



Group of Canadian Research Universities

Regroupement des universités de recherche du Canada

Statement – U15 Welcomes Investments in Skills in Budget 2019

March 19, 2019 (OTTAWA, ON) — The U15 Group of Canadian Research Universities welcomes Budget 2019, which includes major investments in skills for Canadians, including post-secondary students, particularly as it relates to work integrated learning, international experiential learning, and scholarships and fellowships.

“These significant investments in experiential learning are investments in Canada’s future. They will drive economic growth, by giving Canadians the capabilities they need to succeed, and improving the readiness of post-secondary graduates entering the labour force,” says Professor Meric Gertler, Chair of the U15 Group of Canadian Research Universities and President of the University of Toronto. “Moreover, investments in scholarships and fellowships are an important step in addressing Canada’s gap with peer countries in advanced degree attainment. Since graduate students play a key role in our research enterprise, today’s announcement adds an important complement to the government’s past investments to bolster the country’s research strength.”

“The government is also to be commended for its new support for life-long learning. Through their continuing studies programs and other adult learning initiatives, Canada’s research universities make a unique contribution in enabling Canadians to anticipate and adapt to changes in the workforce.”

The U15 also notes the government’s significant support for science and research throughout their mandate, including convening the Fundamental Science Review Panel, and for significant investments in Budget 2018, including the largest ever single-year investment in the granting councils, regularized funding for the Canada Foundation for Innovation, and significant funding for digital research infrastructure. The U15 is eager to continue to work with the government on improving the Canadian research ecosystem, and to ensure that the full costs of research are supported, as recommended by the Naylor Report.

Key investments include:

- Scholarships and Fellowships: \$114M over five years, starting in 2019–20, with \$26.5 million per year ongoing, to the federal granting councils to create 500 more master’s level scholarship awards annually and 167 more three-year doctoral scholarship awards annually through the Canada Graduate Scholarship program.

- Parental Leave for Student Researchers: An additional \$37.4 million over five years, starting in 2019–20, and \$8.6 million per year ongoing, to the federal granting councils, to expand parental leave coverage from six months to 12 months for students and postdoctoral fellows who receive granting council funding.
- International Education Strategy: For work/study abroad opportunities plus promoting Canadian education internationally, \$147.9 million over five years, starting in 2019–20, and \$8.0 million per year ongoing.
- Work Integrated Learning:
 - Expanding the Student Work Placement Program: \$631.2 million over five years, starting in 2019–20, to support up to 20,000 new work placements per year for post-secondary students across Canada, in all disciplines, by 2021–22.
 - \$150.0 million over four years, starting in 2020–21, to create partnerships with innovative businesses to create up to a further 20,000 work-integrated learning opportunities per year.
 - The government is funding the creation of 40,000 work placements for Canadian students by 2023–24.
 - \$17M over 3 years to the Business Higher Education Roundtable, starting in 2019–20, to help forge these partnerships including development of a national matching platform.
 - In total, Budget 2019 sets a target of creating 84,000 new student work placements across Canada by 2023–24, and includes a stated goal of moving to 100% attainment for WIL opportunities for interested PSE students.
- Supporting Indigenous Students:
 - \$327M over 5 years to renew the Post Secondary Student Support Program.
 - An Inuit-led post secondary strategy through an investment of \$125M over 10 years.
 - A Metis-led strategy through an investment of \$362 over 10 years.
- Life Long Learning—The Canada Training Benefit: \$1.7B over 5 years for the Canada Training Benefit, which includes a new, non-taxable Canada Training Credit to help with the cost of training fees, and a new Employment Insurance (EI) Training Support Benefit to provide income support when an individual requires time to take off work, including:
 - Canada Training Credit: \$710M over 5 years, starting in 2019-20 for a new, non-taxable credit would help Canadians pay for training fees.
 - EI Training Support Benefit: Up to 4 weeks of EI income support every 4 years for Canadians leaving work to do training.

For more Information please contact:

Dylan Hanley
 Director, Public Affairs
 U15 Group of Canadian Research Universities
 (613) 695-6755
Dylan.hanley@u15.ca