



Yale University

Whitney & Betty MacMillan

Center for International & Area Studies

Strategic Plan 2025 - 2030



Introduction

In its role as a central resource to all disciplines, departments, and Schools at Yale, the Whitney and Betty MacMillan Center for International and Area Studies encompasses the full scope of international and regional engagement throughout the University. MacMillan faculty and students conduct deep research on societies and states around the world, using the full range of methods in the humanities and social sciences. We also foster connections throughout Yale that enable our scholars to advance their work in STEM and health sciences. As a partner to Yale's 13 professional schools, we also advance international research and projects across a wide range of professions, industries, and praxes. Our teaching, research, and service provide students from Yale and around the world with the cultural, linguistic, and regional context they need to become better-informed global citizens, professionals, leaders, and scholars. In short, as Yale's international hub, the MacMillan Center promotes understanding of the world and in the world.

In creating this strategy, we aim to build upon the Center's unique strengths and positioning to deepen and broaden its world-class scholarship, support the next generation of global leaders, and foster a more informed, inclusive, and flourishing world. The foundation of this document is the Center's mission statement, as well as that of Yale University, and the values and priorities the Center adopted in the fall of 2023. These values and priorities, along with the goals described in this plan, emerged from a consultative process with the faculty and staff of the Center, as well as key stakeholders within the university. Students contributed to this plan with research and through listening sessions. The outcome is a concise document that we hope sets a compelling course for the next five years.

The rest of this document is as follows: First, we describe our purpose, values, ways of working, and global priorities. With this context we then identify three key goals and a set of actions that we will use to advance these goals. Because MacMillan is defined by the intellectual vision of our scholars and the activities of our regional councils and global programs, this document is undergirded by the priorities and plans of our councils and programs. In addition, we have defined a set of objectives related to core programming, visibility, fundraising, and community building that will be tracked and measured in coordination with the goals here. All of this activity will be reflected in our annual impact reports over the next five years.

It is important to acknowledge that the past five years have offered insights into the ways in which both world events and more local challenges have the potential to disrupt our work. While the MacMillan Center is committed to realizing the goals and actions enumerated here, we also pledge to adapt in meaningful ways to extreme circumstances should they arise by enabling proactive and responsive approaches to global challenges through our scholarly work and our activities.

Our Purpose

Yale Mission Yale's core mission is to create, disseminate, and preserve knowledge through research and teaching.

Yale pursues this mission through the Faculty of Arts and Sciences, Yale College, and its graduate and professional schools, each with its own distinct contributions.

MacMillan Mission The Whitney and Betty MacMillan Center for International and Area Studies at Yale pursues excellence in research, teaching, and capacity-building across societies to bring about a more informed, inclusive, and flourishing world.



Our Values

These values are the guiding principles of the MacMillan Center. They are reflected in our decision-making on a daily basis as well as in our longer-term planning.

- Academic Excellence* We value and support deep scholarship and excellent teaching to produce new insights in the academy and beyond. We use innovative research to engage contemporary challenges, while drawing on lessons of history to understand the past and inform the future.
- Disciplinarity* We support both unrestricted academic exploration within traditional disciplines, and dynamic collaboration within and across academic fields and schools.
- Collaboration & Community* In our role as Yale's international hub, we are a catalyst for academic relationships throughout the university and with external partners. We are also committed to serving as a gathering place and resource for Yale's community members.
- Balance & Capacity* Recognizing our power as an institution and our role as a center for international research and teaching, we strive to ensure balance in our programs and practices. We foster relationships with institutions and communities around the world in pursuit of meaningful exchange – both sharing and absorbing knowledge.
- Curiosity & Impact* We embrace intellectual inquiry into international societies and cultures past and present for its own sake, and to contribute meaningfully to actions and outcomes in communities, in regions, and around the globe.

How We Work

Created in the 1960s as the Concilium on International and Area Studies and renamed to be The Whitney and Betty MacMillan Center for International and Area Studies at Yale in 2006, the MacMillan Center is a resource for all members of the Yale academic community. The strength of the Center relies on strong leadership and administrative support with the majority of our activities are being realized through our regional councils and global programs.

Central Administration

A tenured faculty member with extensive international expertise is appointed by the Provost as the MacMillan Center's director. Additional center leaders include a deputy director, a finance director, a senior director for engagement, and a senior director for global programs. The core team is rounded out by business office and IT staff as well as experts in academic appointments, communications, and programmatic support. This model allows the Center to efficiently and effectively deliver services and coordinate shared programming, visibility tactics, and fundraising. It also enables a vibrant multicultural community, with ample offerings for Yale's students, staff, faculty, and visitors.

Regional Councils

MacMillan currently houses regional councils focused on Africa, East Asia, Europe, Latin America and Iberia, the Middle East, South Asia, and Southeast Asia. These are integral, permanent parts of the Center that advance deep understanding of the world through regional lenses and foster synergy between faculty from various disciplines throughout Yale. The faculty members associated with these councils also develop and sustain robust collaborations with scholars in their respective regions. Five of the councils host undergraduate majors and three offer master's programs, creating direct academic connections to area studies for students at Yale. Postdoctoral associates also contribute to research and teaching.

