



# Queen's University

Written Submission to Ontario's Pre-Budget  
Consultations in Advance of the 2023 Budget

February 2023

## Recommendations

Queen's University offers the following recommendations for the Government of Ontario:

### **Support Ontario's Post-Secondary Sector and Skilled Workforce**

1. Develop a long-term, sustainable funding model for the post-secondary sector to support the delivery of high-quality education and student services.
2. Provide greater flexibility in enrolment corridors for universities to grow in-demand programs to ensure Ontario has the skilled workforce it needs to meet the industry demands of tomorrow.
3. Support Queen's Faculty of Education's proposals to expand its programming to help future teachers gain the necessary skills to support the education needs of Ontario's students.
4. Support Queen's Faculty of Engineering and Applied Science's EV Battery Microcredential Certification to help fill the labour needs of Ontario's growing EV cluster.

### **Invest in Health Human Resources**

5. Support Queen's proposal to further expand its School of Nursing by doubling its nursing enrolment to address acute provincial need.
6. Support Queen's Health Sciences plans to build the Queen's Health Sciences Complex that will provide hands-on learning experiences for students while serving community needs.
7. Support Weeneebayko Area Health Authority's and Queen's proposal to build an inter-professional health campus in Northern Ontario that would prepare Indigenous youth for healthcare careers, improve talent retention, and address growing health disparities.

### **Invest in Innovation & Commercialization**

8. Increase MCU's research envelope to leverage federal research programs and obtain Ontario's proportional share of federal monies in research and innovation.
9. Provide ongoing provincial support to SNOLAB in the amount of \$9M annually to attract top talent and research investments to Sudbury from around the world.

## **Introduction**

Ontarians rely on universities to help build healthy, safe, and sustainable societies by training the highly-skilled workforce of tomorrow and developing innovative solutions to the world's most urgent challenges. Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, Ontario's universities, including Queen's University, acted as stabilizing economic forces that contained employment disruption and supported our local communities. With Ontario's recovery efforts well underway, Queen's looks forward to being an important partner for the next phase of the government's plans to build Ontario.

As the university for the future, Queen's is responding to Ontario's most pressing issues by making meaningful contributions to our economy, healthcare sector, and innovation ecosystem. From first-in-Canada community-based medical programs and life-saving breakthroughs in our medical labs, to advancing Ontario's prosperity by creating skilled talent for existing and new industries, including EV battery manufacturing, we have the ingenuity and capacity to play a key role in Ontario's post-pandemic future.

Queen's supports the Council of Ontario Universities' pre-budget recommendations and is also pleased to offer the above recommendations for the 2023 Budget.

## **Support Ontario's Post-Secondary Sector and Skilled Workforce**

- 1. Develop a long-term, sustainable funding model for the post-secondary sector to support the delivery of high-quality education and student services.**
- 2. Provide greater flexibility in enrolment corridors for universities to grow in-demand programs to ensure Ontario has the skilled workforce it needs to meet the industry demands of tomorrow.**
- 3. Support Queen's Faculty of Education's proposals to expand its programming to help future teachers gain the necessary skills to support the education needs of Ontario's students.**
- 4. Support Queen's Faculty of Engineering and Applied Science's EV Battery Microcredential Certification to help fill the labour needs of Ontario's growing EV cluster.**

Queen's University is committed to providing a supportive learning environment that equips our students with the high-quality education and supports they need to become highly skilled and prosperous members of tomorrow's workforce. With a leading

undergraduate completion rate of 89% and graduate employment rate of 92%, Queen's prepares our students to be Ontario's future leaders and change-makers who will advance Ontario's economic prosperity. Through our comprehensive personal, academic, and social health supports—including over 250 wellbeing-related resources—Queen's best positions students for success. The wellbeing and academic success of our students is crucial for the important contributions they will make to Ontario's future.

Queen's remains dedicated to supporting our students, our community, and the province, but, along with the rest of the post-secondary sector, requires a sustainable funding model that provides predictability and flexibility in revenue streams. Ontario is the only province in Canada with a tuition freeze in place. A long-term, sustainable tuition framework, and commitment to increased funding for the sector would ensure Ontario has the highly-skilled workforce and groundbreaking intellectual property to foster social and economic growth in a post-pandemic era. In addition, given the impact of the pandemic on students and on the secondary school system over the past two years, universities are seeing increased need for mental health services and support for academic skill development, coupled with considerable mounting costs. Without additional revenue options, the financial pressures for universities will continue to grow, impacting the sector's ability to adapt and respond to student needs and industry demands.

Universities need expanded revenue options and increased enrolment corridors to ensure that Ontario has the highly-skilled workforce who can meet the immediate and future needs of the economy.

Universities are a key partner for the government in responding to incoming labour trends and the skills required by our evolving industries. As a result of an aging population, Ontario will experience significant labour shortages over the next 10 years, particularly amongst jobs that require a university education. Addressing these shortages will be critical to supplying Ontario's priority industries with STEM, health, education, law, business, and finance professionals.

Queen's is addressing the skills needs of Ontario's workforce through innovative education programs, such as our Faculty of Education's Technological Education Multi-Session Program (TEMS) and Indigenous Teacher Education Program (ITEP). The Faculty is proposing to expand the TEMS program into Sault Ste. Marie, which will provide the opportunity for skilled tradespeople to earn a BEd or DipEd in a blended format while continuing to work during the program. In addition, the proposal to expand the ITEP program into Tyendinaga and the Pikangikum First Nation will help to provide opportunities for future teachers to specialize in Indigenous education and train in Indigenous communities. Queen's encourages the government to support the expansion of these successful programs through outside enrollment corridor funding to help equip teachers with the necessary skills to support the education needs of Ontario's students.

