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# PREPARING THE NEXT GENERATION

ALBERTA POST-SECONDARY NETWORK 2023 ELECTION PRIORITIES

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# LETTER FROM APSN CHAIR DR. ANNETTE TRIMBEE



Alberta Post-Secondary Network (APSN) represents Alberta's 26 publicly funded post-secondary institutions. These institutions play a central role in the socio-economic and cultural growth of our province. Alberta's universities, polytechnics and colleges equip individuals with skills to become innovators and leaders with the knowledge required to ensure continued success of Alberta's economy. We prepare the next generation of employees and entrepreneurs to fuel the industries of the future.

APSN's vision is for Alberta to strengthen its world class post-secondary system and student experience in order to drive discovery, creativity and innovation. As the next election approaches, this document reflects our desire for all parties to join us in this vision. Preparing the Next Generation highlights our objectives, vision and priorities for the next four years.

There are challenges, yes, but also opportunities. We can set up the system for long-term sustainability; we can seize on innovation and research to shape the future and we can continue to contribute to growth in Alberta's already vibrant economy.

We also recognize that we can't do this alone. We are proud of the strong relationships we have forged with student groups, faculty, licensing bodies and businesses. We are working closely with the Alberta Chambers of Commerce to identify emerging trends and shifts in Alberta's labour market, and how post-secondary institutions can position themselves to meet those evolving needs. We also recognize our students are disruptors, innovators and entrepreneurs who will lead that change.

As leaders in education we know that now, more than ever, there is a need for a skilled and knowledge-based workforce across Alberta. With support from the government and the public we can meet that need.

We hope these priorities will provide insight to all parties on how they can partner with post-secondaries to deliver on Alberta's full potential. Our members will have individual priorities but this document represents our shared mandate as a system. We look forward to speaking with candidates from all parties on these ideas.

Dr. Annette Trimbee  
Chair, Alberta Post-Secondary Network  
President and Vice Chancellor, MacEwan University

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## APSN's RECOMMENDATIONS:

### **Micro-credentials and Work-Integrated Learning**

- All parties commit to expanding pilot programs and investment in micro-credentials and work-integrated learning.

### **Planning Ahead**

- APSN supports the proposal from the Business Council of Alberta for the development and implementation of an Alberta Workforce Strategy.

### **International Students**

- Continue to invest in the Alberta Bureau of International Education (ABIE) and support other institutions seeking to enhance international recruitment.
- Work with the federal government to shorten wait-times for student visas.
- Create a pathway to citizenship.

### **Skilled Trades**

- Ensure capacity remains in alignment with market demand through sustainable investment in skilled trades and technology programming.
- Continue implementation of key elements of the *Skilled Trades and Apprenticeship Education Act*.
- Support stronger pathways into skilled trades and technology-based programs for underrepresented groups such as youth, women, Indigenous peoples, and new Canadians.
- Promote skilled trades and technology program exploration for junior high and high school students.

### **Knowledge-Based and Arts-Based Talent**

- Invest in knowledge-based education through the social sciences and the arts.

### **Affordability**

- Work with post-secondary institutions to develop an inflation-based tuition model.
- Expand needs-based grants for new students and those currently enrolled in existing programs.
- Match charitable giving that is targeted to increase affordability for our learners.

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



## **Mental Health**

- Increased funding to enable post-secondary institutions to support the mental health of students, staff and faculty.

## **Funding to meet demands**

- All parties commit to developing, in partnership with post-secondary, a stable, predictable post-secondary funding system.
- Government ensure future funding takes into account the true costs of delivering high-demand programs.

## **Sustainable Infrastructure**

- Make a strong investment in capital maintenance and renewal.
- Invest in IT infrastructure and a recognition of this infrastructure as a capital asset that requires maintenance and renewal.

## **Research and Innovation**

- Leverage federal grants to grow opportunities.
- Grow graduate student spaces and provide funding to attract leaders of tomorrow.
- Invest in research and innovation.

## **Support Institutional Autonomy and Competitiveness**

- Work with the post-secondary system to update regulations around the Reform of Agencies, Boards and Commissions Compensation Act (RABCCA).
- Allow post-secondary institutions to pursue financial deconsolidation or aspects of deconsolidation.

## **Data and Analysis**

- Advanced Education partner with APSN and its members to identify and develop additional data sets to better inform the post-secondary system.

Alberta is a place where the curious  
come to pursue their passion.

