



# **The University of Guelph Pre-Budget Submission**

August 2017

The Honourable Bill Morneau  
Minister of Finance  
c/o The House of Commons Standing Committee on Finance

Dear Minister Morneau:

On behalf of the University of Guelph, I am pleased to submit our 2018 pre-budget submission to the House of Commons Standing Committee on Finance.

The University wishes to thank the Government of Canada for its recognition of the role the post-secondary sector plays in strengthening economic development and prosperity in Canada. We applaud the government's ongoing investments that support research, innovation and training, including infrastructure investments made through the Post-Secondary Institutions Strategic Investment Fund, leading research offered through the Canada First Research Excellence Fund, and numerous supports outlined in budget 2017 that connect industry and academia to spur innovation.

About the University of Guelph

The University of Guelph is one of Canada's top comprehensive universities, both learner centred and research intensive.

Our reputation for innovation and excellence dates back more than 150 years to our founding colleges – the Ontario Agricultural College, the Ontario Veterinary College and the Macdonald Institute.

Our rich history distinguishes and shapes us. We pursue active inquiry and exercise creativity across a range of disciplines, from the physical and life sciences, to business and the arts and humanities, to social, agricultural and veterinary sciences.

We are Canada's food university, with a legacy in agri-food and a global reputation for quality. We have world-class researchers and facilities, and strong partnerships with government and industry.

With campuses in Guelph, Toronto and Ridgetown, U of G covers both urban and rural areas of the province. We are known for our commitment to developing exceptional thinkers and engaged citizens – the leaders of tomorrow.

At the University of Guelph, we are committed to fostering excellence, partnership, diversity and inclusivity, and to ensuring that our knowledge and discoveries shape understanding and improve life.

In keeping with the identified theme of productivity and competitiveness, the University of Guelph wishes to encourage and advocate for federal investments in areas that build on our recognized strengths:

- continued support for the agriculture and food sector;
- investments in research and discovery; and
- measures to enhance equity and diversity

## Building on Our Strengths

### 1. Continued Support for the Agriculture and Food Sectors

Canada's agri-food sector employs 2.1 million people and accounts for 6.7% of our GDP. Globally, Canada ranks 5<sup>th</sup> in agriculture exports and 11<sup>th</sup> in agri-food exports. The goal is to move into 2<sup>nd</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> places, respectively, by 2027, contributing an additional US \$30 billion, or nearly 2 percent of current GDP<sup>1</sup>.

Today's agri-food sector includes family farms, larger commercial farming operations and an increasing number of high-tech, multimillion-dollar industries promoting leading-edge research and development. As Canadians look to our agri-food sector for a safe and reliable food supply, our global potential appears limitless.

As Canada's Food University, the University of Guelph is uniquely positioned to help the government strengthen Canada's already prosperous agri-food sector. The depth and breadth of our experience and capacity is unmatched in Canada, and spans areas including precision agriculture, environmental sustainability; health; food safety and security; and product development and production.

With expertise in innovation, research and development and industry partnership, U of G is a key player in our national agri-food ecosystem, globally connected and strategically embedded in the Ontario innovation corridor.

We encourage government to continue to make strategic investments in the agri-food sector, which support and allow U of G to deliver continued excellence in innovation, research, and industry collaboration.

### 2. Investments in Research and Discovery

As the global landscape continues to change, Canada is emerging in a new-found leadership role. As Canadians, our values, inclusivity, and willingness to work with others are held in high regard. This shift offers broad applications for our country, including unique opportunities for our universities.

Canada's universities are known for world-class research and discoveries that have far-reaching societal impacts. Our country has the talent, expertise and desire to solve global challenges. Further, our universities drive innovation and contribute to regional and national economies in significant ways.

---

<sup>1</sup> Advisory council on Economic Growth (2017). *Unleashing the Growth Potential of Key Sectors.* Ottawa, Ontario: Government of Canada.

The University of Guelph consistently ranks among Canada's top comprehensive universities. We have earned a reputation for world-class research in numerous fields, including global recognition as Canada's Food University for our strengths in agri-food, and as a global leader in the important connections between animal and human health through our leading veterinary medicine faculty.

As we look to strengthen our reputation and help address critical global challenges – such as how to feed our growing human population sustainably – we need to ensure that we are equipped with the necessary resources and the funds to retain top talent.

The results and recommendations of the Advisory Panel on Federal Support for Fundamental Science provide a road map to ensure Canada's research community is not left behind. We echo the recommendations made by Universities Canada for additional investments in research, specifically in the following areas:

- Increased direct support for discovery research, which will, in turn, have system-wide benefits across the research ecosystem;
- Dedicated support for international research collaboration; and
- Stable and predictable funding for Canada Foundation for Innovation, supporting long-term research infrastructure planning, development and operation.

### 3. Equity and diversity

One of Canada's greatest strengths is our diversity. We are country of many cultures, backgrounds and beliefs. One-fifth of Canadians were born outside of Canada. The fact that so many people chose to immigrate here makes our country special and unique. With this diversity comes great opportunities, along with tolerance and understanding.

Our federal, provincial and municipal governments make equity and diversity a priority through actions and policies. However, despite these efforts, many significant obstacles and challenges remain, and not all Canadians are able to reach their full potential.

Canadian universities have an important role to play by supporting government, helping remove barriers and fostering equity and diversity.

At the University of Guelph, we are committed to enhancing our open, inclusive and respectful campuses and have launched specific measure to remove barriers.

This spring, we started a gender equity initiative, led by the Provost and Vice-President Academic, to help remove systematic gender barriers that exist in universities.

Preliminary goals include identifying and addressing gender wage gaps and salary anomalies; increasing the proportion of women in senior University leadership roles; improving recognition for women's research and scholarship; increasing the number of women holding research chairs and positions in non-traditional fields; and new and improved programs promoting leadership and mentorship for women.

To advance reconciliation, U of G launched a strategy to attract more First Nations, Métis and Inuit scholars and learners. Last fall, we hired six tenure-track Aboriginal faculty members across the disciplines, promoting new lines of research inquiry and inspiring future generations of scholars. Additionally, the University created five new graduate awards for Aboriginal scholars, expanded undergraduate research opportunities, and created an Aboriginal artist-in-residence program.

We commend the federal government for its commitment to gender equity, and the support announced in the 2017 Budget that assists Indigenous students pursuing post-secondary education. We ask that the government continue to make investments in these areas and support campus initiatives that foster equity and diversity.

In closing, the University of Guelph acknowledges the benefits of continued federal investment in Canada's post-secondary sector. We look forward to playing a role in the government's plan to increase Canada's productivity and competitiveness. Thank you for the opportunity to provide recommendations for the 2018 federal budget.

Dr. Franco J. Vaccarino  
President and Vice-Chancellor  
University of Guelph