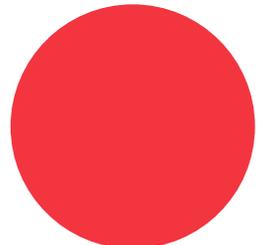
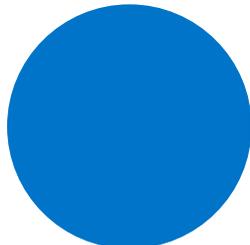
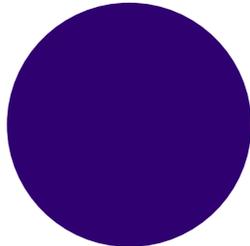


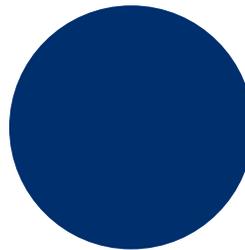
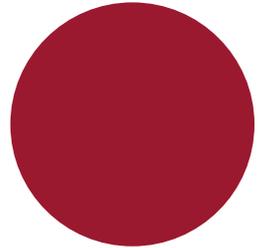
PARTNERING TO BUILD A BETTER ONTARIO

2019 Pre-Budget Submission
to the Ontario Government



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All photos from Ontario universities.

Cover photos, clockwise from top:
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Introduction

Our students – and the people of Ontario – need an efficient public sector and an affordable province. They need a workforce that can adapt to the jobs of a rapidly changing economy, and access to a health-care system that allows them to live independent, fruitful lives.

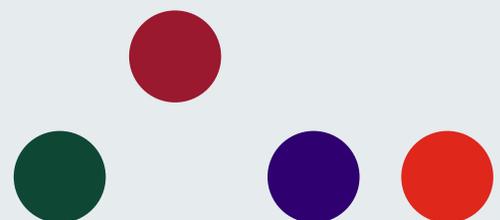
Ontario's universities understand the needs of the province. As the government addresses complex financial challenges and starts Ontario down a path toward fiscal sustainability, our universities continue to modernize, re-invent and find efficiencies in order to grow our province, support local communities and protect a quality learning experience for our students – the workforce of today and tomorrow.

The problems facing Ontario will require bold, new and transformative ideas. In response, our universities are committed to:

- Creating linkages with industry to develop programs, secure ongoing input and collaboration and equip students with the skills and real-world experiences they need to thrive as the jobs of today make way for the ever-evolving jobs and industries of tomorrow;
- Fostering entrepreneurship and innovation to create a new generation of start-ups, jobs and products brought-to-market that will help make Ontario competitive;

- Continuing to operate as efficiently and cost-effectively as possible, ensuring the tax dollars that are invested in universities bring the best possible return to the people of Ontario;
- Partnering to improve health care and address other societal concerns affecting our province and the people of Ontario.

This pre-budget submission details how government and universities can partner to achieve these goals, so that together we can tackle the priorities that matter most to the people of Ontario, like creating jobs, continuing to find efficiencies and cost savings and helping deliver better health care so we can build a more prosperous future for our students, communities and the province.





Developing a Skilled and Adaptable Workforce for the Jobs of Today and Tomorrow

As the province continues to face increasingly complex challenges, it will be Ontario's students – our future makers – who will use their talent and skills to build the economic growth, strong communities and innovation that the province needs to prosper.

We share the government's goal of ensuring that all students who qualify should be able to access a postsecondary opportunity.

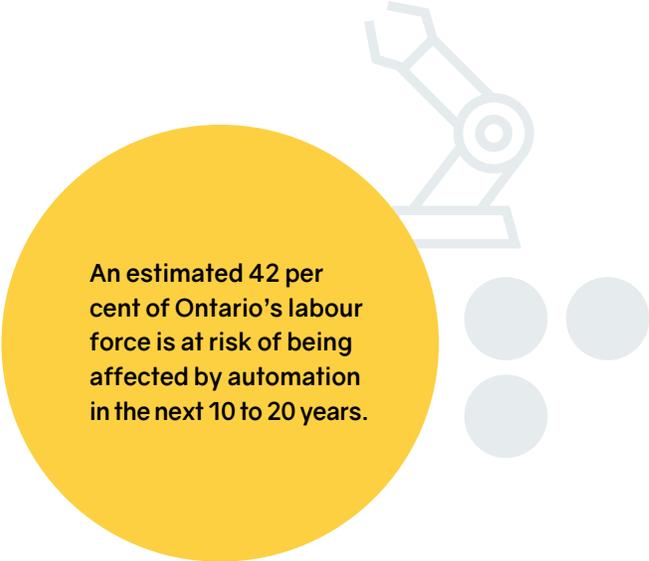
That's why Ontario's universities remain committed to working with government and stakeholders to ensure every willing and qualified student is able to attend university and have access to a quality educational experience. Universities are focused on increasing access for students from low-income families in Ontario, and provide nearly \$1 billion each year in student scholarships and bursaries to students who need help the most.

