Budget 2022
The Next Step Forward
Submission to the Department of Finance Canada

February 2022
Budget 2022 – The Next Step Forward

Pre-budget consultation recommendations from Colleges and Institutes Canada (CICan):

Driving Towards Net Zero Emissions

Recommendation 1: Drive Canadian leadership on net zero and the global energy transition by creating a new Green Postsecondary Infrastructure Fund, with a minimum of $400 million a year over five years being dedicated to helping colleges reduce greenhouse gas emissions and lead to net zero emission campuses.

Recommendation 2: Increase Canada’s commitment to international development to support skills training and applied research for the transition to a net zero world.

Improving Canadian competitiveness and commercialization

Recommendation 3: Prioritize a new annual funding commitment to establish a fund to help colleges and universities commercialize leading research, including a college-specific stream designed to strengthen SMEs commercialization and the application of intellectual property developed through R&D projects with the support of college applied research offices and centres.

Addressing Labour Shortages

Recommendation 4: Boost Canada’s talent pool through the development and implementation of permanent residency streams for international students graduating from publicly-funded post secondary institutions and equip institutions to improve labour market outcomes of international students by providing additional support throughout their transition to Canada.

Recommendation 5: Fund a $16 million a year national program, modelled on Ontario’s Occupation Specific Language Training (OSLT), over three years to scale up support through colleges for newcomers to acquire the job specific language training they need, with connections to work-integration learning opportunities that support their integration into the Canadian workforce and are aligned with employers needs.

Supporting Youth

Recommendation 6: Create a new fund for student well-being to improve wait times and increase access to mental health care at colleges and universities. This fund should provide institutions the opportunity to hire mental healthcare counsellors and provide additional wrap-around supports for students that are tailored to their need.
1. Introduction

Colleges and Institutes Canada (CICan) is the national and international voice of Canada’s 140 publicly supported colleges and institutes. Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, Canada’s colleges, cégeps, institutes, and polytechnics\(^1\) have been at the forefront of building resilience and powering an inclusive recovery in communities across the country. They do this by equipping students with the future-proof skills that allow learners to thrive in a rapidly changing economy, providing practical solutions for business challenges through applied research and collaboration, and by being immersed in the communities they serve with a college campus no more than 50 km away from 95% of Canadians and 86% of Indigenous peoples. College graduates make up the largest group of workers in Canada at over 34% of the workforce and some 6.5 million workers being college graduates. The fastest growing labour market needs are for our graduates. Taken together this explains why a Nanos opinion poll from February 2022 showed that 72% of Canadians trust the post-secondary education system to help build a better Canada, the most of any sector surveyed.

As we look to Budget 2022, Canada must take another step in its efforts to build a clean, competitive economy that ensures all reach their potential. A strong publicly supported college sector and our graduates will be important as we emerge from this unprecedented health crisis and continue to feel its social and economic impacts, while also tackling the pressing challenges of climate change, a strained labour market, and a rapidly changing economy.

CICan welcomes the opportunity to provide this updated set of recommendations building on our brief to the House of Commons Standing Committee on Finance in advance of Budget 2022.

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\(^1\) References to “colleges” refer collectively to publicly-supported colleges, institutes, polytechnics, cégeps.
2. Driving Towards Net Zero Emissions

**Recommendation 1:** Drive Canadian leadership on net zero and the global energy transition by creating a new Green Postsecondary Infrastructure Fund, with a minimum of $400 million a year over five years being dedicated to helping colleges reduce greenhouse gas emissions and lead to net zero emission campuses.

With over 680 campuses across Canada and a recent system-wide, public commitment to achieving net-zero emissions on campuses, Canada’s public colleges and institutes have an unparalleled footprint across the country and are ideally positioned to be leaders in their communities as the country transitions to a net-zero economy.

Investments in college infrastructure have not kept pace with the needs. A recent survey of infrastructure needs revealed that CICan members have over 300 shovel-ready projects, the majority (62%) of which are for renovations, repairs and retrofits to improve energy efficiency and reduce campus GHG emissions. Investments in green infrastructure will also support job creation and the national commitment to transition to net zero.

We recommend a dedicated Green Postsecondary Infrastructure Stream through the Investing in Canada Plan. A similar program has been highly effective in Ontario, putting colleges on a clear path towards net-zero emissions. To receive funding through this new program, colleges would be required to prepare a roadmap to net-zero emissions by 2050 and report annually on carbon reductions.

