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# SCIENCE FOR THE PEOPLE • CANADA •

## Statement of Purpose

**SftP Canada is an organization that seeks to grow a tradition of feminist, anti-capitalist, and anti-imperialist science.**

Science is an inherently social process, and scientific explanations reflect the dominant values of society. Political ideology is manifest in the assumptions that scientists make, and when received as a source of “politically neutral” or “value-free” knowledge, scientific explanations in turn serve to reinforce the attitudes that give rise to these assumptions in the first place. Many scientific explanations therefore serve to legitimize and perpetuate our current systems of social relation.

Under capitalism, the production of scientific knowledge and technology serves first and foremost the interests of capital. Capitalist governments invest in basic research to accelerate resource extraction and labour exploitation with the ultimate aim of generating profit. In Canada, these facts are dangerously obscured by funding bodies and educational institutions which uphold the myth that publicly funded research truly serves the interests of the general public. Instead, state institutions in Canada fund research that stabilizes, upholds, and perfects an exploitative system of production— a system that has brought us to the brink of catastrophic ecosystem collapse, and one that is making life on this planet increasingly unlivable.

As scientists living and working in Canada, we believe a different world is possible, in which ecosystem-sustaining and life-enriching scientific knowledge is truly generated by, and in the service of, the people.



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**SftP Canada firmly believes in doing science for, by, and with the people. To that end, we are deeply committed to the extension and democratization of scientific theory and practice beyond the walls of traditional elitist institutions.**

**In the Canadian context, SftP Canada recognizes that:**

- Scientific knowledge can be produced both within and outside of state-recognized institutions.
- Canada is a colonial power that builds its wealth through a mode of resource extraction that simply cannot be sustained.
- Capitalist and imperialist values are deeply embedded in the tradition of science taught within Canada's public education system.
- Canadian scientists and engineers are complicit in armed imperial conflict, enabling the high-tech militarization of Canadian borders and police, and armed oppression both at home and abroad.
- The climate crisis is produced by, and cannot be solved under, capitalism; and it will continue to disproportionately affect the poorest nations.
- Traditional Indigenous Knowledge and Indigenous sciences are critical for revolutionizing our relationships with one another and with the land.
- Canada's resource extraction projects, arms industries, pharmaceutical industries, and medical institutions cannot function without the scientist-workers that sustain them.

**Within the Canadian struggle for radical science, we recognize the following urgent needs:**

- There is an urgent need for Western-trained scientists to engage with, keep alive, re-centre, and grow Traditional Indigenous Knowledge— and in so doing, to fundamentally change our abusive relationship with the land on which we work.
- As Canadian scientists are implicated in imperial power struggles over global “technospheres” of influence, there is an urgent need to build international solidarity from below and reject racist and imperialist nationalisms of all kinds.



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- Canadian scientists have become increasingly disillusioned with “traditional science activism” around the climate crisis, which has sought to implement incremental reforms within existing political institutions. There is instead an urgent need to organize scientists around radical system change, and to raise anti-capitalist and anti-imperial consciousness in scientists, both inside and outside of established institutions.
  - STEM students and workers in Canada are largely non-unionized, disorganized, and disempowered, and enjoy very little democratic control over the institutions in which they work. There is an urgent need to develop class consciousness and build solidarity at our places of employment.
  - The exclusion of oppressed groups from modes of scientific knowledge generation has led to the production of faulty, dangerous, and unreliable scientific explanations. There is a need to build parity both within SftP and at STEM institutions to centre the perspectives of marginalized, oppressed, and exploited peoples and to ensure their full participation in shaping the scientific practices of the future— in particular, the women, gender minorities, and racial minorities that comprise the majority of the working class.

**With these needs in mind, SftP Canada aims to sustain and grow this tradition of radical science by:**

- Committing ourselves to popular training and community-led science outside of state-recognized institutions.
- Building networks of knowledge-sharing within Canada and internationally.
- Maintaining channels of international communication to advance global solidarity in anti-capitalist and anti-imperial struggles.
- Actively contributing to and engaging with SftP’s publications and developing radical analysis in the Canadian context.
- Developing radical critiques of capitalist science and developing alternative modes of knowledge production.
- Building a supportive community in which to study and deepening our knowledge and practice of radical science.