- Dr. Melanie Humphreys, The King's University

# DRIVING ECONOMIC GROWTH



The post-secondary system is plays an integral role in Alberta’s economy in multiple ways:

**The first is by developing talent.** The Alberta post-secondary system and the institutions across the province are training the best and brightest students in the world to achieve their chosen futures. Students can engage their curiosity and passion to pursue careers in the arts, sciences, skilled trades, business, as well as the knowledge economy. When students emerge from their time at post-secondary they are ready to engage in their careers and meet Alberta’s workforce demands.

**The second is through research and innovation.** Alberta’s post-secondary institutions are engaged in research across a wide spectrum of fields. The innovations happening here are driving new industries and transforming existing ones. The result over the last decade has been an influx of capital, as industry and business move to the province, creating new jobs and opportunities for Albertans.

**Finally, post-secondary graduates have higher employment and social outcomes.** The Organization of Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) has noted that people with higher levels of education are more likely to find employment, remain employed, learn new skills on the job, and earn more over their working life relative to those with lower levels of education. But it’s not just individuals that benefit. Investing in education gives governments positive public returns at every level of education. Educated citizens earn more, pay higher taxes over a lifetime, and cost less for their governments in terms of social entitlements.

**"People with higher levels of education are more likely to find employment, remain employed, learn new skills on the job, and earn more over their working life" [1]**

- Organization of Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD)

# THE POST-SECONDARY SYSTEM IS UNDER PRESSURE



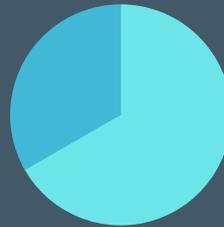
The Alberta post-secondary system is under pressure as the province's economy continues to grow and the demand for our students increases.

## Talent Demand is Growing

A massive skill shortage in Alberta has led to 100,000 job vacancies as of 2022[2]. It's only expected to get worse. Employers across the province are struggling to find the skilled professionals they need.

It has gotten so bad right across the country, that the Canadian Manufacturers and Exporters (CME) estimated **\$13 billion was lost across Canada last year in the manufacturing sector alone due to labour shortages.**[3] While the provincial and federal government work to attract more talent, it's clear there is a need for growth.

While there is a heavy focus on attracting talent from abroad, we need a strong investment in educating local talent here in Alberta. That requires investment in Alberta's post-secondary system.

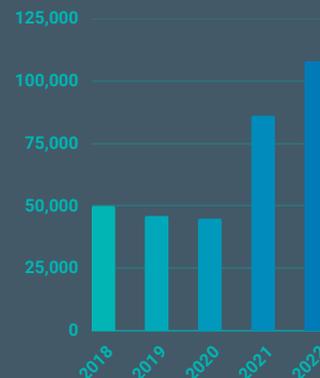


# 2/3

of Canadian jobs will require a post-secondary education by 2033



Projects indicate that by 2028, Alberta will see a labour shortage of between 1,700 and 3,750 university graduates every year.[2]



A massive skill shortage in Alberta has led to 100,000 job vacancies as of 2022[2]. It's only expected to get worse.

# THE POST-SECONDARY SYSTEM IS UNDER PRESSURE



## Program Space

Increased demand for talent and a growing population, have created a need for spaces in Alberta's post-secondary programs. These spaces cannot be created out of thin air. Many programs already have insufficient space to meet demand.

One of the challenges with past funding solutions has been their short term nature. When trying to grow spaces post-secondary institutions need to recruit faculty, and that cannot be done for 2 or 3 year windows. It requires a long-term commitment from institutions.

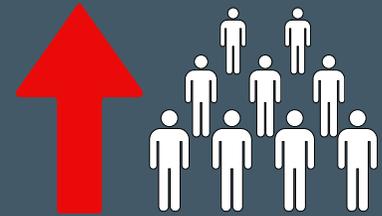
When programs face massive demand and have only limited space, their only option is to increase requirements to enter the program. This leads to situations where students with excellent grades are turned away.

When students can't get into their program, they looking outside the province. In 2021 alone, **11,000 students left Alberta** for other jurisdictions.[4] When these students leave, the risk of them not returning increases dramatically.

**We need Alberta students to have the option to study and build their futures close to home, whether it is in our cities or thriving rural communities.** This problem will only accelerate as more students enter the system and space becomes increasingly limited.