This new fund to support green infrastructure also aligns closely with the mandate for the Minister of Infrastructure and Communities, Intergovernmental Affairs to make meaningful investments in infrastructure across the country, with a focus on growth-generating investments in green infrastructure. These investments would work towards a shared priority in reducing emissions, supporting climate resilience and creating good middle-class jobs with infrastructure that improves Canadians’ quality of life.

**Recommendation 2:** Increase Canada’s commitment to international development to support skills training and applied research for the transition to a net zero world.

To accelerate towards a net zero world, increased international development assistance should be directed to support skills training that equips people in developing countries to work in a green economy and tackle climate change, including through partnerships with Canadian colleges. For example, CICan’s Skills to Access the Green Economy Program is helping six Caribbean countries become more resilient through demand-driven skills training in economic sectors most affected by climate change. This will also facilitate the growth of curriculum development and innovation capacity in developing countries by supporting research partnerships between educational institutions with local business and community organizations. This is in alignment with the mandate letter commitments of the Minister of Foreign Affairs and the Minister of International Development to continue Canadian leadership on international efforts to combat climate change and support developing country adaptation, mitigation and resilience.
3. Improving Canadian competitiveness and commercialization

**Recommendation 3:** Prioritize a new annual funding commitment to establish a fund to help colleges and universities commercialize leading research, including a college-specific stream designed to strengthen SMEs commercialization and the application of intellectual property developed through R&D projects with the support of college applied research offices and centres.

As trusted industry and community partners, colleges serve as local gateways to the innovation ecosystem, specializing in research that solves technology, business, health and social innovation challenges. Partnered applied research drives innovation at the “speed of business”. In 2019-2020 applied research offices reported:

- Over 8,000 research partnerships, mainly with small and medium enterprises (SMEs), who often lack the resources, specialized technology and networks to solve innovation challenges on their own;
- A total of 42,000 students participating in applied research activities, gaining valuable work-integrated learning experience; and
- Over 5,500 new processes, products, prototypes and services, 85% of which were completed in under one year.

By mobilizing students, technology, and faculty to work collaboratively with partners, colleges serve as catalysts and connectors in the broader R&D ecosystem. With colleges’ extensive partnerships with SMEs, strengthening colleges’ outreach capacity through applied research will enable them to draw new actors into the innovation ecosystem. Colleges are strongly committed to helping Canada build a world-class R&D ecosystem by incorporating strong research data management systems, equity, diversity and inclusion principles, ensuring research integrity and security, and meeting regulatory and ethical standards. In 2020, a coalition of college-sector stakeholders put forward a plan for a targeted investment of $40 million a year that would allow the sector to expand their support to business partners. Current trends indicate that government direction towards commercialization of research and the real value proposition college-based applied research brings to businesses and other innovation partners will only accelerate the growth of this portfolio.

The Minister of Innovation, Science and Industry’s mandate letter includes a commitment to establish a new fund to help colleges and universities commercialize leading research, including identifying and securing patent rights for research done within their institutions and connecting researchers with people and businesses to help put these innovations into action and grow our economy. CICan believes that this important promise should be prioritized for Budget 2022 with a particular focus on helping SMEs innovate and thrive in these turbulent times – with college applied research offices already playing a crucial role in this space.

College’s unique approach to intellectual property (IP) make them ideal partners for business in commercialization. Colleges and their applied research offices, unlike other post-secondary institutions, do not retain ownership over the intellectual property developed through applied research projects. Instead, the partner – be it business or not-for-profit – is supported to develop and retain the IP developed during the project. This means that the IP is grounded in a business or use case. This approach has been validated by business partners time and time again, as is shown by private sector contributions increasing by 42% between 2017-2018 and 2019-2020.

The proposed commercialization program should expand colleges’ ability to further support both the development and application of IP at Canadian SMEs. This would include: expanding colleges’ onsite IP expertise with a focus on supporting the domestic use and application of IP developed in conjunction with the college; providing legacy support following the completion of a research project to assist partners in capitalizing on alternative uses or markets for innovations; and supporting SMEs with the process of manufacturability and scaling of productions or services.
4. Addressing Labour Shortages

**Recommendation 4:** Boost Canada’s talent pool through the development and implementation of permanent residency streams for international students graduating from publicly-funded post secondary institutions and equip institutions to improve labour market outcomes of international students by providing additional support throughout their transition to Canada.

The international competition for talent has accelerated due to the pandemic as countries look to economic recovery. Competitor markets have moved quickly to modify their immigration policies and modernize their immigration processes. The UK has introduced a new points system with a pathway to permanent residency, and Australia has also shown incremental movement towards the re-instatement of pathways to migration over time. The demand for the temporary pathway to permanent residency for 40,000 recent graduates announced in early 2021 demonstrates the interest that these graduates have in remaining in Canada. This is an opportunity to retain those who have gained Canadian education and experience. There is a need for this stream to be permanent, with refinements to best meet the needs of the Canadian Labour Market.