Ensuring Ontario has the workforce it needs in a rapidly changing economy

As our labour force changes, Ontario businesses, families and workers will need a flexible and adaptable workforce.

Technological advances are making it hard to predict what kinds of jobs will exist in the future. Workforce challenges that affect jobs across all levels, sectors and industries, have only just started disrupting how most Ontarians will work in the coming decades.

Job insecurity is a major concern for Ontarians – temporary employment has more than doubled from 4.7 per cent in 1989 to 10.7 per cent in 2016.



An estimated 42 per cent of Ontario's labour force is at risk of being affected by automation in the next 10 to 20 years.

New technologies are transforming our industries.

Automation is poised to affect everything from law offices to manufacturing, and people from every region in Ontario are concerned about the quantity and quality of jobs in the future.

With companies like Amazon and Microsoft based in Ontario, there will be a growing demand for highly skilled and adaptable university graduates who are ready to work and fill a variety of roles in areas from high-tech manufacturing to computer engineering.

About two-thirds of all job openings in the near future will require postsecondary education. In fact, the Ontario Ministry of Finance's Long Term Report on the Economy states that jobs that require a university degree are increasing at a much higher rate than others. In just three decades, jobs requiring a university education have increased by 145 per cent.

With rapid changes in the job market, learning new skills is critical for everyone – even those who already have jobs. Through their faculties of continuing education, universities offer a wide range of programs, training and certificates to help Ontario’s workers meet the changing demands of the economy. By working together, we can develop a strategy that ensures Ontario’s workforce has the skills that are critical to Ontario’s economic future.

Ensuring students are job-ready for a dynamic economy

The skills learned and opportunities gained at university prepare students for the dynamic and ever-changing workforce of tomorrow. Our graduates and their ability to adapt is, and will continue to be, a valuable resource in helping build stronger communities and a stronger province for the people of Ontario.

Employers say today’s students need to be adaptable for the jobs of the future, the roles we haven’t even imagined. That’s why universities are preparing students for the challenges of work and life by ensuring they have the critical thinking, problem-solving and communication skills they need to succeed – the kind of skills employers are increasingly looking for in new hires.



A 2016 Business Council of Canada survey found that companies prioritize collaboration, teamwork, communication, problem-solving and people and leadership skills when hiring new staff. They are looking for workers with multifaceted and transferable skills that can help them master new technologies and keep up with changes to their industries.

University graduates have a 94 per cent employment rate after two years, with 89 per cent of graduates who are employed full-time considering their work either closely or somewhat related to the skills developed at university.

Through career service centres, universities are ensuring students are prepared for the workforce by assisting in resume-writing, preparing for interviews, articulating their skills and facilitating links to employers.

Building Ontario’s future through hands-on learning, placements and mentorship

As demands for diverse and adaptable workers – and the fresh ideas they bring – increase, hands-on learning opportunities taking place at Ontario universities through co-ops, internships and projects across all disciplines are equipping the next generation of leaders with real-life experience that will help them transition into the labour market.

Students use these opportunities to apply their knowledge and critical thinking to real-world problems or situations, learning to take initiative, make decisions and be accountable for results. Ultimately, this helps them become self-directed, life-long learners who can adapt to a changing world.

According to a 2016 Abacus Data report entitled, *Work Integrated Learning and Post-Secondary Education: What Students Think*, 86 per cent of current students and recent graduates in Canada said experiential learning led to an easier transition from school to a successful career.

While there are established internship, co-op and other experiential programs and placements available at each of Ontario’s universities, they cannot meet the rapidly evolving needs of all students.

Investment is required to build more effective partnerships for high-quality experiential learning opportunities for students and to create better linkages between students, graduates and employers.

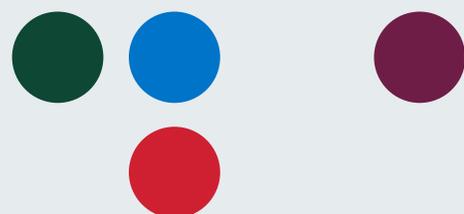
Tax credits to employers (particularly small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and non-profit organizations) will create more hands-on learning opportunities for postsecondary students and will help incentivize employers to seek out student talent, growing the number of opportunities available to skilled and experience-hungry students.

Ensuring businesses have access to the right talent – now and in the future – requires strong linkages between employers, universities and government to help every student achieve their potential and develop the flexible skills they'll need for a competitive and dynamically changing economy.

