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Budget 2018: Research community welcomes record investments in fundamental research for Canada

(Ottawa, Ontario) February 28, 2018 — The Canadian Consortium for Research (CCR) applauds the Government of Canada's budget which provided record new investments for fundamental science and research infrastructure, as well as for students and researchers.

The CCR's pre-budget submission recommended that the recommendations embodied within the Fundamental Science Review report be fully implemented, particularly to establish steady-state annual funding across the four agencies and related entities at \$4.8 billion (from approximately \$3.5 billion). This steady-state increase in base by the end of four years would amount to an additional 0.4% of the Government of Canada's annual budget.

"The CCR is particularly pleased with the allocation to the granting councils of a total of \$925 million over a 5-year period. This is a welcomed step toward restoring Canada as a world-leader in fundamental research for the natural, health and social sciences," says Canadian Consortium for Research Chair, Dr. Lisa Votta-Bleeker.

Consistent with the recommendations in the Fundamental Science Review report, the budget also included support for a new tri-council fund to support research that is international, interdisciplinary, fast-breaking and higher-risk; funding to provide increased support and training opportunities for researchers, students and highly qualified personnel; funding for surveys to collect data on researchers; funding to implement programs that support improved equality and diversity in academia and post-secondary institutions; increased support for the Canada Research Chairs program; and ongoing and stable funding for the Canada Foundation for Innovation.

NSERC, CIHR and SSHRC have been tasked with developing new plans, strategies and targets to ensure greater tri-council collaboration in support for interdisciplinary research, as well as to achieve greater diversity among research funding recipients, including improved support for women, underrepresented groups and early-career researchers. The CCR looks forward to collaborating with the granting councils to provide input on the development and implementation of these plans.

"Canada's research community has long called for these investments, and we are pleased the Government has heard these calls. These investments will position Canada as a leader in knowledge production and innovation, and a country that cultivates a strong science culture, domestically and internationally", added Dr. Votta-Bleeker. "We look forward to working with the Federal Government in the years to come as it continues this commitment towards a long-term roadmap for Canada's research system as outlined in the Fundamental Science Review report."

The CCR is the largest advocacy coalition in Canada, focusing on research funding in all disciplines and support for post-secondary education. CCR includes 20 organizations that represent more than 50,000 researchers and 500,000 students across disciplines.

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