Achieving Canada’s 2021 Immigration targets will require new innovative and streamlined pathways to permanent residency for international students’ post-graduation by implementing retention driven programs like the Rural and Northern Immigration Pilot, Mobilité Francophone, and the Atlantic Immigration Pilot, which has now become a program due to its success. Colleges and institutes play a key role in ensuring that graduates have the right mix of skills that will allow them to integrate into the labour market and benefit from these programs. Models based on these pilots could be expanded across the country mapping not only to specific regions, but also industry. Eligibility for these programs should be directly mapped to the value of skills and labour market needs over duration or level of study.

**Recommendation 5:** Fund a $16 million a year national program, modelled on Ontario’s Occupation Specific Language Training (OSLT), over three years to scale up support through colleges for newcomers to acquire the job specific language training they need, with connections to work-integration learning opportunities that support their integration into the Canadian workforce and are aligned with employers needs.

A strong pipeline of global talent will be required in the years to come to respond to labour market shortages, across all skills levels and areas of our economy as Canadians age and birthrates stall. It is essential then that Canada does not waste the abilities of those who arrive.

As reviewed in a CICan report last Fall, employers continue to have difficulty evaluating foreign credentials and foreign work experience. Moreover, familiarity with workplace language and culture continue to be barriers that prevent many skilled newcomers from accessing the roles for which they have trained. Currently Canada offers language training for the workplace under programs such as Enhanced Language Training (ELT) and Occupation Specific Language Training (OSLT) in Ontario to give newcomers the opportunity to learn English or French specific to their careers. Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada’s evaluation of its language programs found existing ELT programs need to improve. Canada’s publicly supported colleges and institutes already have a strong track record supporting newcomer integration and, with federal support, can expand their offering to address these crucial challenges.

To ensure immigrants are supported in overcoming barriers to employment, Canada should build on the expertise of colleges in language training, work-integrated learning, and responding to local labour market needs with a pilot project to support newcomers with language training and pathways into the labour market. As experts in content development and a well-established method of developing programs to meet the needs of employers, colleges are well-positioned to be key partners in ELT training. By working with members across Canada, a national approach to ELT can be developed with manuals and policy guidance for support services and the integration of work-integrated learning opportunities, along with the necessary infrastructure to deliver the programming. The program could be modelled on Colleges Ontario’s highly successful OSLT, which offers newcomers language training geared towards a specific occupation or sector.
5. Supporting Youth

**Recommendation 6:** Create a new fund for student well-being to improve wait times and increase access to mental health care at colleges and universities. This fund should provide institutions the opportunity to hire mental healthcare counsellors and provide additional wrap-around supports for students that are tailored to their need.

The health and wellbeing of students, and especially our most vulnerable students, is a paramount concern for Canada’s colleges and institutes. This has been an ongoing priority for CICan and our members, one that saw us most recently work with the Mental Health Commission of Canada (MHCC) to develop a voluntary National Standard for Mental Health and Well-Being for Post-Secondary Students, which was released in 2020. However, more still needs to be done and COVID-19 has placed new and increased pressures on students and the services which support them, with a recent poll conducted by Abacus Data and the Canadian Alliance of Student Associations indicating that 64% of students reported that the pandemic has created entirely new mental health struggles for them. As was recognized in the mandate letter for the Minister of Mental Health and Addictions and Associate Minister of Health additional funding to support the hiring of additional mental healthcare counsellors is sorely needed, including those to support the needs of Indigenous, Black and racialized students. In particular, the expansion of mental health services at rural and remote colleges will mean that many students will be able to access mental health supports for the first time - and will be able to do so in a familiar environment.
CICan Member Colleges and Institutes in Canada

Over 95% of Canadians live within 50 km of a college or institute.