Policy Recommendations

Support the development of a highly skilled workforce. The Ontario government should:

- **Partner with universities to engage stakeholders on the development of an Ontario Talent Strategy to drive economic growth and ensure Ontario has the workforce it will require for the future.**
- **Provide tax credits to employers (particularly SMEs and non-profit organizations) to create more hands-on learning opportunities for postsecondary students.**



2

Helping Make Ontario Competitive and Open for Business

As the government works to make Ontario more competitive, the province's universities are committed to doing the same.

Research and industry partnerships between universities, entrepreneurs, business leaders and government have created the kind of discoveries that help feed us, save lives, transport us to work and power our homes.

Many of the technologies we've come to rely on – from treating polio to inventing Technicolor and developing the Yukon Gold potato – originated on university campuses across Ontario.

Today, these partnerships continue to make an impact. University researchers are working on the issues that matter most to Ontarians, helping communities address their unique challenges and drive regional development for a more prosperous Ontario.



The higher education sector is the second largest performer of research and development in Ontario, carrying out an estimated \$5.2 billion in work, which translated into 34 per cent of the province's research activities in 2014.

By working in partnership with the Ontario government, our home-grown university researchers can continue to help find and drive the innovative ideas and solutions to the challenges facing our province and the people of Ontario.

Commercializing ideas to drive economic development

Transforming new discoveries and partnerships into real-world products and solutions is essential to a strong and competitive province.

By partnering with industry and the public sector, Ontario's universities are creating the conditions that make it easier to start a business, grow a business or invest in Ontario – and

Community-building examples researchers are working on include:

- Making cross-border traffic between the U.S. and Canada more efficient
- Building better ice roads in the province's northern communities
- Improving digital infrastructure in rural and remote areas
- Helping increase Ontario-based jobs in the automotive sector
- Designing more cost-effective bridges
- Helping farmers protect their crops and save money

to build an economy that allows more Ontario workers to find a job right here at home.

Ontario's thriving regional economies – concentrations of companies, non-profits and academic institutions that spur growth and transformation in a common field – are helping drive the province's economy.

They encourage linkages and knowledge-sharing between postsecondary institutions, businesses and the public sector, and are attracting investment from both inside and outside the province.

University research and innovation, for example, has helped create high-tech ecosystems, much like Silicon Valley, in Ottawa and Waterloo. These tech hubs are now attracting and retaining talent from nearby universities and across the country, making these cities desirable for companies like Amazon, Shopify and Google who are looking to invest, thrive and create good jobs.

Technology Transfer Offices at universities act as bridges between industry and postsecondary, helping to identify and evaluate research for its potential for commercialization, and coordinate licensing to the interested companies.

Through the commercialization of new discoveries, researchers, students and faculty are developing thousands of start-ups and revenue-generating companies every day. They are creating jobs, attracting foreign investment and providing employers and industries with access to the brightest talent and ideas.

Our researchers are also partnering to help find solutions to real-world issues that are driving community, regional and economic development. One example includes the development of biodegradable fertilizers that use nanotechnology to deliver nutrients when crops need it, causing less contamination on farms and wasting less money for farmers.

While the Advanced Manufacturing Park in southwestern Ontario is another example of how research, the manufacturing sector, municipalities and businesses are partnering in the creation of high-tech manufacturing



Miners who work in hot environments often experience heat stress without realizing it, leading to a variety of different heat illnesses. University researchers have partnered to create a vest for miners with the technology to monitor and control body temperature. The vest adapts to how hard they're working, temperature and what they're doing at the time to generate different levels of body heat and cool the miner down.

innovations and solutions to ensure a continuous competitive advantage for regional industry and economic growth.

Embracing innovation and focusing on initiatives that foster a healthier and happier Ontario, have also led to the development of software that better detects Alzheimer's disease, kits that monitor drinking water and food for E. coli and to a mobile lab dedicated to promoting occupational health and safety in the mining sector.

A collaborative program that measures the cold hardiness of grapevines and warns grape growers when they need to turn on frost-fighting wind machines – or take other protective measures – is helping the Ontario grape and wine industry avoid up to \$54.6 million a year in lost sales from severe cold weather events.

These are just a few examples of the kinds of innovations being developed on university campuses and commercialized for the benefit of communities across Ontario.

University incubators: Supporting talent, entrepreneurship and innovation in Ontario

University incubators and accelerators are hubs for cross-sector links. They connect students, faculty, entrepreneurs and industry to a network of mentors, business leaders and investors to help turn ideas into products and services, and take companies to the next level.



