

Global network of research university groups promotes social sciences and the humanities

Leiden, The Netherlands (November 21, 2014) – At the invitation of the League of European Research Universities (LERU) and Leiden University, the U15 Group of Canadian Research Universities joined its counterpart associations to discuss the importance of social sciences and humanities research in solving the world’s pressing challenges.

“Promoting research in the social sciences and humanities is a crucial step in developing solutions to problems facing not only Canada, but the world at large,” said Dr. Daniel Woolf, vice-chair of The U15 and Principal and Vice-Chancellor of Queen’s University, who led The U15 delegation. “The social sciences and humanities contribute to the improvement of cross-cultural understanding, whether this be through history, law, economics, literature, sociology or any other related discipline.

“If we are going to respond to 21st Century challenges, from an aging population, to regional instabilities caused by climate change or extremism, we are going to need to mobilize support for the social sciences as we have already mobilized it for the science, technical, engineering and medical (STEM) disciplines,” Woolf adds.

The [League of European Research Universities](#) (LERU), the [Association of American Universities](#) (AAU), the [Association of East Asian Research Universities](#) (AEARU), the [Group of Eight](#) (Australia), the [RU11 Japan](#), the [Russell Group](#) (UK), and the [U15 Group of Canadian Research Universities](#) committed themselves to working together to advance the characteristics described in the ‘[Leiden Statement](#)’.

With this statement, the research-intensive university networks want to champion the fundamental role that social sciences and humanities research plays in our global community. They are calling for an expanded role for the social sciences and humanities, in tackling problems through interdisciplinary research. The signatories committed themselves to:

- 1) ensure that social sciences and humanities disciplines continue to receive effective support within their institutions;
- 2) highlight the contributions of these disciplines to national and global wellbeing;
- 3) ensure that social sciences and humanities research and education programs flow without unnecessary constraint to the wider community;
- 4) promote strong funding and support for social sciences and humanities research; and
- 5) advance global research collaborations, including interdisciplinary approaches.

UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY

DALHOUSIE UNIVERSITY

UNIVERSITÉ LAVAL

UNIVERSITY OF MANITOBA

MCGILL UNIVERSITY

MCMASTER UNIVERSITY

UNIVERSITÉ DE MONTRÉAL

UNIVERSITY OF OTTAWA

QUEEN’S UNIVERSITY

UNIVERSITY OF SASKATCHEWAN

UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO

UNIVERSITY OF WATERLOO

WESTERN UNIVERSITY

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“Students from the social sciences and humanities work in government, business and the non-profit sector and add tremendous value to society by taking with them the knowledge and understanding of languages, cultures and societies of the world,” says Professor Wim van den Doel, dean of humanities at Leiden University and the Chair of the LERU Community of Social Sciences and Humanities. “That knowledge and understanding enables them to create a richer, resilient and more diverse and humane society.”

Accompanying Dr. Daniel Woolf as part of the U15 delegation was Dr. Martha Crago, Vice-President, Research, Dalhousie University and Ms. Suzanne Corbeil, Executive Director, The U15.

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As Canada’s 15 leading research universities, The U15’s members undertake about 80 percent of all competitive university research in Canada, rank among the world’s premier institutions, and represent a research enterprise valued at more than \$5.3 billion annually. Collectively, we produce more than 75 percent of all doctorates awarded in Canada.