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Budget 2019: Research community welcomes investment in increased learning opportunities and graduate student scholarships

(Ottawa, Ontario) March 20, 2019 — The Canadian Consortium for Research (CCR) welcomes the Government of Canada's budget and commitment to: expand the Student-Work-Integrated Learning Program; provide new research scholarships to Canadian graduate students; support Canada's youth in pursuing post-secondary education through various taxation and loan-interest improvements; and work with Canada's Indigenous peoples to access post-secondary education and achieve academic success.

In its pre-budget submission, the CCR maintained that despite the commitments made to support fundamental science, Canada's competitiveness could be further advanced by implementing the recommendations in the report from Canada's Fundamental Science Review – *“Investing in Canada's Future: Strengthening the Foundations of Canadian Research”* – which was released on April 10, 2017. The report was prepared by an independent, expert advisory panel and was commissioned by the federal Minister of Science, Kirsty Duncan.

Through its recommendations, the report offered a comprehensive plan to both change and improve Canada's research ecosystem and, in so doing, restore the position of Canadians as research leaders on the international stage. At the time of the pre-budget submission, unfulfilled recommendations focused on: students and early career researchers; research infrastructure; and institutional research support.

“The CCR is particularly pleased with the government's allocation of \$114 million over the next five years to the federal granting councils for new research scholarships to Canadian graduate students. This is a welcomed step toward supporting Canada's next generation of researchers who will contribute to Canada's science culture, productivity and competitiveness by making ground-breaking discoveries and tackling the many economic, social, and cultural challenges facing Canadians,” says Canadian Consortium for Research Chair, Dr. Lisa Votta-Bleeker.

The 2019 budget did not include institutional research support or support for research infrastructure. Both are critical to enhance the environment for science and scholarship, which includes but is not limited to infrastructure-related start up costs, ongoing costs to support major science facilities, and replacement costs for research tools and instruments that are outdated.

“Canada's research community will continue to call for these investments, as they 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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