According to the 2016 UBI Global Impact Study, more than 2,200 start-ups were created or supported with the help of student entrepreneurship programs alone, and more than 4,700 jobs have been directly created by these start-ups in Ontario.

Additionally, access to shared incubators and labs gives companies the opportunity to innovate, collaborate and generate ideas. Small and medium-sized businesses, in particular, are able to use cutting-edge university equipment, while accessing talent and infrastructure, to find solutions to challenges they're facing – an opportunity they may not otherwise afford.

The increasing demand from both students and employers for incubators continues to grow. Incubators have been used by more than 280,000 Ontario students, allowing universities to provide vital learning opportunities. An estimated \$85 million was contributed to Ontario's GDP by student start-ups, while an estimated \$16.6 million in fiscal benefits generated by the economic activity of these start-ups has been returned to the government.

Entrepreneurship, a key for economic growth, has moved from the margins to the mainstream of university education. CIBC says Canadians are expected to become

their own bosses at an accelerated pace in the coming decade. We also know that talent exposed to entrepreneurship programs and opportunities are essential to helping SMEs scale.

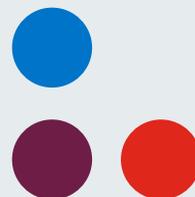
Universities are responding to this employer and student demand through programs dedicated to teaching students what it takes to produce new inventions, attract investors and take services and products to market – enabling the next generation of job creators.

To ensure long-term prosperity for our province and the people of Ontario, we need to invest in the entrepreneurial talent, research and innovation coming out of our universities – they are key to building up the province's businesses, attracting investment and keeping Ontario's economy competitive, on the cutting-edge and open for business.

Policy Recommendations

Leverage Ontario's position of global leadership in research and innovation. The Ontario government should:

- **Develop explicit strategies and policy frameworks in support of innovation and accelerated commercialization, including incentivizing venture capital and business investments.**
- **Continue its support for university incubators and student entrepreneurship programs.**
- **Ensure Ontario maintains its share of federal research funding through continued support of Ontario research by maintaining the Ontario Research Fund.**



3

Supporting Efficiency in Higher Education

As the government starts Ontario down a path toward balancing the province's budget in a responsible manner, our universities want to continue being good partners in delivering efficiencies and cost effectiveness, and ensuring financial sustainability.

Having already faced years of funding pressure, Ontario's universities have demonstrated, and will continue to demonstrate, their ability to do more with less – providing a world-class quality education and student supports while holding the line on costs.

We support the government's commitment to maintain the current level of operating grants as Ontario's universities have faced more than a decade of decreased funding. Since 2002-03, operating grants per student, when adjusted for inflation, have decreased by 10.6 per cent, requiring Ontario universities to operate at the lowest per-student funding levels in Canada.

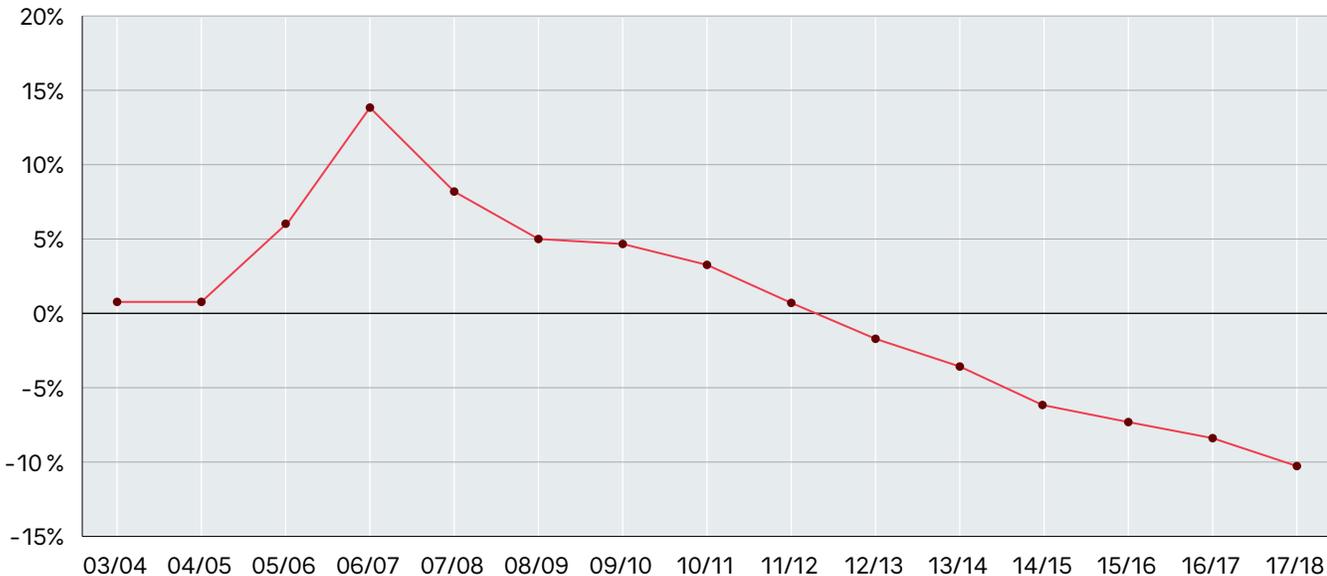
According to the recent Ernst & Young line-by-line review of Ontario government expenditures, transfer payment expenditures in the postsecondary sector saw almost the lowest annual growth, at 0.3 per cent, of any of the seven major sectors reviewed.

