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UTFA Welcomes Federal Investment in Basic Science

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Following years of campaigning with our provincial and federal counterparts, UTFA is pleased to welcome the news that the 2018 Federal budget includes a significant allocation towards basic science and research.

In November 2017, UTFA joined CAUT in calling for the Federal government to adopt the recommendations of the Advisory Panel on Federal Support for Fundamental Science – also known as the Naylor report – which recommended an investment of $1.3 billion over four years. The 2018 budget allocates $925 million over five years, falling short of the recommendation but still providing a record new investment in basic science.

Moreover, CAUT identifies a number of budget items of interest to our colleagues:

Additional budget promises of interest for academic staff include the creation of a new Centre for Gender, Diversity and Inclusion Statistics at Statistics Canada, $10 million to support Métis post-secondary education, new competitive processes for research institutes and organizations, and reinvestment in government science. (CAUT press release)

Since 2013, UTFA has supported calls for:

- The reinstatement of the long-form census;
- Freedom of expression for federal government scientists; and
- The reversal of cuts to post-secondary education and research.

UTFA has backed, and will continue to back, nation-wide campaigns and coalitions for Federal support of science and research. These campaigns and coalitions include Our Right to Know (ORK; formerly known as Scientists for the Right to Know), Get Science Right, and Evidence for Democracy (E4D).

E4D deserves special recognition for co-organizing an information session at the University of Toronto during the summer of 2017 and for developing an electronic template letter that could be easily

advertised and used by Canadian scientists to contact their MPs with the message. In particular the response from the Federal Government to members in the scientific community through groups of scientists and the E4D action not only led to an increase in research funding but also extended funding for research stations studying climate change that were facing cuts and/or closure. UTFA members, including department heads, got the word out and members followed up with the E4D template letter and with visits to their MPs.

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