Global Programs

As a complement to the Center's regional councils, MacMillan's Global Programs explore historical and contemporary trends, practices, and theories through interdisciplinary, transnational lenses. Seeking to advance solutions to global challenges and foster deep disciplinary exploration, each Global Program is shaped by the vision and leadership of selected Yale faculty members, often in collaboration with scholars, practitioners, students, and policymakers from throughout the world. The Center supports these efforts through funds, staffing, outreach, and other resources.

Academic Appointments

Most of MacMillan's ladder and instructional faculty members are appointed through or in cooperation with the Yale Faculty of Arts and Sciences, which comprises the 40+ departments and programs that, along with the School of Engineering and Applied Science, provide instruction to the students of Yale College and the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences. The Center also has affiliated faculty members from most of Yale's 13 professional schools: School of Architecture, School of Art, Divinity School, David Geffen School of Drama, School of Engineering & Applied Science, School of the Environment, Jackson School of Global Affairs, Law School, School of Management, School of Medicine, School of Music, School of Nursing, School of Public Health.

Themes

The MacMillan Center advances and shares knowledge across a range of disciplines driven by faculty interest and the principle of academic freedom. Reflecting and reinforcing the work of MacMillan’s councils and programs, as well as Yale University’s areas of academic strength, the Center has identified seven themes to nurture dialogue and showcase outcomes.

Humanity *Engaging global voices to better understand ourselves and others.*

Understanding what it is to be human is a question explored across all cultures and societies. Through the study and teaching of disciplines such as language, arts, history, philosophy, religion, literature, and as well as the social sciences we seek to inspire the next generation to never lose sight of the wonder and scope of human potential across the world.

Dignity *Scholarship and intervention to promote respect and human rights.*

Human dignity includes such things as gender and racial equality, understanding of religious and cultural differences, access to education and livelihoods, the right to free expression and debate, and freedom from slavery and torture. Our engagement reflects deep empirical and historical study, and well-designed analytically rigorous research that focuses on issues such as conflict moderation, reducing discrimination against migrants and refugees, and gender-inclusive development.

Good Governance *Exploring and advancing effective and inclusive leadership.*

Transparency, fairness, accountability, and equity are critical to good governance. Our scholars examine debates over ethics, power, and representative institutions to understand what has been effective in the past and consider models that may be applicable for the environmental, political, and social challenges of our world today.

Environment *Balancing the needs of people and the planet.*

Ecology figures heavily in culture, religion, and traditions in all regions of the world, yet we are at a pivotal moment in history: habitat loss, movement of invasive species, and climate change have brought us to the brink of a biodiversity crisis that stands to compromise our ability to ensure human well-being and economic prosperity for all. Our councils and programs deepen our understanding of ecological themes in literature, language, tradition, and more.

Climate Change *Exploring the complexities of global warming through international and regional lenses.*

Climate change is disrupting the natural, economic, and social systems we rely on, which is shifting our ability to ensure human health and well-being – especially of the most vulnerable populations. We use critical regional and transnational insights to understand the historical, physical, and societal roots of these changes, and elevate the inquiry and action that reflect the urgency of one of the most daunting social challenges of our time.

Societal Resilience *Building resilience in individuals and societies.*

Societal resilience includes disaster response and preparedness, robust health systems, inclusive growth, and strong social connections that ensure people are mentally, physically, and emotionally able to endure and recover from major disruptions. Our scholars are investigating the full range of how societies and states have adapted to these challenges over time and across different societies.

Leadership & Service: *Translating scholarship into insights and solutions.*

Yale University educates leaders worldwide who serve all sectors of society. As the University explores transformative ideas, often in STEM and health sciences, the MacMillan Center plays a critical role by providing deep context through international education, research, and service and by supporting international partnerships and networks to inform decision-making.

Goals

Aligned with our priorities and in service to the mission statements of Yale University and the MacMillan Center, over the coming five years we will focus on three overarching goals:

- Connect* Foster community and partnerships on campus, in our community, with peer institutions, and around the world.
- Research* Support the generation and dissemination of knowledge to enhance our understanding of the world and in the world.
- Lead* Leverage our intellectual and programmatic contributions to inform a more inclusive and flourishing world.

These goals are intentionally broad, as this allows us to describe the myriad activities and dimensions of the councils and programs while advancing toward a compelling and cohesive presence for the Center on campus and in the world.



Connect

Foster community and partnerships on campus, in our community, with peer institutions, and around the world.

MacMillan brings together geographically, culturally, and ideologically diverse scholars, practitioners, and organizations and we partner with a range of other universities across the globe for research, programming, and exchanges. Over the coming five years, we will further invest in our identity to be a central international hub for the campus, nurture and grow our faculty connections, and expand our scope and reach through partnerships.

1. Be a central international hub for the Yale community.

Beyond our role as a catalyst for academic relationships throughout the university, we are committed to serving as a gathering place and resource for Yale’s community members. This work includes welcoming visiting scholars to campus each year, convening international events, and creating and curating activities that promote an environment of welcome, inclusion, respect, and learning.

