PRESS RELEASE

For immediate release

U15 universities ready to support Canadian sovereignty and security following Budget 2026

UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA
UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA
UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY
DALHOUSIE UNIVERSITY
UNIVERSITÉ LAVAL
UNIVERSITY OF MANITOBA
MCGILL UNIVERSITY
MCMASTER UNIVERSITY
UNIVERSITÉ DE MONTRÉAL
UNIVERSITÉ D'OTTAWA
UNIVERSITY OF OTTAWA
QUEEN'S UNIVERSITY
UNIVERSITY OF SASKATCHEWAN
UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO
UNIVERSITY OF WATERLOO
WESTERN UNIVERSITY

November 5, 2026 (OTTAWA, ON) – U15 Canada has signalled that Canada's leading research universities remain ready to work with government partners to advance sovereign capabilities that will keep Canada secure and create economic opportunities for Canadians.

In a moment when the global economy is undergoing a profound transformation and Canada is facing the urgent need to secure its sovereignty and economic future, leading research universities are developing talent, driving innovation and delivering impact across the Canadian economy. Our universities have extensive capabilities in many of the critical sovereign technologies the government has identified as vital to our defence and prosperity.

While Budget 2026 acknowledged the important role of Canadian research in advancing national priorities, it stopped short of providing the investments and policy mechanisms needed to turn Canada's research excellence into the sovereign capabilities that will underpin its future security, economic competitiveness and prosperity.

Canada's Defence Industrial Strategy illustrates this gap. Without a coherent research and development strategy that mobilizes the country's scientific expertise, increased defence spending risks expanding what Canada buys without fundamentally strengthening what it can design, develop, produce and sustain on its own.

"We are ready to continue working with government partners to advance the ambition of the Defence Industrial Strategy and realize the government's prior commitment to increase defence research funding," said Robert Asselin, CEO of U15 Canada.

"Establishing clear policy mechanisms to facilitate academic collaboration and build hubs of expertise in these vital domains will be essential to ensure Canada

can draw on the full capacity of its world-leading research system," added Asselin.

About U15 Canada

U15 Canada is an association of fifteen leading research universities across Canada. U15 Canada works to optimize research and innovation policies and programs that advance knowledge, develop highly-qualified leaders for all sectors, and mobilize knowledge for the benefit of all Canadians. In this way, U15 Canada seeks to help Canadian universities make a prosperous, sustainable and just future for all.

For further information, please contact:

James Hammond, Director of Public Affairs
james.hammond@u15.ca
613-715-4764

-30-