

Enhance Canada's research efficiency and security

Increasingly complicated government regulations and research funding environments lead to complex layers of administration that hinders Canadian research progress. This added administrative burden takes away valuable time researchers can spend on their work, reducing productivity, and creates significant barriers for researchers with smaller teams and fewer resources.

3 ways to strengthen Canadian research

1 Expand access to research security supports

Protecting Canadian research is a top priority for Canadian universities. The research security stream of the Research Support Fund (RSF) has helped transform universities' research security efforts. However, these funds have not kept pace with growing administrative demands.

Since the fund was introduced, multiple layers of unstandardized administrative requirements have been added across Canada and internationally, further straining the funds.



A research partnership crossing Ontario and Alberta now requires up to 3 layers of research security paperwork.



WE RECOMMEND: SCALE RSF RESEARCH SECURITY FUNDING

to reflect the escalating administrative burdens related to research security.

It is even harder for smaller research teams to access these funds.

IN 2023/24:



NEARLY \$25 MILLION

in RSF research security funds were allocated to 50 qualifying universities.

15 of those universities received

LESS THAN \$50,000



The University of Prince Edward Island was able to access

ONLY \$41.

The government could provide a helpful baseline in research security funds to all universities that currently access tri-council funding with an additional allocation of \$2 million annually.

WE RECOMMEND:

A supplementary fund should be established to support smaller institutions in pooling resources and addressing capacity gaps effectively.

2 Increase Canada's presence with Horizon Europe

Canada risks losing valuable funding opportunities without adequate support to effectively access Horizon Europe, the largest research fund in the world. We must act fast to build up capacity before the current program ends in 2027.

Horizon Europe offers significant opportunities to advance Canadian research. But it also comes with a steep learning curve for researchers due to complex legal and administrative requirements.

With few federal staff dedicated to Horizon Europe, support for researchers in Canada remains limited compared to other countries.



The Government of New Zealand has a similar number of Horizon Europe staff as Canada does, who can dedicate their support to far fewer universities.

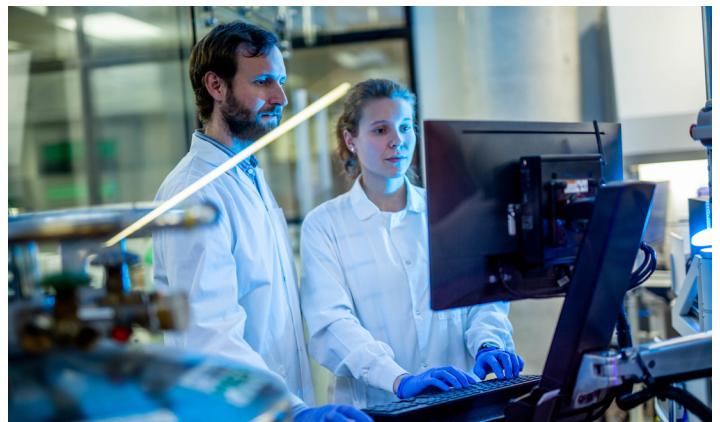
WE RECOMMEND:

Create a dedicated Horizon Europe secretariat to maximize Canadian researchers' participation in Horizon Europe and facilitate direct engagement with EU program development.

3 Invest in AI infrastructure

The Digital Research Alliance of Canada's mandate is due for renewal. Further investments are needed to expand Canada's digital research infrastructure to support artificial intelligence (AI) investments made in Budget 2024. There is currently a major deficit in data storage centers and related infrastructure in Canada needed to support increased AI computing power.

Building robust digital infrastructure and providing a centralized platform for data management and storage, software and AI facilities will enhance capacity for universities and SMEs, promote collaboration and AI sovereignty and protect Canadian research data.



WE RECOMMEND:

Renew the mandate for the Digital Research Alliance of Canada and invest in expanding digital research infrastructure, including exascale computing, data management, software platforms and data storage solutions.