2. Nurture and grow our connections to faculty and students throughout Yale.

Given the Center’s mandate as a resource for all of Yale, we seek to fully reflect the university’s range of faculty pursuits. In addition to augmenting MacMillan’s strong presence in the Faculty of Arts and Sciences, we seek to bolster our work with faculty members appointed to Yale’s other schools, including connecting them with faculty in the Faculty of Arts and Sciences who share their interests. This will further our abilities to support academic exploration within traditional disciplines as well as impact-oriented collaboration within and across academic fields and schools.

3. Expand our reach and scope through partnerships.

In the next five years, we aim to enhance our work through alliances with other centers on campus and as well as through connections with our counterparts in peer institutions. We will also build on the work of our councils and global programs in establishing meaningful relationships with academic and non-academic regional partners.

4. Foster and enhance relationships with alumni and friends around the world.

Our students’ relationship with the MacMillan Center does not end with graduation. In addition to maintaining connections with alumni of our own masters and undergraduate programs, we are committed to curating a vibrant network of Yale alumni, parents, friends, and thought partners who can advise the Center and help to advance its priorities.



Research

Support the generation and dissemination of knowledge to enhance understanding of the world and in the world

MacMillan offers Yale faculty opportunities to pursue regional and international research and connect with diverse colleagues from throughout the University and beyond. In addition to the support and vibrant programming offered through our councils and programs, we offer an array of generous grants to enable faculty to explore their interests. The Center also provides a platform to disseminate findings to the Yale, New Haven, and international communities, thereby enhancing reach and uptake. Students receive resources and mentorship to pursue rigorous, timely research spanning the humanities, social sciences, and beyond. In the coming five years, we are committed to growing our support of excellent regional and transnational research and amplifying the outcomes of the work we support.

1. Cultivate global research programs that address transnational challenges.

MacMillan's faculty-led global programs support intellectual exploration within and outside the humanities and social sciences. We seek to establish and support a set of programs that are aligned to the Center's priorities, enable new forms of inquiry, and advance multidisciplinary approaches.

2. Showcase the value of regional studies.

The Center's regional councils spotlight the full tapestry of traditions, complexities, and opportunities of the seven areas they encompass while creating a welcoming space for scholarly exchange, performances, and more. The strength and diversity of these councils also help attract scholars to Yale. In the coming years, we will elevate the visibility of our existing councils and explore opportunities to offer faculty additional leadership positions.

3. Catalyze and facilitate fresh research.

Funding international research is one of MacMillan's key responsibilities and one we intend to grow our volume of available funding significantly in the coming years. In doing so, we are committed to collaborating with other groups on campus and streamlining the processes for securing funds, thereby establishing a standard for timely, low-burden provision of resources. As this work progresses, we will seek input from faculty and staff leaders on how to disseminate outputs with key stakeholders.

4. Amplify reach.

The research of our faculty members provides valuable insights into an array of topics. We will maximize uptake by using a coordinated set of visibility standards and innovative tactics, including collaboration with partners on- and off-campus, publication through new outlets, and investment in new digital outlets.



Lead

Leverage our intellectual and programmatic contributions to inform a more inclusive and flourishing world.

Yale is committed to improving the world today and for future generations. As the University's international hub, MacMillan plays a central role in supporting outstanding research and scholarship, excellent education, culturally conscious preservation, and dynamic and effective practice. Over the next five years, we see additional opportunities to shape understanding and action on topics of regional and international importance through education, streamlining processes, elevating the visibility of Yale's research, and developing strategic alliances.

1. Educate and inspire aspiring leaders who will go on to serve all sectors of society.

Students who enroll in our courses and graduate with these degrees offered by our councils derive insights across intellectual disciplines and enter the workforce with deep understanding of how and why regions evolve. In the coming years, the Center will increase the number of students enrolled in these courses and degrees and aspire to secure funds to support additional international master's students.

2. Fortify, diversify, and unify our efforts.

MacMillan's councils and programs are dynamic, vibrant hubs of excellence, but due to the structure and size of the Center, there are some barriers to collaboration within the Center and with other campus partners. We will celebrate the unique attributes of the councils and programs while advancing shared standards of excellence for all outputs of the center, supporting additional pathways to maximize the visibility of our activities and devising additional opportunities for collaboration within the Center and throughout campus through Center-led programs.

3. Champion initiatives that leverage Yale's intellectual assets and convening power.

MacMillan is uniquely positioned to create and support collaborative programs within and on behalf of the University. Over the next five years, we will create initiatives that reflect the Center's priorities, engage our councils and programs, and foster synergy with schools and units from throughout Yale. In cooperation with the other groups under the Vice Provost for Global Strategy, we will advance Yale as a worldwide research leader on matters of global import and inform meaningful, reciprocal relationships with institutions around the world.



Plan into Action

This document is accompanied by an implementation guide that is a living document to be used by the Center's leadership to ensure collective and cohesive progress as well as a visibility strategy and a development strategy. Each of the Center's regional councils and major programs has also been encouraged to commit to their own plan that connects to the priorities of this Plan. The Center's annual impact report will offer both qualitative and quantitative insights as we move forward together.