Queen's is uniquely positioned for talent production and collaboration with the growing electric vehicle (EV) industry in Southeastern Ontario. Belgium-based Umicore, a leading circular materials and electric vehicle technology company expanding its operations in North America, will build a cathode component manufacturing facility for EV batteries just outside Kingston in Loyalist Township, which was announced at Queen's last summer by Prime Minister Trudeau and Ontario's Minister of Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade Vic Fedeli. As well, Li-Cycle, a growing company that is developing battery recycling operations in Canada and the United States, is also located in Kingston. Queen's Faculty of Engineering and Applied Science will lead the way in training workers for this growing industry by developing a new EV Battery Microcredential Certification that will help address the labour needs of Ontario's EV cluster in this priority area. Queen's encourages the government to support the development of this program to help upskill workers for this growing industry, including for employment at companies that are expanding their operations in Ontario, like Umicore and Li-Cycle.

### **Invest in Health Human Resources**

- 5. Support Queen's proposal to further expand its School of Nursing by doubling its nursing enrolment to address acute provincial need.**
- 6. Support Queen's Health Sciences plans to build the Queen's Health Sciences Complex that will provide hands-on learning experiences for students while serving community needs.**
- 7. Support Weeneebayko Area Health Authority's and Queen's proposal to build an inter-professional health campus in Northern Ontario that would prepare Indigenous youth for healthcare careers, improve talent retention, and address growing health disparities.**

Queen's is a leader in the training of Ontario's doctors and nurses and developing innovative approaches to delivering improved health outcomes for communities with specialized and acute needs. Queen's has responded to the government's recent calls for more health human resources by expanding our schools of medicine and nursing, and we thank the Government of Ontario for these critical investments. Queen's School of Nursing enrolment is up by 25%, including Queen's two-year accelerated Bachelor of Nursing Science program. Queen's is looking to make further contributions to Ontario's healthcare workforce by doubling our nursing enrolment, which will include targeted growth to both our 4-year BNSc and 2-year Accelerated program. These enrolment increases would allow Queen's to train more nurses faster to address acute provincial need.

Queen's is eager to continue supporting the government's vision for a resilient, world-class healthcare system in Ontario. To accommodate the growth in our nursing program, Queen's Health Sciences is also looking to develop the Queen's Health Sciences Complex, which will house the Schools of Nursing and Rehabilitation Therapy, research institutes,

labs, and classrooms. The construction of this purposefully-designed building would provide clinical spaces for hands-on learning opportunities while also serving the needs of the community. By supporting the development of collaborative, cross-disciplinary health teams, the complex will help to improve service provision and set the foundation for building back a better health system for patients.

In partnership with the Weeneebayko Area Health Authority (WAHA), Queen's University is proposing to develop an interprofessional health campus, situated within Indigenous communities in Northern Ontario, to train Indigenous youth for careers in medicine, nursing, midwifery, and other health professions in their own communities. Queen's and WAHA propose to graduate family physicians and nurses with roots already established in Northern Ontario communities through an innovative method to train healthcare workers within a community-centric model that places retention and the needs of communities at the core of health sciences education. The Queen's-WAHA campus would contribute to the government's regional training and talent retention objectives, increase health human resources in Northern Ontario, and reduce costly patient-transfers to Kingston and other centres in the South. This project can become a model for other jurisdictions to replicate to increase their healthcare workforce, improve Indigenous-led health service delivery, and address the challenges of training and retaining talent in remote communities.

## **Invest in Innovation & Commercialization**

- 8. Increase MCU's research envelope to leverage federal research programs and obtain Ontario's proportional share of federal monies in research and innovation.**
- 9. Provide ongoing provincial support to SNOLAB in the amount of \$9M annually to attract top talent and research investments to Sudbury from around the world.**

As a research-intensive university, Queen's attracts world-class talent and partnerships that contribute to solutions to critical challenges facing Ontario, Canada, and the world. Through discovery, partnership, and commercialization, Queen's researchers are making advancements in science and technology that will propel our economy and have positive impacts on our society. The government should ensure that our universities have the resources and tools necessary to tackle our greatest challenges and deliver 'Made-in-Ontario' innovations to the world.

Queen's is home to one of the country's most unique translational health research facilities that plays a critical role in advancing cancer clinical trials and supporting Ontario's biomanufacturing ecosystem. Queen's encourages the government to ensure that MCU's research envelope includes new funds to leverage federal research and biomanufacturing programs and obtain our proportional share of federal monies in this critical sector.

Ongoing collaboration between governments, industry, and universities will be crucial to advancing Ontario's research, talent, and workforce capabilities.

Federal and provincial collaboration is particularly important for funding Ontario's major research facilities. Queen's research institute, SNOLAB, located 2 km underground in an operational mine near Sudbury, is an exquisite low-radiation background laboratory, ideally suited to host experiments that are addressing the highest priority questions in science today. Thanks to ongoing provincial support of the Major Science Initiatives fund, world-leading researchers from Queen's and SNOLAB are advancing our understanding of the building blocks of the universe and placing Ontario first for excellence in particle astrophysics. Queen's is seeking ongoing provincial support of SNOLAB in Sudbury in the amount of \$9M annually to support SNOLAB's mission. Investments in SNOLAB's unique research infrastructure are investments in Sudbury and Ontario that pay dividends through increased jobs, access to education and highly-qualified personnel, and opportunities for commercialization. This investment would also support the attraction of world-leading international experiments in astroparticle physics to SNOLAB, furthering the facilities groundbreaking research and Nobel-prize winning legacy.

## **Conclusion**

Queen's University is committed to training the workforce of tomorrow while being a partner for the government in addressing Ontario's most pressing issues. Our recommendations above will support the mission's of universities and stimulate Ontario's socio-economic prosperity—contributing to a brighter future for our province.