House of Commons
Chambre des communes
Canada

House of Commons Standing Committee on Finance – Pre-budget Consultations 2013

This brief is submitted by:

(•) **an organization** **Organization name:** Canadian Association of University Teachers

or

( ) **an individual** **Name:** _____

Topic: Innovation and commercialization

*Recommendation 1: Please provide a short summary of your recommendation.

Increase funding for basic research provided through the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC), the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council (NSERC), and the Canadian Institutes for Health Research (CIHR) by $500 million over 3 years.

Expected cost or savings: From the pull-down menus, please indicate the expected cost or savings of your recommendation to the federal government and the period of time to which the expected cost or savings is related.

$500 million-$999.9 million

3 years

Federal funding: Please provide a precise indication of how the federal government could fund your recommendation. For example, indicate what federal spending should be reallocated, what federal tax measure(s) should be introduced, eliminated or changed, etc.

Since 2007-08 and adjusted for inflation, funding for SSHRC has declined by over 10%. NSERC's funding is down 6.4%, while core support for CIHR has dropped by 7.5%. The increased economic activity generated by new investments will more than fund their costs. In the meantime, the federal government should reduce or eliminate private sector R&D tax credits, reverse corporate tax cuts, and cancel unnecessary military procurements.

Intended beneficiaries: Please indicate the groups of individuals, the sector(s) and/or the regions that would benefit by implementation of your recommendation.

Public investments in independent, peer-reviewed, scientific research boost productivity and drive fundamental advances in knowledge. All Canadians in all regions of the country and potentially all economic sectors will benefit from the advances and innovations generated by basic research.

General impacts: Depending on the nature of your recommendation, please indicate how the standard of living of Canadians would be improved, jobs would be created, people would be trained, etc.

Basic scientific research has a proven track record in improving the standard and quality of life. The discovery and development of X-rays, computers, nylon, Teflon, GPS technology, informatics, lasers, superconductivity and medical imaging are just some of the innovations that emerged from basic research. It has provided the basis for the biotech industry as well as significant advances in knowledge in the social sciences.

Topic: Innovation and commercialization

Recommendation 2: Please provide a short summary of your recommendation.

The federal government needs to re-invest in our collective public knowledge infrastructure by increasing funding by $75 million over 3 years for Library and Archives Canada (LAC), Statistics Canada, and other government science agencies. In addition, the government must ensure that government scientists are free to communicate their research with the broader scientific community and the public whom they serve.

Expected cost or savings: From the pull-down menus, please indicate the expected cost or savings of your recommendation to the federal government and the period of time to which the expected cost or savings is related.

$10 million-$99.9 million

3 years

Federal funding: Please provide a precise indication of how the federal government could fund your recommendation. For example, indicate what federal spending should be reallocated, what federal tax measure(s) should be introduced, eliminated or changed, etc.

The federal government should reverse ineffective corporate tax cuts and cancel unnecessary military procurements. Additionally, the federal government could back down on plans to implement Bill C-377, a likely unconstitutional law that unfairly targets trade unions with onerous financial reporting requirements. It is estimated that it will cost the government between $32 million and $45 million a year to implement and administer the provisions of Bill C-377.

Intended beneficiaries: Please indicate the groups of individuals, the sector(s) and/or the regions that would benefit by implementation of your recommendation.

All Canadians and regions will benefit from investments in public science and historical agencies. Data collected by Statistics Canada, for instance, is necessary for the conduct of basic research in the social and health sciences, as well as for urban planning, business marketing, and government policy-making. The elimination of recent surveys, including the long-form Census, is impeding this vital research and analysis. Canadians' opportunity to know their history and cultural heritage is under threat by cuts to Library and Archives Canada and to federal bodies that maintain our history.

General impacts: Depending on the nature of your recommendation, please indicate how the standard of living of Canadians would be improved, jobs would be created, people would be trained, etc.

Recent cuts to government science and public historical institutions have serious implications for the quality of life of Canadians. Government science informs sound and evidence-based policy-making, protects public health and safety, and contributes to the preservation of the environment and our natural resources. Public historical institutions, such as LAC, are essential for preserving our history and cultural heritage.

Topic: Aboriginal peoples

Recommendation 3: Please provide a short summary of your recommendation.

The federal government must honour its treaty obligations by ensuring that all qualified First Nations people who wish to pursue a post-secondary education are provided full funding to do so.

Expected cost or savings: From the pull-down menus, please indicate the expected cost or savings of your recommendation to the federal government and the period of time to which the expected cost or savings is related.

$10 million-$99.9 million

Immediately

Federal funding: Please provide a precise indication of how the federal government could fund your recommendation. For example, indicate what federal spending should be reallocated, what federal tax measure(s) should be introduced, eliminated or changed, etc.

The federal government should reverse ineffective corporate tax cuts and cancel unnecessary military procurements. Additionally, the federal government could back down on plans to implement Bill C-377, a likely unconstitutional law that unfairly targets trade unions with onerous financial reporting requirements. It is estimated that it will cost the government between $32 million and $45 million a year to implement and administer the provisions of Bill C-377.

Intended beneficiaries: Please indicate the groups of individuals, the sector(s) and/or the regions that would benefit by implementation of your recommendation.

There are an estimated 15,000 to 25,000 First Nations people waiting for federal support under the Post-Secondary Student Support Program (PSSSP). Funding for the program has been capped at 2% since 1995-96 and remains woefully inadequate to meet the pressing needs of Canada's First Nations communities.

General impacts: Depending on the nature of your recommendation, please indicate how the standard of living of Canadians would be improved, jobs would be created, people would be trained, etc.

Providing increased access to post-secondary education and training will provide immediate benefits to some of Canada's most vulnerable communities, and will generate long-term gains for the country as a whole.

Please use this page if you wish to provide more explanation about your recommendation(s).

The federal government has ample fiscal room available to make the needed investments in post-secondary education and research to sustain long-term economic growth and help confront some of the major social and environmental challenges we face. Even a reversal of previous corporate tax cuts would free up nearly $6 billion for badly-needed investments in health care, seniors, the environment, and education. As a result of inflation-adjusted cuts in basic research funding and government science, Canada's research community is reeling from the closure of internationally-renowned laboratories and projects and inadequate resources to fund new advanced projects. All Canadians will lose if the government continues to undermine our ability to advance knowledge and promote the economic, social and cultural development of Canada.

*Please note that at least one recommendation must be provided