In fact, just under four per cent, or \$5.1 billion, of total government operating expenditure goes to colleges and universities for operating costs, making the postsecondary sector's Compounded Annual Growth Rate (CAGR) below that of similar provinces like Quebec and British Columbia.

This, in turn, has led our institutions to fund a greater proportion of operating costs through tuition fees.

Even as funding has fallen, the demands on university budgets have risen – including increased campus services in areas such as student mental health, and more cost-intensive resources and equipment for the science and technology programs that are required to meet the needs of Ontario's employers.

Percentage change in MTCU grants per student from 2002/2003
(inflation adjusted)



A pattern of reduced investment by government threatens to erode our ability to be more innovative and entrepreneurial – precisely the factors that will keep Ontario's economy competitive and on the cutting-edge.

A healthy, financially sustainable university system is vital to Ontario's economic and social well-being and even as we operate at the lowest per-student funding levels in Canada, we continue to look for new ways to innovate operations and work together to scale up promising projects that can save costs and benefit all universities.

Modernization, collaboration and improved efficiency at Ontario's universities

Ontario's universities share the government's goal of fostering modernization projects that are collaborative, and drive efficiencies that yield significant savings. Investments in these areas help spur transformational change at our institutions as they modernize systems and processes and improve the learning experience for students.

When it comes to modernizing administrative processes to help make university operations run smarter, there is no question traditional procurement models can be considered decentralized, paper-based and labour-intensive. These outdated processes often do not result in the best deal. One example of how our institutions are finding ways to increase efficiencies in purchasing and achieve maximum value from vendor relationships is through the implementation of a campus-wide e-procurement marketplace.

This solution provides an "Amazon-like" shopping experience – a one-stop shop where faculty members can access catalogues from vendors with product descriptions and negotiate discount pricing to meet research lab needs. The system is completely online, from order to payment processing, and provides detailed information that has improved price negotiations on contracts and produced amazing cost-saving results.



In its first year, the e-procurement marketplace initiative saved more than \$1 million.

The expected return on investment for the e-procurement marketplace is \$4.8 million over five years resulting from strategic sourcing, contract compliance, administrative process efficiencies and credit card rebates.

Universities are also seeing improvements in productivity through technology and partnership. As the digital age demands access to massive amounts of data in an instant, Ontario's universities recognize that finding cost-effective models for storing, managing and accessing digital content is critical.

The Ontario (Digital) Library Research Cloud (OLRC) is the first cloud-based cooperatively managed storage service in Canada's university sector – providing a shared technology infrastructure for all 21 university libraries in Ontario. These libraries are pooling resources to build a large-scale shared storage service with the capacity to house existing and new digital content. The cost is significantly cheaper than what individual universities could achieve and cheaper than current commercial cloud storage alternatives.

Cutting red tape to save time, money and resources

In an environment of limited resources and competing demands, Ontario's universities recognize how important it is to seek opportunities that save money and time – without sacrificing quality.

We support the Government of Ontario's commitment to cutting unproductive red tape and restoring transparency and accountability to Ontario taxpayers. Our universities want to work in partnership on a host of ideas to increase efficiencies, reduce red tape and reporting burdens.

For example, great savings can be achieved by streamlining university program funding approvals. Currently, it can take up to six months for the government to review and approve a new program that has already received approval by Ontario's arms-length Council on Quality Assurance. This time delay duplicates work and hinders our universities from being nimble and responsive to the needs and demands of students and employers.

Ontario universities file more than 50 separate reports with the Ministry. Some of these reports are duplicative or require extensive external audits on proportionally small grants, for example, a \$10,000 audit on a \$100,000 grant.

Other issues include reporting on now-closed government grants. For example, when it comes to a grant the government may not have contributed to in years, extensive and duplicative reporting and auditing is still required in perpetuity on the interest accrued. This is disproportionate to the amount of grant money provided. These inefficiencies drain time and money – both in staff time and in external auditors – that can be better spent supporting students.