**35,000**

Additional Students



will be added to the post-secondary system by 2030[5]

**University of Calgary's current student population is**

**35,500 students**

# THE POST-SECONDARY SYSTEM IS UNDER PRESSURE

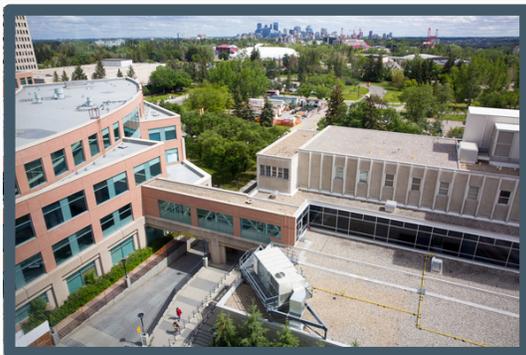


## Aging Infrastructure

In 2008, Statistics Canada found that the average age of educational infrastructure (elementary, secondary and post-secondary) was 20.1 years.[6] On average this infrastructure has a 40 year lifespan before major upgrades or repairs need to be done. That study was completed 15 years ago and much of that infrastructure has not been improved. Because of restricted investment and red tape, post-secondary institutions have had to defer investment in their aging infrastructure. While the province has provided funding through Capital Maintenance and Renewal (CMR) funding, it hasn't kept up with the demand.

As infrastructure ages, institutions take short term actions to extend the life of these facilities. Some institutions are now facing massive costs for infrastructure renewal. As a result, institutions are considering closing facilities, which only adds to the space crunch.

Aging infrastructure also impact the ability of institutions to attract top talent and perform cutting edge research. This negatively impact post-secondary institutions ability to compete both nationally and globally.



In 2008, Statistics Canada found the average age of educational infrastructure was 20.1 years.

# THE POST-SECONDARY SYSTEM IS UNDER PRESSURE

## National and Global Competition

Alberta's post-secondary institutions compete with other jurisdictions, both within Canada and around the world. They compete for talent, investment and research dollars.

Red tape and legislation hinders post-secondary institutions' ability to recruit top talent. Without changes to existing legislation, their ability to compete with other sectors and other jurisdictions continues to be a challenge.

Under financial consolidation legislation, institutions are forced to seek approval to sell/lease property, establish new entities and borrow. It impacts how institutions utilize donations the year after they are made, and forces institutions to incur additional costs for financial reporting and management. All of this comes with costs.

The post-secondary institutions are also in competition with other Canadian jurisdictions for federal research dollars.

For Federal grants there are often requirements for matching provincial money, and without a strong timely provincial investment, the chance to leverage federal investment can be lost. This impacts research competitiveness and hinders institution's ability to grow and attract talent.

Post-secondary institutions are competing nationally and globally on multiple fronts. They need every advantage.

# EDUCATING ALBERTA'S TALENT WORKFORCE



Alberta has a world-class post-secondary system and APSN's members are proud of the work they do with faculty and students to nurture talent, create opportunities, build partnerships, and ensure current and future generations have the skills and knowledge to succeed. Alberta's post-secondary institutions have recommendations on how to grow the talent workforce.

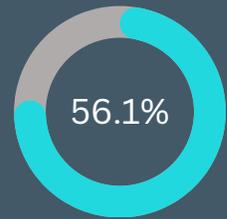
## Micro-Credentials and Work-Integrated Learning

Statistics Canada shows over half (56.1%) of Canadian businesses report their overall workforce was not fully proficient to perform their job at the required levels. More than 44.5% of businesses experienced difficulties finding candidates who possessed the skills needed to do their job at the required level.[7]

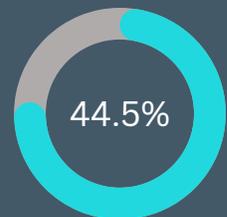
While these statistics are province wide, it's worth noting smaller and rural communities have an even more difficult time attracting and retaining talent. There is an urgent need to reskill and upskill existing workers in a timely and efficient way so they keep working.

