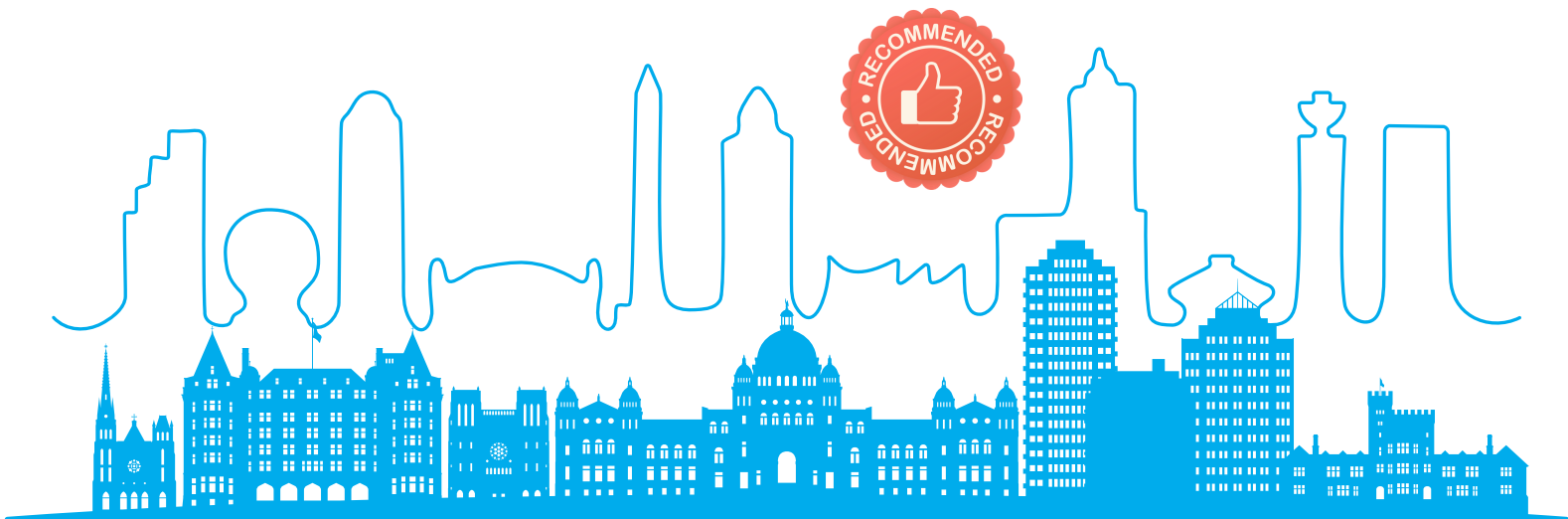




2023

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# RECOMMENDATIONS FOR BC'S POST-SECONDARY FUNDING MODEL



## FUNDING FOR SUCCESS POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION IN BC

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Brief 6 of 6 in a series by the  
Confederation of University Faculty  
Associations of British Columbia (CUFA BC)

# Recommendations for BC's Post-Secondary Funding Model

## Part of the "Funding for Success: Post-Secondary Education in BC" Series 2023

### Acknowledgements

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# Funding for Success

## RECOMMENDATIONS FOR BC'S FUNDING MODEL

### CONCLUSION

BC's research universities embody the public interest. They are successful in achieving—even exceeding—their public missions. These institutions operate in relatively free markets for faculty and students, and compete fairly for research grants in competitive processes. They are created and partially funded by the province, which makes the province partially responsible and accountable for their performance. But they are also autonomous institutions that function at arm's length from government through a bicameral system of governance (or unicameral system as is the case for Royal Roads University).

Government, boards of governors, and university senates together have responsibility for ensuring institutional success.

#### **Boards and senates are accountable for fulfilling the public mandate, mission, and vision of institutions.**

They should be publicly accountable for reporting on how they are achieving those public purposes. They also need to ensure long term stability in teaching and research activities to achieve these purposes.

#### **Governments are accountable for providing stable and sufficient funding for institutions to achieve their public purposes,** and should reasonably avoid creating situations of structural financial shortfalls.