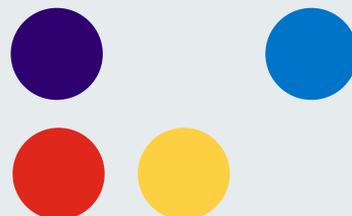
The creation of a master transfer payment agreement for university operating grants would reduce duplication of reporting, streamline operations for both government and universities and allow for greater centralization of data.

Funding for projects that run leaner and more efficient services has not only produced one-time savings, but has laid the groundwork for ongoing and future savings. We continue to seek and find strong solutions to modernize and transform systems to provide the best possible learning experience for our students.

Policy Recommendations

**Drive modernization and efficiency.
The Ontario government should:**

- **Reduce red tape by:**
 - » **Reviewing and consolidating the audit process so that universities can reduce spending on expensive third-party audits for low-cost grants.**
 - » **Streamlining program funding approvals processes for universities.**
 - » **Streamlining research funding applications and approvals.**
 - » **Reviewing and streamlining the Tuition Set Aside and Student Access Guarantee Programs.**
 - » **Establishing a Master Transfer Payment Agreement and inventory and schedule of reports.**
- **Find cost savings through the creation of innovative projects that leverage technology, back-office supports and shared procurement and services.**



4

Partnering to Relieve the Growing Burden on Health Care in Ontario

As the government continues to work towards putting patients at the heart of health-care delivery – by increasing the number of long-term care beds and investing in mental health funding – Ontario’s universities are partnering with hospitals, colleges, health-care providers and local communities to help provide the efficient and transformative solutions the province needs.

But there is more to be done. The demographic challenges of Ontario’s aging population will continue to grow, and it is estimated that health-care spending will account for 55 per cent of Ontario’s program spending by 2050, up from 42 per cent today.

In order to tackle this challenge and ease the growing burden of hallway health care – and on the health-care system as a whole – efficient and effective collaboration across Ontario is needed, at all levels of delivery, to ultimately put an end to hospital overcrowding and keep Ontarians healthy and out of hospital.

To help reduce this burden, Ontario’s universities are partnering with government and industry for a better future for health care in Ontario. From training the physicians, nurses and other health professionals that deliver the highest-quality care to the people of Ontario, to creating the life-saving technologies that improve quality of life, our universities play a critical role in strengthening the province’s health-care system

Improving access to health care through a strong workforce

With rapid advances in technology and the growing need for more complex care for the people of Ontario, the province’s health-care system depends on the many thousands of high-quality, dedicated and adaptable health professionals who support an efficient, effective and sustainable health-care system that puts the patient first.

Our institutions graduate more than 10,000 doctors, nurses and other highly skilled medical and administrative professionals each year. These highly trained and adaptable graduates contribute to improved health outcomes and lower costs, helping Ontario continue to meet the health-care needs of our communities and province.

Access to quality care is becoming easier with the expanding role of nurse practitioners (NPs) as primary care providers. NPs are registered nurses with advanced preparation and education who provide acute and specialty health-care services.

NPs are educated through two different university programs: the Ontario Primary Health Care Nurse Practitioner Program, a unique advanced nursing education program offered through a partnership of nine Ontario universities; and the University of Toronto Primary Health Care Global Health Program offered in the Greater Toronto Area. Both programs are giving patients more choices and showing them that NPs are a viable option for primary care services.

The number of NPs in Ontario’s nursing workforce has more than tripled over the past nine years. With a 97 per cent employment rate in Ontario, NPs improve access to high quality, cost-effective care and help reduce pressure on our health-care system.

Another way universities help provide cost-effective care is through Ontario's collaborative nursing degree programs. Partnerships between colleges and universities deliver training and create an excellent educational foundation to care for the people of Ontario. These programs effectively combine and leverage the resources and strengths of colleges and universities.

The nine-university 'flagship' nurse practitioner program in Canada is an efficient model that shares faculty, curriculum, resources, knowledge, governance and an online distance education hub, in a high-quality, cost-effective, province-wide approach to NP education.

Graduating more than 4,000 registered nurses per year, collaborative nursing programs have proven successful at expanding nursing supply to meet today's complex patient needs.

Building a robust health-care system through innovation

While the training of thousands of high-quality health professionals is crucial to strong and accessible health care, Ontario's universities are also partnering with government and industry to find creative solutions to make health-care innovation and delivery more available and cost-effective.

The research and technology developed on university campuses is being used by health professionals to ensure all Ontarians remain healthy within their communities. For example, advancing monitoring technology and partnering with paramedics and hospitals means Ontarians with chronic diseases are better able to manage their conditions, often avoiding the need to be admitted or re-admitted into the hospital.