### APSN RECOMMENDS:

- **That all parties commit to expanding pilot programs and investment in Micro-credentials and work-integrated learning.** These programs help existing workers develop the skills they need while continuing to work. Work-integrated learning will also provide students with hands-on experience to meet the changing demands of the economy.



of Canadian businesses in 2021 reported that their overall workforce was not fully proficient to perform their job at the required level.



of businesses experienced difficulties finding candidates who possessed the skills needed to do their job at the required level

# EDUCATING ALBERTA'S TALENT WORKFORCE



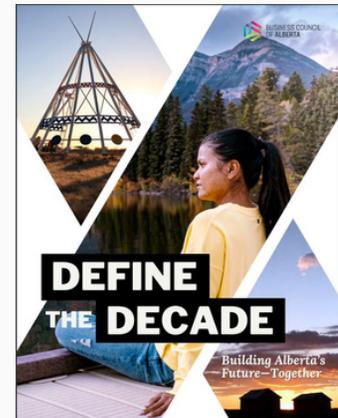
## Planning Ahead

APSN is proud to collaborate with stakeholders across the province and are pleased to see the comprehensive recommendations brought forward by the Business Council of Alberta in the Define the Decade report.

This report recognized that education is one of the pillars of Alberta's economic future. They also recognized it was critical there be greater collaboration and planning for the future.

### APSN SUPPORTS:

- **The proposal from the Business Council of Alberta for the development and implementation of an Alberta Workforce Strategy.** An Alberta Workforce Strategy would help ensure a coordinated delivery of education and skills training. The post-secondary system would like to partner in the development of this strategy which would look at the short and long-term trends in skill demands.



"Post-secondary educational institutions are key originators of future companies and economic and social value." [8]

- Define the Decade

# EDUCATING ALBERTA'S TALENT WORKFORCE



## International Student Recruitment

There is a perception international students displace domestic learners, but nothing could be further from the truth. International students play a significant role in the post-secondary system and economy. International students bring a unique perspective to the classroom, at a time when international competition is growing and the economy is globalized. It's crucial that students are exposed to a wide set of perspectives.

As we struggle to meet the growing demand for talent, attracting the best and brightest from around the world is important. Once international students attend post-secondary in Alberta they are more likely to remain and build their careers here. As Alberta business's seek to expand internationally, having students with international experience and knowledge will be invaluable. In so many ways international students are future Albertans.



In 2019/20 international students represented 11.5% of post-secondary recruitment in Alberta, compared to 17.1% nationally[5]



# EDUCATING ALBERTA'S TALENT WORKFORCE

## International Student Recruitment

**We need to strengthen the Alberta brand.** It's urgent that we sell Alberta as a destination for students abroad. International students look at a number of factors when choosing where they will study. This includes work prospects, pathways to immigration, housing affordability, salary potential and cost of living. Government must continue to work with the post-secondary system and business to highlight the benefits of pursuing a post-secondary education in Alberta.

### APSN RECOMMENDS:

- **Continue to invest in the Alberta Bureau of International Education (ABIE) and support other institutions seeking to enhance international recruitment.** ABIE offers a venue for collaboration between government, business and post-secondary institutions to discuss and coordinate efforts to attract international students to Alberta. ABIE works as a complement to the work being undertaken by many institutions to recruit students abroad. It is important that the government continue to support these efforts as a collective approach to strengthening Alberta's global brand.
- **Work with the federal government to shorten wait-times for student visas.** Delays in federal decision making have created barriers for many international students enrolling in Alberta. Delays in the approval of visas stops students from beginning their programs on time and creates costs for post-secondary institutions. APSN wants to work with the province to pressure the federal government into making changes to speed up the visa program for students wishing to study in Alberta.
- **Create a pathway to citizenship.** As institutions attract more students from around the world, there is strong recognition both from the institutions and business of the value of retaining these students here in Alberta. Currently, the federal government has the Atlantic Immigration Program, a pathway to permanent residence for skilled foreign workers and international graduates from a Canadian institution, to work and live in one of Canada's four Atlantic provinces. APSN wants to work with the province to create a similar program for Alberta as a means of attracting and retaining international students.



# EDUCATING ALBERTA'S TALENT WORKFORCE

## Skilled Trades and Technology Talent

Expansion and diversification of the Alberta economy relies upon our ability to secure a highly skilled workforce, trained here in Alberta, to meet industry's growing demand.

As that demand grows, Alberta will continue to experience an acute shortage of skilled trades and technology workers across all critical sectors – particularly in areas such as Construction, Health, Technology, Business, and Energy. As the province invests in new economies, such as hydrogen, these labour shortages will only be compounded as they will draw from the same limited talent pools.

This skilled talent shortage will be one of the largest barriers to economic growth that Alberta will face. To address this challenge, governments need to both incentivize new learners into these professions as well as create the necessary system capacities to develop the talent needed to drive the economy.

