

Written Submission for the Pre-Budget Consultations in Advance of the
2020 Budget

The University of Winnipeg

Recommendations

The University of Winnipeg (UWinnipeg) recommends that the federal government:

1. invests in post-secondary institutions' infrastructure to reduce their carbon footprint; and
2. invests in post-secondary institutions' capacity to deliver climate change education; and
3. invests in wrap around programs and direct financial support for Indigenous students.

About UWinnipeg

UWinnipeg is a member of Universities Canada and fully supports its budget submission to the Standing Committee on Finance. We offer this complementary submission to specifically reference three of the Universities Canada recommendations. Our submission provides additional context and depth as it relates to the need for the Government of Canada to support university efforts to adapt infrastructure to climate change, provide climate change education, and support Indigenous learners.

The UWinnipeg campus is located in the heart of downtown Winnipeg, adjacent to one of the poorest and most ethnically diverse neighborhoods in Canada, which includes a large population of Indigenous people. We are a medium-sized university with approximately 10,000 graduate and undergraduate students, and an additional 4,000 adult learners who are currently enrolled in our Professional, Applied and Continuing Education programs.

Our 350 tenured faculty members in six faculties including Arts, Science, Business, Education, Kinesiology and Graduate Studies conduct a broad range of research activities, with a special emphasis on partnerships and research impact, locally and globally.

Leaders in Sustainability

The Earth is heating up and this sudden and recent change to climate is already causing environmental, social, and economic effects worldwide. Universities, by their very nature, are leaders in incorporating sustainable principles and practices. UWinnipeg has a long history of integrating sustainable practices and principles. We take our responsibility to the people and land in our neighbourhood seriously.

UWinnipeg set four sustainability goals in our 2017 Sustainability Strategy: 1) Exceed Canada's commitments under the Paris Accord. 2) Cultivate principled relationships with people on and off campus and with ecosystems near and far. 3) Develop and deliver curriculum, student services, and programming that deepen student knowledge about sustainability and that help motivate thoughtful leadership and action. 4) Mobilize evidence and research to address local and global sustainability challenges.ⁱ We have worked towards those goals through a variety of initiatives. From 1990 to 2017, UWinnipeg increased its occupied space by one third and yet reduced greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions by one third.

UWinnipeg participates in the Sustainability Tracking, Assessment and Rating System (STARS).ⁱⁱ This public self-reporting system tracks post-secondary institutions' progress in increasing sustainable practices.

In 2019, UWinnipeg began the installation of one of Winnipeg's largest solar panel systems. This 540-panel installation will produce up to 180,000 kWh of electricity per year. This is roughly the amount of energy required to power sixteen Canadian homes, or enough to supply 20% of the Axworthy Health and RecPlex's energy needs.

UWinnipeg is making plans to redevelop the campus library and archives. The new mechanical systems will reduce greenhouse gas emissions by half. About two thirds of UWinnipeg's newly constructed or renovated building space is certified under a green building rating system. UWinnipeg's Richardson College for the Environment and the Axworthy Health and RecPlex, totaling over 31,000 square feet, are LEED Gold certified. McFeetors Hall, a student residence, and the Buhler Centre, the home to UWinnipeg's Faculty of Business and Economics, are LEED Silver certified. All new building proposals are assessed in terms of the impact of the project on UWinnipeg's sustainability goals.

UWinnipeg is recognized as a pioneer in sustainable food because of Diversity Foods, the campus food service that was established in 2009. Diversity is a joint venture of The University of Winnipeg Community Renewal Corporation (UWCRC) and SEED Winnipeg to deliver excellent food services to UWinnipeg while providing meaningful employment and ownership opportunities for the community. Their specific community objectives include job opportunities in the food industry for new Canadians, Aboriginal people, community residents and students. Diversity's mission is to provide food services that demonstrate the desire to meet the goals of sustainability at UWinnipeg within a work environment that reflects a high level of training for the diverse group of employees. Diversity's mandate includes maximizing Social/Cultural/Economic/Environmentally Sustainable purchasing decisions. This includes a commitment to local procurement and specifically targets small businesses, farmers, fisherman, ranchers, etc. in an effort to maximize the economic benefits that our community experiences from our purchasing power. Food is cooked from scratch as much as possible, and food products to be purchased are researched.

