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:** The University of Calgary

or

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

Topic: Innovation and commercialization

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

The University of Calgary recommends the establishment of a Research Excellence Fund that would enhance the research ecosystem in Canada's major research universities. This $400M, multi-year program would solidify Canada's position as a hub for world-class research. The Fund would build on the successful foundation established by other federal research support programs. The Excellence Fund would allow Canada's top research universities to compete amongst the best at a global level to attract and retain talent, create new knowledge and commercialize new technologies.

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.

$100 million -$499.9 million

5 or more 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 Excellence Fund will be a $400M investment, beginning with an initial investment of $100M in year one and ramped up over a four or five year period. This roll out schedule takes into account the life-cycle costs of research and will allow Canada to keep pace with international peers. The Fund will see several times its value returned in economic benefits for Canada.

Through the government's expenditure reduction program, significant savings have been identified. The University of Calgary is hopeful some of those savings can be dedicated to investing in the Excellence Fund.

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

The Excellence Fund is intended to enable Canada's top research universities, as defined by the Tri-Council peer-reviewed grant process, to compete with the global best. These universities are located in every region of the country. The Fund will foster more collaboration between universities, industry, government and the non-profit sector, nationally and globally. It will support new knowledge and innovation that, through transfer and commercialization, will yield economic, societal, environmental and health benefits for all Canadians.

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.

Rising standards of living are directly linked to increased productivity. Excellence in research underpins Canada's ability to improve productivity across all sectors of society. Through discovery and applied research, and the training of highly skilled, adaptable graduates, universities contribute significantly to the development of new products and services, new ways of doing things and new job opportunities for Canadians. These outcomes build the knowledge economy of today and tomorrow and strengthen the nation's overall international economic competitiveness.

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

The University of Calgary recommends the government increase funding to the Tri-Council agencies - NSERC, SSHRC and CIHR. These agencies drive discovery and applied research activity on campuses across the country. Some additional dollars should also be targeted towards Tri-Council partnership programs that foster collaboration between university researchers, industry and other partners. It is critical that the government maintain its commitment to the principle of stable, predictable research funding.

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.

unknown

5 or more 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.

Through the government's expenditure reduction program, significant savings have been identified. The University of Calgary encourages the government to reinvest a portion of those savings in increased support for the granting councils.

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

Research funding provides broad benefits to Canadians across the country. Increased funding through the granting councils, facilitates discovery and applied research and strengthens research capacity at Canadian universities. It allows researchers to partner with business, government and the non-profit research supporting community, transferring knowledge and commercializing discoveries. Increased research activity also improves the student learning experiences at universities and prepares highly qualified, adaptable graduates ready to succeed in today's and future labour markets.

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.

Research activity drives innovation and improvements in productivity. Through discovery and applied research, new knowledge is developed and transfered to society and new discoveries are made and commercialized for economic growth. Research investments enhance the competitiveness of Canadians in the global economy by equipping graduates with the quality education and experience that are in demand by Canadian employers. Overall, increased research funding strongly correlates with increases in productivity and economic competitiveness.

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

The Government of Canada should commit to a new round of investment, over a 5 year period beginning in 2016, for the Canada Foundation for Innovation (CFI). Updated lab and equipment infrastructure is critical to maintaining research excellence and a leadership position for Canada. The new allocation would allow the agency to fund the next generation of research infrastructure at universities across the country. A commitment in the forthcoming budget would allow institutions to plan research infrastructure and better leverage provincial and private sector funding.

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.

unknown

5 or more 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.

New funding would not be required until the 2016 budget.

Through the government's expenditure reduction program, significant savings have been identified. The University of Calgary encourages the government to reinvest some of those savings in the renewal of research infrastructure over the long term.

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

There is a need to continue renewing Canada's research infrastructure - equipment, labs, communication technology and facilities. Cutting-edge research infrastructure makes universities across Canada research destinations of choice for researchers, students, and partners looking to develop new technology or solve problems. The additional funding would be used to renew and enhance current capacity, ensuring it remains world class and viable into the future. It would also facilitate scientific and financial planning among universities and their funding partners.

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.

State of the art research infrastructure helps push the boundaries of knowledge and generate exciting outcomes that can drive productivity and improve Canada's economic competitiveness. Solid platforms of research infrastructure are critical to support innovation. They become collaborative hubs where researchers work with industry and others, to develop solutions to business and societal challenges. New infrastructure also increases the quality of education for Canadian students, who in turn become highly qualified, adaptable and sought-after graduates.

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

In 2011, the University of Calgary launched its "Eyes High" strategic direction. "Eyes High" establishes a goal that the University of Calgary will be a global intellectual hub with students who thrive in research rich programs and hands-on experience. By our 50th anniversary in 2016, we will be one of Canada's top 5 research universities, fully engaging the communities we both serve and lead. Partnerships with our communities are critical to achieving our goals. The knowledge we create is shared with our community. The problems we help solve and the innovations we help commercialize are done in partnership with industry. The highly-qualified people we graduate are desirable because of their skills and adaptability.

The University of Calgary recognizes and appreciates the government's ongoing commitment to funding research. Federal funding has been able to leverage significant additional dollars from provincial, private sector, not for profit and other sources. Those investments have made the University of Calgary a multi-disciplinary research leader in energy, health and life sciences, human dynamics, and earth-space technologies, among other fields.

Our recommendations are based on growing the commitment to research and innovation the government has consistently maintained – a commitment that has served all Canadians well. The government's ongoing financial support for discovery and applied research, is resulting in improved productivity, the development of new products and services, the creation of new jobs, and an improving quality of life for all Canadians.

Establishing a Research Excellence Fund will allow Canada's top research institutions, including the University of Calgary, to take a significant step forward in building research excellence, enabling the best Canada has to offer, to compete on an equal basis with the best in the world.

Sustainable funding for the granting agencies allows all universities to strengthen discovery and applied research, improve student experiences, and graduate highly qualified people. Enhanced research support allows universities greater opportunities to collaborate with businesses, bringing new technology to market and improving overall economic competitiveness.

Committing to a renewal of research infrastructure through the Canadian Foundation for Innovation would ensure Canada maintains up-to-date research infrastructure and facilitates longterm scientific and financial planning.

The University of Calgary is committed to making relevant and lasting contributions to our community. In order to do that, a continuing commitment to research excellence is required. Implementing these recommendations will help the University of Calgary and other Canadian institutions to support innovation, enhance productivity and strengthen Canada's economic competitiveness.

*Please note that at least one recommendation must be provided