This extensive network of post-secondary institutions serves students from all over the country where they live, whether it’s in urban, rural, northern or remote communities, thanks to more than 680 campuses or facilities across Canada.
CICan Member Colleges and Institutes in Canada

Yukon

- Yukon University

Northwest Territories

- Aurora College
- Collège Nordique Francophone

Nunavut

- Nunavut Arctic College

British Columbia

- British Columbia Institute of Technology (BCIT)
- Capilano University
- College Educación Centre*
- College of New Caledonia
- College of the Rockies
- Columbia College
- Douglas College
- Justice Institute of British Columbia
- Kwantlen Polytechnic University
- Langara College
- Nicola Valley Institute of Technology(NVIT)**
- North Island College
- Nicola Valley Institute of Technology(NVIT)**
- Native Education College**
- Okanagan College

Alberta

- Bow Valley College
- Centre collégial de l’Alberta*
- Grande Prairie Regional College (GPRC)
- Keyano College
- Lakeland College
- Lethbridge College
- Medicine Hat College
- NorQuest College
- North Island College
- Olds College
- Portage College
- Red Deer College
- SAIT

Saskatchewan

- Carlton Trail College
- Collège Mathieu*
- Cumberland College
- dumont Technical Institute**
- Great Plains College
- North West College
- Northlands College
- Parkland College
- Saskatchewan Indian Institute of Technologies**
- Saskatchewan Polytechnic
- Southeast College

Manitoba

- Assiniboine Community College
- École technique et professionnelle, Université de Saint-Boniface*
- Red River College
- University College of the North
- Manitoba Institute of Trades and Technology

Ontario

- Algonguin College
- Cambrian College
- Canadore College
- Centennial College
- Collège Boréal*
- Conestoga College Institute of Technology and Advanced Learning
- Confederation College
- Durham College
- Fanshawe College
- First Nations Technical Institute**
- Fleming College
- George Brown College
- Georgian College
- Humber College Institute of Technology & Advanced Learning
- Kenjgewin Teg Educational Institute (or KTEI)**
- La Cité*
- Lambton College
- Loyalist College
- The Michener Institute of Education at UHN
- Mohawk College
- Niagara College
- Northern College
- Sault College
- Seneca College
- Sheridan College
- Six Nations Polytechnic**
- St. Clair College
- St. Lawrence College

Quebec

- Cégep André-Laurendeau*
- Cégep de Chicoutimi*
- Le cégep de Granby*
- Cégep de Jonquière*
- Cégep de l'Abitibi-Témiscamingue*
- Cégep de la Gaspésie et des Îles*
- Cégep de La Pocatière*
- Cégep de Lévis*
- Cégep de Matane*
- Cégep de Rimouski*
- Cégep de Saint-Félicien*
- Cégep de Sainte-Foy*
- Cégep de Saint-Hyacinthe*
- Cégep de Saint-Jérôme*
- Cégep de Saint-Laurent*
- Cégep de Sept-îles*
- Cégep de Sherbrooke*
- Cégep de Trois-Rivières*
- Cégep de Victoriaville*
- Cégep du Vieux Montréal*
- Cégep Édouard-Montpetit*
- Cégep Garneau*
- Cégep Limoiou*
- Cégep Marie-Victorin*
- Cégep régional de Lanaudière*
- Cégep Rivièr du Loup*
- Cégep Saint-Jean-sur-Richelieu*
- Champlain Regional College
- Collège Ahuntsic*
- Collège André Grasset*
- Collège d’Alma*
- Collège de Bois-de-Boulogne*
- Collège de Maisonneuve*
- Collège de Rosemont*
- Collège LaSalle*
- Collège Mérici*
- Collège Montmorency*
- Collège Shawinigan*
- Cégep Heritage College
- Dawson College
- John Abbott College
- Vanier College

Newfoundland and Labrador

- Centre for Nursing Studies
- College of the North Atlantic
- Fisheries and Marine Institute Memorial University of Newfoundland

New Brunswick

- Collège communautaire du Nouveau-Brunswick (CCNB)*
- Maritime College Forest Technology
- New Brunswick College of Craft and Design
- New Brunswick Community College (NBCC)

Prince Edward Island

- Collège de l’Île*
- Holland College

Nova Scotia

- Cape Breton University
- Dalhousie Agricultural Campus, Dalhousie University
- Nova Scotia Community College
- Université Sainte-Anne*

Newfoundland

- Fisheries and Marine Institute
- College of the North Atlantic
- Centre for Nursing Studies
- College of the North Atlantic
- New Brunswick College of Craft and Design
- New Brunswick Community College (NBCC)

Associates

- Association des collèges privés du Québec*
- Association québécoise de pédagogie collégiale*
- Atlantic Provinces Community College Consortium (APCCC)
- BC Colleges (BCC)
- Canadian Association of Diploma in Agriculture Programs (CADAP)
- Colleges Ontario
- Council of Postsecondary Presidents of Alberta (COPPOA)
- Fédération des cégeps*
- Forum for International Trade Training (FIT)
- Horatio Alger Association of Canada
- Inter-American Organization for Higher Education (IOHE)
- Regroupement des collèges du Montréal métropolitain (RCMM)
- Synchronex*
- Tra Vinh University

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