The funding system in BC's post-secondary sector is fractured, and unable to keep pace with the current demands on research universities today. The funding model needs to be flexible enough to respond to emerging priorities at both the individual institution level and across the sector, while maintaining supports for research and core academic programming.

Research universities play a crucial role in the social, intellectual, and economic innovation of British Columbians. The BC Labour Market Outlook Report predicts more than one million job openings in BC within the next ten years. Eighty percent of these will require post-secondary education, relying heavily on the high quality, comprehensive, accredited programs at BC's research universities.

#### **Faculty and staff are stewards of the knowledge economy. The backbone of the academic mission.**

Without the incredible work of faculty and staff to date, that prediction of one million job openings in ten years would be a lot higher, and many would go unfulfilled for lack of an educated workforce. Worse, though, would be the irreparable loss to our collective social, intellectual, and economic well-being.

Supporting the human infrastructure on campuses, especially in areas of teaching and research, will be critical to the future success of a strong post-secondary system in this province. This success hinges on the support from government and institutions.

Together, these pillars—people, government, and institutions—can meet the talent and skills needs of British Columbians. BC's research universities will play a significant role in this future.

**CUFA BC recommends funding BC's post-secondary system for success. We base these recommendations on five core principles identified earlier in this series: keep public education public, ensure equity of access, maintain a commitment to knowledge, create financial stability (reciprocal accountability), and protect institutional autonomy.**

*“Faculty and staff at BC's research universities are the backbone of the academic mission, serving as stewards of the knowledge economy. Supporting the human infrastructure, especially in areas of teaching and research, will be critical to the future success of a strong post-secondary system in BC.”*

# Funding for Success

## RECOMMENDATIONS FOR BC'S FUNDING MODEL

### GOVERNMENT

- Implement a funding model that **stabilizes and sufficiently funds** BC's research universities;
- Adopt a **funding model that respects the uniqueness** of each institution, while recognizing what they have in common, and that is input-based to minimize inter-institutional competition;
- **Advocate to the federal government for fair PSE funding** at BC's research universities;
- Continue to have a role in **establishing enrolment targets**, provided those targets are fully funded. FTE enrolment targets should be based on actual FTE capacity and student demand. *Capacity* is defined as the maximum number of all students (Canadian and international) that can be registered, as constrained by physical space, number of instructors, student support, and administrative capacity;
- Continue **data collection initiatives and accountability measures** for efficiency and effectiveness, with limited expansion to include annual data reporting as follows;
  - the **total number** of all individuals (with and without medical schools) who are **employed on term-limited teaching contacts** and a **distribution of the duration** of those contracts by Faculty at each institution;
  - a distribution of the **total number of classes taught** by individuals on term-limited teaching contracts, and the total number of classes offered by Faculty at each institution;
  - the **total number of senior administrators** (from assistant deans up to president), and their **total compensation** by Faculty at each institution; and
  - **separate the reporting** for the total number of FTE faculty and their total compensation from the total number and total compensation of senior academic administrators;
- Continue to **oversee BC's research universities** through mechanisms established through the Ministry of Post-Secondary Education and Future Skills, but defer to institutional autonomy over financial decision-making beyond capital / operating grant funding and tuition regulation;
- **Exclude BC's research universities from the Government Reporting Entity** accounting model now that a minority share of institutional revenue comes from government funding;
- **Correct the structural disadvantage at Royal Roads University** by
  - revoking the *Royal Roads University Act*;
  - placing it under the *University Act* as a single-source legislation, which then provides proper collegial academic governance; and
  - providing RRU with a funding model comparable to other research and doctoral institutions;
- **Support free and fair collective bargaining** by limiting the role of the Public Sector Employers' Council Secretariat in post-secondary bargaining. Public sector bargaining mandates are problematic because they
  - **encroach** on the legislative autonomy of BC's research universities;
  - **fail to support** the pressing needs of institutions to address equity, diversity, and inclusion practices in hiring, tenure, and promotion;
  - **limit the flexibility** of institutions to respond to emergencies (like providing necessary and timely financial supports to offset pandemic disruptions; supporting green transformation on campuses);
  - **limit the ability** of institutions and labour groups to respond to strategic opportunities specific to the local institutional context; and
  - **interfere** in free and fair collective bargaining between an employer and the faculty union as protected by the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms.