The UWCRC is a separate, non-profit community partnership organization that offers a full range of values-driven development services to organizations. UWCRC's services include feasibility assessments, project management, land assembly, First Nations economic development consulting, and property management. Many public and private financing and funding sources are used to develop environmentally, socially, economically, and culturally sustainable projects.

According to Edward Jackson's report for the J.W. McConnell Foundation, UWCRC is a viable business model with "solid performance for a non-profit organization."ⁱⁱⁱ UWCRC has designed and built sustainable buildings worth more than \$200 million over the past decade.^{iv} Jackson notes that these publicly funded infrastructure projects have directly and indirectly contributed more than \$320 million to the economy.^v UWCRC's environmental sustainability gains have been important to UWinnipeg "achieving its Kyoto 2012 and 2016 greenhouse gas emission reduction targets."^{vi}

There are 42 UWinnipeg faculty and staff members engaged in sustainability research. One of these is Canada Research Chair Dr. Ryan Bullock, director of the Centre for Forest Interdisciplinary Research (C-FIR). Since 1998, C-FIR's researchers have studied a wide range of ecological, economic, and socio-cultural issues that shape forests and the natural resources provided by forest systems in Manitoba and around the world. Dr. Bullock is studying community forestry practices in Canada. He is also looking at how communities, governments, and industries can respond to environmental and social change as part

of the Climate Learning and Adaptation for Northern Development (C-LAND) project. The insights gleaned from this research will help build communities' adaptive capacity in this time of climate change.

The Role of Universities

Universities can engage Canadians in conversation about climate change.

The Prairie Climate Centre (PCC) makes climate change relevant to Canadians. Using interactive maps, documentary video, custom reports, and plain language, the PCC answers Canadians' pressing questions with up-to-date information. The PCC is headed by UWinnipeg researchers dedicated to effectively communicating accurate climate science knowledge to a broad audience.

The PCC is a partner to the Pan-Canadian Expert Collaboration on climate change which will provide independent and credible advice on clean growth, adaptation, and mitigation to Canadians and governments. Since the launch of the atlas in April 2018, there have been 240,000 sessions on the Climate Atlas of Canada website. That is, people have gone to the atlas website almost a quarter of a million times. Furthermore, there have been over 1 million page views. The PCC's Ad Value Equivalency (AVE) since April 2018 is equal to \$1.75 million dollars. If the PCC had paid for media exposure it would have cost \$1.75 million. Potential views over print, broadcast and social media since April 2018 have reached over 233 million.

The atlas website is often used in schools. Teachers are using the site to teach students about climate change and its expected impact in Canada. The atlas data (the projections for all of Canada about how climate is expected to change) are often used by local organizations looking for a better understanding of how their communities are expected to change, and how those communities may have to adapt to these changes, to minimize risk and take advantage of opportunities. In particular, municipal governments are using the atlas/data to evaluate the risks associated with climate change in the coming decades. The best example of that is the work done with the City of Selkirk, Manitoba. The PCC fields many calls from journalists from all across Canada for comments about climate change and climate change policy; and also for data about recent trends, projections, impacts. Dr. Danny Blair, one of the PCC's co-founders, is asked to do many presentations to groups looking for more information about what climate change may mean to their interests. In recent and upcoming months this includes the Prairie Provinces Water Board, Assiniboine River Basin Initiative, Partners for the Saskatchewan River Basin, Creative Retirement Manitoba, Nature Manitoba, Cooks Creek Conservation District, Plant Biologists of Manitoba, and the Manitoba Metis Federation.

