

University of Ontario Institute of
Technology
Submission to the
House of Commons
Standing Committee on Finance

August 5, 2016

UOIT was pleased to see the strong support for Canada's universities as outlined in the most recent budget including the creation of the Post-Secondary Institutions Strategic Investment Fund (SIF). These investments in post-secondary institutions allow us to help deliver on the government's mandate of economic growth and international competitiveness.

Universities play a fundamental role in the Canadian economy due to their teaching and research mandates, as well as the significant economic impacts from their operations. Universities impart upon their students the skills, knowledge and experiences they need to directly contribute to Canada's economic growth and productivity. They are at the heart of the discovery and innovation agenda. Through partnerships with industrial and community partners, universities leverage their assets and resources to improve the quality of life for all Canadians. We help advance Canada's long-term economic growth and prosperity and can help achieve many of the objectives outlined in the mandate letters to Cabinet Ministers.

Since inception, the University of Ontario Institute of Technology (UOIT) has embedded research, innovation, technology and entrepreneurship into everything we do. We are a STEM intensive institution that integrates work experiences into the curriculum of our programs with eighty-five per cent of upper year students participating in work integrated learning. We have had success as evidenced by our job ready graduates of which ninety-six per cent are employed two years after graduation, which is higher than the average in Ontario.

Research is a key mechanism by which UOIT imparts the knowledge and skills our students need to become innovative citizen leaders. New investments into research ultimately lead to the creation of new jobs and economic stability.

UOIT's recommendations for the 2017 federal Budget support those of Universities Canada and address the focus of the House of Commons Standing Committee on Finance's consultations on measures that will help Canadians, Canada's businesses, and urban, rural and remote communities throughout Canada contribute to the country's economic growth.

.../2

UOIT endorses Universities Canada’s recommended strategic focal areas of:

1. **Research and innovation**, with a focus on sustained and transformative support for discovery research through the federal research granting councils; sustained support for the Canada Foundation for Innovation; and new investments in international research collaboration;
2. **Indigenous higher education**, with an emphasis on direct financial assistance for Indigenous students and initiatives that support Indigenous student access, retention and academic success at university; and
3. **Talent mobilization** through international student mobility and work-integrated learning, as well as enhanced labour market information.

Research and Innovation Recommendations:

1. Provide sustained and transformative investments in discovery research through the federal research granting councils that ensures Canada is returning to globally competitive funding levels and is making significant progress towards reclaiming third place in the OECD for HERD investments;
2. Provide sustained support for the Canada Foundation for Innovation to address operational and maintenance pressures on existing research facilities and to allow for better planning horizons for bold, transformative initiatives; and mandate the CFI to lead a national big science strategy; and
3. Provide support to address gaps in Canada’s research and innovation ecosystem, including a new fund to support international research collaboration with partner countries.

Indigenous Higher Education Recommendations:

1. Commit to additional direct financial assistance for Indigenous students pursuing a university education;
2. Invest in new scholarships to support more Indigenous students to pursue graduate and post-doctoral studies;
3. Provide new support to scale up successful institutional-level programs and to create new programs – on- and off-campus – that support Indigenous student access, retention, and academic success at university.

.../3

Talent Mobilization Recommendations:

1. Invest in opportunities to double the number of Canadian students participating annually in international mobility experiences by 2022;
2. Invest in new measures, such as vouchers and tax credits, to incentivize the private and not-for-profit sectors to create more paid co-op and internship placements for university students across all academic disciplines; and,
3. Enhance the role of, and resources for, Statistics Canada in collecting, analyzing and disseminating labour market information to support the new Labour Market Information Council's mandate.

Conclusion

Maintaining and improving Canada's research and innovation competitiveness is key to ensuring a healthy, prosperous and innovative society. Research and innovation are the mechanism by which increased productivity is achieved, new markets are opened, new products created and society enhanced.

Reliable, sustainable, long-term funding for the university research enterprise will ensure Canada's international competitiveness for years to come. Through this funding, more students will gain valuable research skills; our research community will employ state-of-the-art infrastructure needed to attract and retain top researchers from around the globe; universities will continue to invest in the supports needed for a high-quality, research-enriched environment; private sector will be encouraged to partner, and Canada will prosper in a globally competitive world.

We appreciate the opportunity to submit these comments for your consideration in developing the 2017 Budget.

Contact:

Susan McGovern
Vice-President, External Relations and Advancement
University of Ontario Institute of Technology
2000 Simcoe Street North
Oshawa, ON L1H 7K4
905-721-8668 x. 3135
susan.mcgovern@uoit.ca