

Canadian scholars organized by the Canadian Embassy at The Hague with the help of a handful of Dutch academics revealed that there was a high potential interest for Canadian Studies. Following these lecture tours an extensive survey was carried out. The survey corroborated initial findings and plans were made to make latent interest become manifest.

3. Laying the foundations

A first successful attempt at teaching a Canadian subject was being made by Prof. August J. Fry of the Department of English and American Literature of the Free University of Amsterdam. An initial course with partial Canadian content taught in the academic year 1983/1984 quickly developed into a full course on Canadian English literature taught in 1984/1985 for the first time. The course has been taught since then with increasing success.

Roughly at the same time a tiny group of enthusiastic Canadianists (amongst whom also Prof. Fry) organized a Canadian Studies Seminar to show the Dutch academe what Canadian Studies could mean. Thus the seminar 'Canada - Profile of a Nation' was held at Amersfoort on October 4, 1984. Over 70 academics attended the seminar, representing a broad range of disciplines belonging to the humanities and the social sciences. Participants' reactions to the seminar were so positive that it was decided to found a Canadian Studies Association in The Netherlands.

4. Starting to build

Following the success of the 1984 Canadian Studies Seminar, which was sponsored entirely by the Department of External Affairs in Ottawa, Canada, a Canadian Studies Association could be founded in The Netherlands. On February 1st 1985 the Studiegenootschap Canada was founded.