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Budget 2016 Consultations

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Committee on Finance

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FEDERATION FOR THE
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Ideas can... build Canada

The challenges facing publics, governments, and businesses in the 21st century – from managing technological change and driving job creation, to the search for low-carbon economic strategies, and building social inclusion – require innovative, people-centered, evidence-based solutions. The [Federation for the Humanities and Social Sciences](#) welcomes the opportunity to provide the following recommendations to the House of Commons Standing Committee on Finance for Budget 2016:

1. **Invest in research:** Significantly increase investment in the granting councils (Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council, Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council, and Canadian Institutes of Health Research) and the Canada Foundation for Innovation in order to ensure that Canada is as active as possible in the global supply chain of ideas. New investments should be designed to achieve growth in real dollars in these vital institutions, ensuring more equitable, predictable, and long-term commitments across disciplines. As part of ensuring greater openness to all disciplines, Canada's research priorities should also involve creating new opportunities for early career researchers and growing Canadian research infrastructure funding.
2. **Create opportunities for student mobility:** Canada must do more to encourage opportunities for internships and experiential learning for students through exchanges within and outside of Canada. Canada's upcoming 150th anniversary is an ideal time to create a visionary fund to encourage students to challenge their horizons and experience the wider world during their studies. A series of awards for short and long-term inter-provincial and international study or internship opportunities would enrich the post-secondary experience and yield many more times the benefit for Canada in the years that follow.
3. **Improve access to post-secondary education for First Nations, Métis and Inuit peoples:** The Truth and Reconciliation Commission's report presents an opportunity to renew and deepen a national commitment to achieve real and just reconciliation. The post-secondary sector can and must be a leader in the movement towards reconciliation between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal peoples. This includes improving real access for Indigenous students to post-secondary education and investments to ensure institutional programming that promotes reconciliation across the educational sector.



Ideas can... position Canada as a global leader

Recommendation 1

Significantly increase investment in the granting councils (Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council, Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council, and Canadian Institutes of Health Research) and the Canada Foundation for Innovation in order to ensure that Canada is as active as possible in the global supply chain of ideas. New investments should be designed to achieve growth in real dollars in these vital institutions, ensuring more equitable, predictable, and long-term commitments across disciplines. As part of ensuring greater openness to all disciplines, Canada's research priorities should also involve creating new opportunities for early career researchers and growing Canadian research infrastructure funding.

This recommendation fits into the following theme set out by the House of Commons Standing Committee on Finance for the pre-budget consultations:

- *Productivity: What federal actions regarding health, education, tools, technology, the federal public service and supports for the involvement of all Canadians would improve Canada's rate of productivity?*
- *Infrastructure and communities: What federal actions would ensure that Canada's communities have the infrastructure they need to support people and businesses, including in work, leisure and getting goods to market?.*

Rationale

Canada's knowledge economy is growing, but its investment in R&D is not. Canada's R&D "intensity" – spending as a percentage of GDP – has been steadily declining for more than a decade and now stands at 1.69% of GDP, well below the OECD average of 2.4%. Canada now ranks 12th in overall spending, investing less in R&D in 2012 (\$21.8B U.S.) than it did in 2004 (\$22.7B) (OECD, 2014).

Canada's total expenditures on higher education R&D declined by 1.8% from \$13B in 2012-2013 to \$12.7B in 2013-2014. Federal expenditures in the social sciences and humanities declined by 2.4% in 2013-2014 (Stats Can, 2015). While social science and humanities researchers compose approximately 52% of the professoriate (Stats Can, 2010-2011), they continue to receive about 15% of federal grant dollars, with overall declining success rates in recent years in Insight Grant applications. This is a missed opportunity, which limits the results, impacts and potential contributions of social science and humanities researchers in their efforts to contribute to areas of importance to Canadians.

In other words, the majority of social science and humanities students and faculty do not receive federal support during their careers. Canada's sliding position in the OECD, combined with declining per capita investment in social science and humanities research, leads to missed opportunities to address and resolve Canada's innovation challenges and to fully participate in international research partnerships.



Ideas can... create opportunities

Recommendation 2

Canada must do more to encourage opportunities for internships and experiential learning for students through exchanges within and outside of Canada. Canada's upcoming 150th anniversary is an ideal time to create a visionary fund to encourage students to challenge their horizons and experience the wider world during their studies. A series of awards for short and long-term inter-provincial and international study or internship opportunities would enrich the post-secondary experience and yield many more times the benefit for Canada in the years that follow.

This recommendation fits into the following themes set out by the House of Commons Standing Committee on Finance for the pre-budget consultations:

- *Jobs: What federal actions would support Canadian residents as they secure employment, adapt their skills to meet the evolving needs of employers, and move to locations where jobs exist.*

Rationale

Canada must increase inter-provincial and international mobility for our students. Currently only 1 in 10 students study outside their province, while less than 3% of Canadian university students leave the country for educational experiences each year. Canada has committed, through its International Education Strategy, to double the number of incoming international students by 2022 (to 450,000), but Canada's own students need more opportunities to live and learn outside of their home province or the country as an integral part of their education.