University researchers are also making advancements in diagnostics and medical treatments. From discovering a method to detect breast cancer earlier, to creating connected care strategies that reduce post-operative complications, there are numerous examples of how



To create efficiencies and improve access to services for remote and rural patient care, nursing and business researchers have developed software that digitizes the equipment and supply ordering process. Not only has it improved patient care, it has also saved home care service providers and government health agencies time and money.

university researchers are ensuring patients can receive more efficient and high-quality care.

These advances in preventative and post-surgical care are helping Ontarians live healthier lives and remain out of the hospital for longer.

Fostering a whole-of-community approach to health care

Ontario's universities greatly appreciate the government's \$1.9-billion investment in urgently needed mental health and addiction services, and its commitment to engage with health-care leaders, frontline staff and people with lived experiences to address the critical gaps in the province's mental health-care system.

Workplaces, hospitals and schools across the province are seeing spikes in mental health-related illnesses, and the campuses of Ontario's colleges and universities are no exception.

The number of students on college and university campuses with identified mental health disabilities has more than doubled over the past five years. In fact, a 2017 survey of on-campus student health service usage determined the second most used billing code by on-campus physicians was directly related to mental health.

This puts our institutions at the frontline of mental health issues.

While many students already rely on the health-care services universities and colleges offer, student mental health is not just a postsecondary concern. It's a societal issue with ripple effects on everything from health care to the workplace and the economy.

This is why universities, colleges and student groups have come together to advocate for a "whole-of-community" approach to student mental health, by creating the [In It Together report](#).

The report is an example of different partners coming together to support student mental health. In It Together begins in kindergarten and continues through high school, postsecondary life and adulthood.

The report proposes curriculum changes that teach young people resiliency before they enter postsecondary education, encourages culturally diverse counselling and promotes the use of more technology and peer counselling – all free to students, on and off campus. It requires support from postsecondary institutions, government, health-care providers and community agencies.

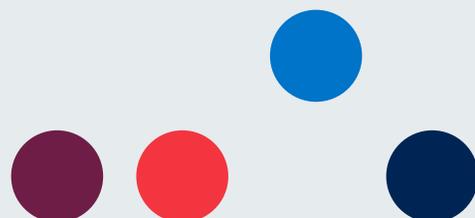
With 75 per cent of mental-health issues beginning before the age of 25, investment into postsecondary mental-health services would make a significant difference to reducing the burden of mental health and addiction needs across the province.

By investing in the mental health of students on campus, the latest research and technologies that improve quality of life and the training of the physicians, nurses and other health professionals that deliver the highest-quality care to the people of Ontario, we can ensure that everyone across the province, no matter their age or where they live, have access to strong and reliable care that helps them lead healthy and fulfilling lives.

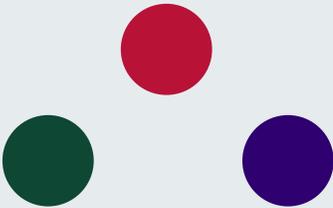
Policy Recommendations

Help end hallway medicine for Ontario. The Ontario government should:

- **Ensure Ontario has the talented health-care workforce needed to provide medical services by supporting research and training programs that graduate a wide range of medical health professionals.**
- **Support student mental health by committing a portion of the \$1.9 billion in mental health funding directly to postsecondary institutions and develop a "whole-of-community" approach to mental health, as outlined in the joint [In It Together report](#).**



Conclusion



Universities, employers and government have an opportunity to work together and lead Ontario through this time of rapid change.

With a shared goal to help Ontarians thrive and prosper, Ontario's universities put forth the above recommendations in order to better support our students and communities as we partner to build a better province.

Ontario needs a strong economy that keeps our industries growing, helps our diverse regions thrive and supports the health and social services of our communities. Our universities are proud to be engines of growth – collectively adding tens of billions of dollars to the provincial economy and helping businesses and other sectors thrive, from mining to banking, tourism, farming and arts and culture.

The estimated economic impact of Ontario universities in the province is
\$115.8
billion annually.

The postsecondary sector is moving forward with great determination. In order for us to succeed, we cannot stand still. Our universities of tomorrow will continue to bring together talented people, inspire them to outstanding acts of learning, discovery and leadership, compel them to reach out and connect with communities, businesses and industry from near and far, and provide them with the supports they need to thrive.

But it's not something we can do alone. Ontario's success is founded on the capacity of people from many different sectors to work collaboratively to answer big questions and solve challenging problems.