**RECOMMENDED**

# Funding for Success

## RECOMMENDATIONS FOR BC'S FUNDING MODEL

### RESEARCH

- **Transform the BC Knowledge Development Fund** into a broad-based, inclusive provincial grant competition open to both STEM and non-STEM disciplines;
- Allocate funding support for institutions to **account for the effects of inflation and fluctuating exchange rates** on essential US-dollar priced resources and supplies, including online textbooks, journals, and other licenses, as well as lab supplies and reagents for research and teaching needs;
- **Recognize graduate students and research** as part of the infrastructure needed to support undergraduate education, including the innovation and economic development benefits from the research function; and
- **Support graduate student research** as one solution to the talent and skills gaps identified in the British Columbia Labour Market Outlook 2021.

### TEACHING AND LEARNING

- **Fully fund costs for program change and expansion**, including wage and benefit costs; ensure these changes are evaluated on an institution-by-institution basis within collegial processes involving faculty and senates;
- **Fund fair faculty complement and research supports**, including the regularization of faculty to better support teaching and research outcomes, research ventures, and broad partnership collaborations in the public interest;
- **Commit to consistent and reliable supports** for student access, retention, and success; and
- **Fairly distribute supports** at both the graduate and undergraduate levels.

### DIVERSITY OF DISCIPLINES

- **Commit to advancing diversity of all disciplines** with funding for STEM and non-STEM disciplines, with commensurate funding of scholarships;
- **Encourage strategic positioning** among universities to avoid inter-institutional competition, which erodes the democratization of knowledge as a public good; and
- Support institutions to **establish a rational distribution of programs** among them to better facilitate co-operation and market responsiveness.

### CAPITAL PROJECTS

- **Fund capital projects at actual cost.** Capital construction cost increases are pinching since capital approvals make no allowance for cost increases and are often set well in advance of construction; and
- **Fund capital projects, including extraordinary maintenance needs.** The unwritten requirement to bring private funding to support new capital projects that are within facilities standards set by government effectively claws-back private donations and creates inequities. Furthermore, it opens the door to privatization of the institution, and brings in money that is not subject to the oversight by government or internal mechanisms like faculty collegial governance.

# Funding for Success

## RECOMMENDATIONS FOR BC'S FUNDING MODEL

### INSTITUTIONAL AUTONOMY & ACCOUNTABILITY

- Defer to the **institutional autonomy over financial decisions and academic programming** of post-secondary institutions to achieve their public mandate, mission, and vision. Under the *University Act* and *Royal Roads University Act*, internal structures already exist that govern financial and academic decision-making through boards of governors and academic senates;
- Affirm the existing **legislative right of senate** to establish a standing committee that meets with the president and assists the president in preparing the university budget;
- Fully realize **institutional autonomy over decisions of financial spending**, including surplus spending as well as labour and employment decisions;
- Return to **excluding BC's research universities from the Government Reporting Entity** accounting model since its controversial adoption in 2003. When the Province adopted this accounting model, they recognized it was a complex undertaking and that the Public Sector Accounting Board (PSAB) control indicators made a strong case for excluding universities.\* The Province then committed to monitoring this issue within BC, and within a national context for post-secondary institutions. Universities are legally autonomous over financial decision-making. Today, less than half of university operating funds come from the provincial government;
- Respect **institutional autonomy in diversifying and tailoring academic programming** decisions in all disciplines (including fine arts, humanities, social sciences, and STEM), and avoid using broad performance targets that are not contextually sensitive; and
- **Support free and fair collective bargaining** at BC's research universities as granted by the *University Act* and *Labour Relations Code*. Free and fair collective bargaining is a core principle of Canadian democratic society, institutional management, and accountability, and must be protected through the existing autonomy rights of post-secondary institutions and within the institutional funding model.

### CHANGE MANAGEMENT & TRANSITION

- Consider **incremental changes informed by strong public policy objectives** to avoid unnecessary disruptions to the core academic mission of the university;
- **Commit to transitional resources** to offset institutional disruptions should significant adjustments to the funding model be necessary; and
- Adopt a funding model that has **clearly identified principles** to ensure funding is policy-driven, transparent, predictable, and supports institutional planning.