International experience boosts global awareness and citizenship, giving students invaluable perspective while maximizing Canada's interests and connections abroad. Several programs offer internships, co-ops and exchanges, including Mitacs Globalink, by connecting Canadian students and faculty with researchers and industry partners. Employers value the experience that study-abroad students bring to the workplace, while students gain opportunities to apply and adapt their skills to an ever-changing international knowledge economy, access to professional networks, improved confidence, and enhanced employability upon graduation.

Canada's 150th celebration provides an opportunity to invest in Canada's future. Funding travel and exchange opportunities allows students to study in another province or internationally and promotes experiential learning through short-and long-term internships. It also encourages second language acquisition and the far reaching benefits that come with it, including improving scholastic achievement, intellectual potential, citizenship and employability. Canada's universities must build and model the skills that enable Canadians to function effectively within our own culturally diverse borders and to engage with the world in a highly interconnected global society.

Ideas can... lead to real reconciliation

Recommendation 3

Improve access to post-secondary education for First Nations, Métis and Inuit peoples: The Truth and Reconciliation Commission's report presents an opportunity to renew and deepen a national commitment to achieve real and just reconciliation. The post-secondary sector can and must be a leader in the movement towards reconciliation between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal peoples. This includes improving real access for Indigenous students to post-secondary education and investments to ensure institutional programming that promotes reconciliation across the educational sector.

This recommendation flows from what we feel is a pre-eminent Canadian priority, and also fits into the following theme set out by the House of Commons Standing Committee on Finance for the pre-budget consultations:

- *Infrastructure and communities: What federal actions would ensure that Canada's communities have the infrastructure they need to support people and businesses, including in work, leisure and getting goods to market?*

Rationale

Touchstone Principles:

1. Recognizing Aboriginal self-determination;
2. The need to take a holistic approach to promoting reconciliation;
3. Respecting Aboriginal cultures and languages;
4. The need for structural interventions to address marginalization and historical wrongs, and
5. Non-discrimination: ensuring that non-Aboriginal staff and partners are supported in working in respectful ways.

Aboriginal Reconciliation remains one of the central challenges of our time. The cumulative impact of residential schools is a legacy of unresolved trauma passed from generation to generation. It has had a profound effect on Aboriginal communities and on the relationship between Aboriginal peoples and other Canadians. As a consequence of this history, Aboriginal knowledge is undervalued and overlooked, and Aboriginal peoples are still marginalized economically and socially.

Canadians must develop relationships that fully recognize our legal and historical responsibilities to Aboriginal peoples and their role in the co-creation of Canada's future. We must recognize that Reconciliation is a movement that must be built and sustained – it is not an event or a short term project. The social movement can begin in the classroom. For its part, the Federation recently adopted the "Touchstone Principles" to guide its own work on addressing Reconciliation and the Academy.

Canada's rapidly growing number of indigenous high school graduates is keen to pursue post-secondary education, but financial barriers and missing support networks remain prohibitive. Partnerships between post-secondary institutions and First-Nations, Inuit and Métis organizations can be enhanced to develop multi-year action plans, while Indigenous students should



receive direct support through expanding federal investments. Investments should also support new programs, approaches and ways of learning for all students and faculty to promote Reconciliation, including important opportunities for non-Aboriginal Canadians to increase their understanding of Indigenous histories, cultures, and knowledge.

Conclusion:

The research, teaching and community work undertaken at Canadian universities is vital to the well-being, productivity, and prosperity of Canada.

Investing in new, discovery-based research across all disciplines will help to ensure that Canada remains competitive globally. Research funding is essential to maintaining and building our strong knowledge economy as well as enhancing the impact of social innovation partnerships between universities, business, and communities.

Canada's social and economic prosperity also depends on breaking down the barriers and prejudices that stymie reconciliation for all Canadians and prevent too many First Nations, Métis and Inuit youth from accessing critical post-secondary education. It is also vital that Canadian students have more opportunities to gain valuable teaching and learning experiences beyond our universities, and provincial and national borders, to enable them to expand their cultural and linguistic literacy and to thrive and adapt in a rapidly evolving global market.

Canada has the strong foundational elements of a healthy research ecosystem. We welcome the federal government's newly announced consultations on developing Canada's digital infrastructure strategy, which is a critical part of this wider system. But greater investments and new approaches to support innovation, collaboration, and exchange across some of the most important components of our research infrastructure — including post-secondary institutions, the research granting councils, Statistics Canada, and the Canada Foundation for Innovation — will benefit Canada in the long term. A strengthened research infrastructure will help ensure that policy and decision-makers have access to, and are informed by, credible, up-to-date evidence and that today's researchers are prepared to address tomorrow's challenges.





The **Federation for the Humanities and Social Sciences** works to promote the value of research and learning in the humanities and social sciences. Its membership comprises over 80 scholarly associations, 79 post-secondary institutions and six affiliate organizations, representing 85,000 researchers, educators and students across Canada.

In advancing equity, diversity, knowledge, excellence and innovation, the Federation for the Humanities and Social Sciences contributes tangibly to a free and democratic society.

The Federation:

- Organizes Canada's largest annual gathering of academic researchers, the **Congress of the Humanities and Social Sciences**
- Brings leading scholars to Parliament Hill to discuss public policy and public relevance in our **Big Thinking** lecture series
- Supports the publication and sharing of new ideas through our **Awards to Scholarly Publications Program**

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