We share the government's goal of ensuring affordability, driving modernization and becoming even more efficient. Ontario's universities will continue to harness the power of transformation and innovation to provide both immediate and lasting contributions to our students and to local communities, helping to build a strong economy that makes Ontario an attractive place to live, work and invest.

By working together, we can build a brighter future – not just for the students we teach and the communities we serve, but to unlock the full potential of Ontario's future and all who live here.

Appendix A

Budget Priorities – Summary of Recommendations

1 Developing a Skilled and Adaptable Workforce for the Jobs of Today and Tomorrow

- Partner with universities to engage stakeholders on the development of an Ontario Talent Strategy to drive economic growth and ensure Ontario has the workforce it will require for the future.
- Provide tax credits to employers (particularly SMEs and non-profit organizations) to create more hands-on learning opportunities for postsecondary students.

2 Helping make Ontario competitive and open for business

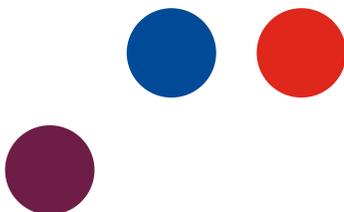
- Develop explicit strategies and policy frameworks in support of innovation and accelerated commercialization, including incentivizing venture capital and business investments.
- Continue support for university incubators and student entrepreneurship programs.
- Ensure Ontario gets its fair share of federal research funding through continued support of Ontario research by maintaining the Ontario Research Fund.

3 Supporting efficiency in higher education

- Reduce red tape by:
 - » Reviewing and consolidating the audit process so that universities can reduce spending on expensive third-party audits for low-cost grants.
 - » Streamlining program funding approvals processes for universities.
 - » Streamlining research funding applications and approvals.
 - » Reviewing and streamlining the Tuition Set Aside and Student Access Guarantee Programs.
 - » Establishing a Master Transfer Payment Agreement and inventory and schedule of reports.
- Find cost savings through the creation of innovative projects that leverage technology, back-office supports and shared procurement and services.

4 Partnering to relieve the growing burden on health care in Ontario

- Ensure Ontario has the talented health-care workforce needed to provide medical services by supporting research and training programs that graduate a wide range of medical health professionals.
- Support student mental health by committing a portion of the \$1.9 billion in mental health funding directly to postsecondary institutions and develop a “whole-of-community” approach to mental health, as outlined in the joint [In It Together](#) report.

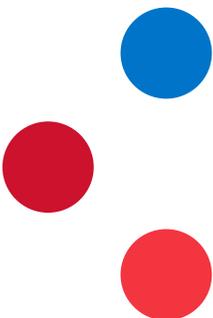


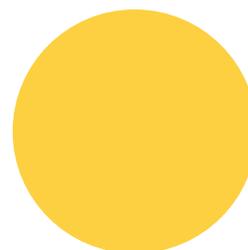
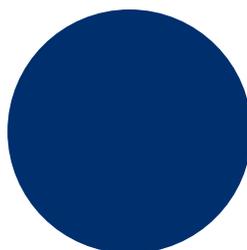
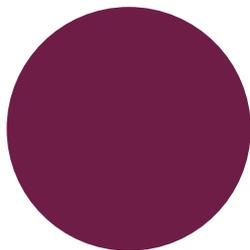
Further Reading

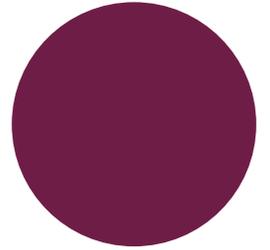
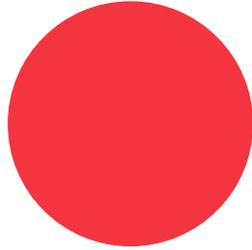
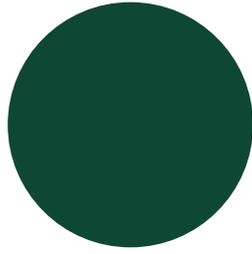
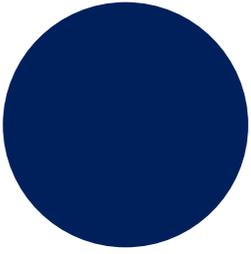
Discover how Ontario's universities are actively working with partners to ensure our students thrive, our communities are vibrant and our province remains dynamic at www.ontariosuniversities.ca.

Reports include:

- [Graduate Survey: A Better Future for University Students](#)
- [50 ways Universities are Partnering with Employers](#)
- [50 ways Universities are Partnering for Stronger Communities](#)
- [Faster, Cheaper, Smarter: Improving Efficiency at Ontario Universities](#)
- [Partnering for a Better Future for Health Care](#)
- [In It Together: Taking Action on Student Mental Health](#)







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