Support for Indigenous Learners

Statistics Canada's 2016 data show that approximately 18% of Manitoba's population is Indigenous^{vii} and this proportion is expected to grow to as much as 21% by 2036.^{viii} 10% of UWinnipeg's student body is Indigenous and we are proud to help them prepare for the future. The Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action are a guiding framework for everyone seeking to heal the relationship between Indigenous peoples and settler Canadians. UWinnipeg is committed to taking steps towards reconciliation and, to do this, we have initiated a number of programs within and without our institution.

In 2015, UWinnipeg was one of the first universities to launch an Indigenous Course Requirement for graduation. Our Opportunity Fund for Indigenous and inner-city learners has supported more than 3000 students since 2007. We have developed Merchants Corner, a campus in the heart of Winnipeg's North End neighbourhood, to deliver programs through the Department of Urban and Inner-City Studies (UIC) and CEDA-Pathways to Education. UWinnipeg's Wii Chiiwaakanak Learning Centre is an initiative that provides educational and recreational programs to 20,000 Indigenous and inner-city children and their families every year. Our outreach and community-based programming helps Indigenous youth develop a university-bound identity.

According to the 2018 Indspire survey of Indigenous students across Canada, although progress has been made, barriers to education persist. Students reported a need for "funding that looks at the needs of Indigenous students in a holistic way."^{ix} Wrap around programs and supports help students succeed. In their analysis of education programs in inner-city Winnipeg, Drs. Shauna MacKinnon and Jim Silver note that "[p]oor peoples' lives are complex and those complexities affect their ability to learn."^x Post-secondary institutions are in a position to provide supports tailored for the local community.

By providing increased, direct funding to Indigenous learners and funding to universities for wrap around support programs, universities and the Government of Canada can build a foundation for the success of Indigenous peoples.

ⁱ The University of Winnipeg, *2017 Sustainability Strategy: Campus Sustainability: Cultivating Healthy, Resilient Communities*,

https://www.uwinnipeg.ca/sustainability/docs/plans/2017_07_Sustainability_InstitutionalStrategy_V04.pdf.

ⁱⁱ The Sustainability Tracking, Assessment & Rating System, *The University of Winnipeg 2019 STARS v2.1 Report*, <https://reports.aashe.org/institutions/university-of-winnipeg-mb/report/2019-03-01/>.

ⁱⁱⁱ Jackson, Edward, "Catalyst for Sustainability: The Achievements, Challenges, Lessons and Prospects of The University of Winnipeg Community Renewal Corporation – Full Report," J.W. McConnell Family Foundation and The University of Winnipeg Community Renewal Corporation, Montreal, September 2018, 20-21.

http://data.uwrc.ca/uploads/2018-10-23-Catalyst_for_Sustainability_Full-Report-Final-for-posting.pdf

^{iv} Jackson, "Catalyst for Sustainability," 21.

^v Jackson, "Catalyst for Sustainability," 22.

^{vi} Jackson, "Catalyst for Sustainability," 22.

^{vii} Statistics Canada, *Focus on Geography Series, 2016 Census*, Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 98-404-X2016001, 2017, Ottawa, Ontario, <https://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2016/as-sa/fogs-spg/Facts-PR-Eng.cfm?TOPIC=9&LANG=Eng&GK=PR&GC=46>.

^{viii} Morency, Jean-Dominique et al., *Projections of the Aboriginal Population and Households in Canada, 2011 to 2036*, Statistics Canada, Sep. 15, 2015, Ottawa, Ontario, <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/91-552-x/91-552-x2015001-eng.pdf>.

^{ix} Indspire, "Truth and Reconciliation in Post-Secondary Settings: Student Experience," Indspire, Nov. 15, 2018, 13-14, https://indspire.ca/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/JMGD_003_IND_TR_REPORT_FINAL_V3_NOV15_V3.pdf.

^x MacKinnon, Shauna and Jim Silver, "Decolonizing for Equity and Inclusion in Winnipeg's North End," in *Toward Equity and Inclusion in Canadian Cities: Lessons from Critical Praxis-Oriented Research*, eds. Fran Klodawsky, Janet Siltanen, and Caroline Andrew. Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2017, 45.