ACCOUNTABILITY



# About CUFA BC



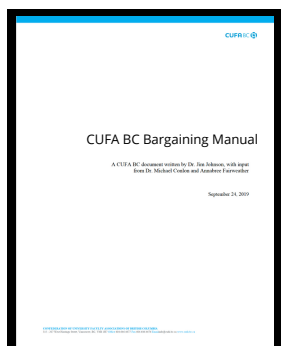
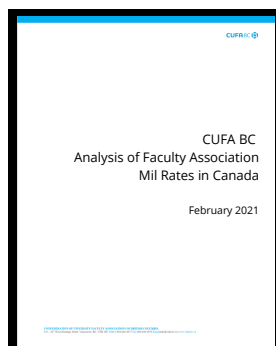
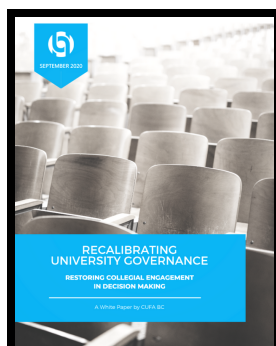
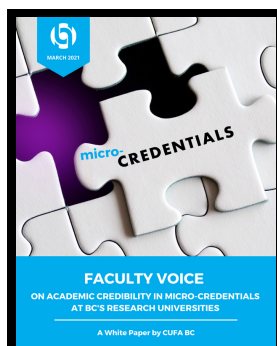
The Confederation of University Faculty Associations of British Columbia (CUFA BC) represents more than 5,500 faculty members (professors, lecturers, instructors, and academic librarians) through their unionized faculty associations at five research-intensive and doctoral universities in British Columbia: University of British Columbia, University of Northern British Columbia, University of Victoria, Royal Roads University, and Simon Fraser University.

For over fifty years, CUFA BC has promoted the value of post-secondary education and research in British Columbia. We advocate for the interests of members on a variety of issues affecting post-secondary education, including academic freedom, collegial governance, labour rights, and funding.

## In this series:

<p><b>1</b> INTRODUCTION TO THE SERIES</p> <p>FUNDING FOR SUCCESS POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION IN BC</p> <p>Brief 1 of 6 in a series by the Confederation of University Faculty Associations of British Columbia (CUFA BC)</p>	<p><b>2</b> MEET BRITISH COLUMBIA'S RESEARCH UNIVERSITIES</p> <p>FUNDING FOR SUCCESS POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION IN BC</p> <p>Brief 2 of 6 in a series by the Confederation of University Faculty Associations of British Columbia (CUFA BC)</p>	<p><b>3</b> AN OVERVIEW OF BRITISH COLUMBIA'S POST-SECONDARY FUNDING</p> <p>FUNDING FOR SUCCESS POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION IN BC</p> <p>Brief 3 of 6 in a series by the Confederation of University Faculty Associations of British Columbia (CUFA BC)</p>	<p><b>4</b> ON REVENUE &amp; EXPENDITURES AT BC'S RESEARCH UNIVERSITIES</p> <p>FUNDING FOR SUCCESS POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION IN BC</p> <p>Brief 4 of 6 in a series by the Confederation of University Faculty Associations of British Columbia (CUFA BC)</p>	<p><b>5</b> ON PERFORMANCE INDICATORS IN POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION</p> <p>FUNDING FOR SUCCESS POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION IN BC</p> <p>Brief 5 of 6 in a series by the Confederation of University Faculty Associations of British Columbia (CUFA BC)</p>	<p><b>6</b> RECOMMENDATIONS FOR BC'S POST-SECONDARY FUNDING MODEL</p> <p>FUNDING FOR SUCCESS POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION IN BC</p> <p>Brief 6 of 6 in a series by the Confederation of University Faculty Associations of British Columbia (CUFA BC)</p>

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# RECOMMENDATIONS FOR BC'S POST-SECONDARY FUNDING MODEL

## FUNDING FOR SUCCESS POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION IN BC



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Confederation of University Faculty Associations of BC

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