Introduction

The Canadian Association of Research Libraries (CARL) is the leadership organization for Canada's research library community. The Association's members include 29 research academic libraries based in the most research intensive universities in Canada. CARL provides leadership on behalf of Canada's research libraries and enhances capacity to advance research and higher education. It promotes effective and sustainable knowledge creation, dissemination, and preservation, as well as public policy that enables broad access to scholarly information.

Priorities for 2016

We want to thank the Government for seeking the views of Canadians on setting priorities for the 2016 federal budget and would like to provide comments relating to the social infrastructure that supports a knowledge economy.

First, we believe that Canada's government should continue to invest in enabling access to research data. The ability to store, access, reuse and build upon digital research data supports innovative solutions to economic and social challenges, and holds tremendous potential for Canada's productivity, competitiveness and quality of life. Recent national initiatives such as the Leadership Council on Digital Infrastructure, and CARL's own nascent Portage Network, provide guidance and leadership toward coordinated and strategic digital research infrastructure investment. Such investment is critical to the advancement of science.

Secondly, we believe that further support to broadening open access to Canada's publicly-funded research results is needed. Providing broader, free access online to the results of publicly funded research enables the granting councils—and thereby the Government of Canada and ultimately the Canadian tax payer—to achieve a better return on the investments made in research. Unrestricted access to research information enables researchers to build on the discoveries of other researchers, and increases the pace of scientific discovery. This benefits not only the scientific community but the general public as well through new products, patents and numerous other benefits.

Finally, we believe that investment in a robust, nationally coordinated digitization program for Canada's documentary heritage would allow access and preservation of these valuable collections and promote teaching, learning and research. Investing in digitization has research, educational and economic benefits for Canada and sustained investment in digital preservation of our rich documentary and cultural heritage will also help to promote national pride and unity.

Conclusion

Investing in Canada's knowledge economy brings strength to Canada in the global economy and provides Canadians—present and future—with opportunity to prosper.

We thank you once again for this opportunity to comment and invite you to contact us at any time to discuss these priorities further.