annual Workshop Summary Report

On September 25 and 26th, the Canadian Network for Research on Extremism, Security, and Society (CANSES) hosted its 2nd Annual Workshop at Saint Mary's University in Halifax, Nova Scotia. In addition to presentations on research funded by CANSES, the Workshop included 4 working group sessions, 3 round tables, and 2 "Views from the Inside" sessions, in which experts shared firsthand knowledge on policy brief writing and practitioners shared their experiences and perspectives working in P/CVE spaces.

Working Group Sessions

Early Career Researchers Working Group

The ECRWG identified four key areas where CANSES can support ECRs:

1. Mentorship
2. National/international relationship building
3. ECR-specific funding
4. Skill development/training

Corrections Working Group

Attendees highlighted two areas of need in the P/CVE-corrections space:

1. Overcome/prevent the further siloing of P/CVE programming and corrections by building relationships between P/CVE practitioners and corrections staff working in prisons.
2. Understand youth-specific psychological drivers of online extremism.

Data Working Group

The Data Working Group (DWG) agreed that the CANSES website should host a data resource center that (a) stores datasets contributed/ owned by CANSES members and (b) serves as a hub linking to other external/pre-existing dataset repositories. Members from across sectors were in favour of a post-secondary institution, such as Simon Fraser University (where CANSES is housed) providing the infrastructure for secure data storage and distribution. There was support for CANSES providing workshops on data analysis and advanced research methods through a TSAS-style Summer Institute or through an existing program like [Vox-Pol's](#) Summer School.

Education Working Group

The EWG agreed that their work should be grounded in decolonial and anti-racist values and be committed to diversity and inclusivity. EWG members identified a list of key priorities/ questions. The EWG produced a research agenda focused on:

1. Determining what teachers need from us (extremism researchers and practitioners)
2. Building curriculum that is research-and-practitioner-informed.

Roundtable Sessions

Nihilistic Violent Extremism (NVE)

The roundtable on NVE was facilitated by Dr. Marc-André Argentino who gave attendees a brief introduction to NVE, focusing on its hybridized nature.

Collaborative Research and Large Grants

Dr. Amy Mack facilitated a round table on collaborative research and large grants aimed at identifying and overcoming challenges associated with these applications. To address common challenges, it was suggested that CANSES:

1. Help facilitate relationships between members who are looking for co-applicants.
2. Encourage projects involving collaborators of all academic ranks.
3. Have the CANSES website list relevant grants and funding opportunities.

Mental Illness, Neurodiversity, & Violence Extremism

Facilitated by Dr. Michael King, this roundtable produced the following suggestions:

1. CANSES could support research on mental illness, neurodiversity, and violent extremism through funding and collecting/hosting relevant data.
2. CANSES could act as facilitator for discussions between law enforcement, government officials, researchers, and practitioners to refine frameworks and definitions relevant to work in this area.

Views from the Inside

Policy Brief Writing Session

Dr. Shannon Nash hosted an interactive policy brief writing session to give CANSES members practical insights into how to translate complex research into actionable, audience-specific policy advice. These insights included:

1. Identify your audience.
2. Defining complex terms.
3. Be clear about the impact/severity/importance of the issue.
4. Be very explicit about policy suggestions.
5. Formatting considerations.

Experiences and Perspectives of Practitioners Working in the P/CVE Space

Facilitators Peter Smyth (the Organization for the Prevention of Violence) and Abokar Mohamed (Yorktown Child and Family Center), shared their experiences as practitioners working in the P/CVE space. The discussion focused on 3 topics:

1. Navigating collaborative efforts with law enforcement and the community.
2. The challenges of mandatory service participants.
3. Complex client needs.