### APSN RECOMMENDS:

- **Ensure capacity remains aligned with market demand through sustainable investment in skilled trades and technology programming.**
- **Continue implementation of key elements of the *Skilled Trades and Apprenticeship Education Act*.** With the goal of positioning post-secondary institutions to be responsive and nimble to the current and future demands of industry.
- **Support stronger pathways into skilled trades and technology-based programs for underrepresented groups such as youth, women, Indigenous peoples, and new Canadians.**
- **Promote skilled trades and technology program exploration for junior high and high school students.**

“The Alberta labour outlook forecasts that from 2023 to 2030, the occupations that will experience the greatest labour shortages, in the skilled trades, will be construction trades helpers and labourers, home building and renovation managers, and petroleum engineers.

Trades, transport, and equipment operators is set to be the second most in-demand sector in the province.”  
[9]

# EDUCATING ALBERTA'S TALENT WORKFORCE



## Knowledge-Based and Arts-Based Talent

The province has remarkably talented people who wish to pursue their education in many skills whether it is the arts, social sciences, or the humanities.

Institutions are seeing an increased trend from businesses seeking out students from these fields for their out-of-the-box thinking or unique perspectives. There is strong recognition of the invaluable role of the arts in Alberta's economy. As an example successive governments have seen the value of Alberta's film industry, and expressed a desire to expand this further into the digital space.

To do this there will need to be continued investment in knowledge-based and arts-based education programs at institutions across Alberta.

### APSN RECOMMENDS:

- **Invest in knowledge-based education through the social sciences and the arts.** To grow the video game industry in Alberta, as an example, we need more graphic designers, artists, sound technicians, software programmers and website designers. There is a need to invest in training young entrepreneurs through business programs and meeting the increased demand from business for students with social science backgrounds. The knowledge economy is growing rapidly, and many businesses want employees with diverse skill sets.

Alberta's film industry drew in nearly \$1 billion in new investment and created 9,000 new jobs[10]



Image from the filming of HBO's *The Last of Us*

# SUPPORTING LEARNERS



Alberta lags behind the national average when it comes to post-secondary participation. The province must meet the growing demand for skilled and knowledge-based students. It is critical to improve opportunities for students to seek a post-secondary education whether it's at polytechnics, colleges or universities. Students play a key factor in shaping the future of Alberta's economy and they need to be educated and retained here.

## Affordability

The pandemic increased costs which shifted economic realities, increased debt, and many students were forced to defer their post-secondary education. Students face growing debt and have challenges meeting the cost of post-secondary, while institutions face ever increasing costs for the delivery and specialized equipment required by today's programs. Without government support, post-secondaries are increasingly reliant on tuition and fees to offset the costs.

### APSN RECOMMENDS:

- **Work with post-secondary institutions to develop an inflation-based tuition model.** The model sets tuition increases to the average inflation over a period of time. The current proposed model contains a flat cap of 2% and does not keep up with existing inflation, as a result this is a cut to existing funding. For this kind of cap to work without impacting program spaces, provincial funding is required as an offset.
- **Expand needs-based grants for new students and those currently enrolled in existing programs.** Current programs may need to be adapted and expanded to cope with the current economic challenges. Growing these programs will provide much needed relief and expand accessibility.
- **Match charitable-giving that is targeted to increase affordability for our learners.** The government recently announced it will match donations to Alberta's food banks to encourage more giving. A similar approach could be applied to the post-secondary system and would see the government matching charitable donations made to post-secondary institutions for bursaries and scholarships, making post-secondary more affordable for students struggling with costs.

Students are facing challenges in meeting the cost of post-secondary education

# SUPPORTING LEARNERS

## Mental Health

Mental health on campus has been an ongoing discussion for several years, new data has emerged since the pandemic that the situation has worsened.

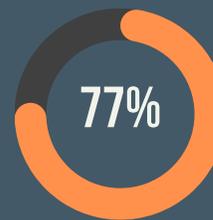
A report from the Canadian Alliance of Student Associations (CASA) with support from the Mental Health Commission of Canada (MHCC) highlights the extent of the challenge. The report found that a majority of students felt “their institution’s administration and staff actively supported student mental health and well-being, including policies in place supporting student mental health”[11] but students are still struggling.

Alberta's post-secondary institutions are determined to support students. The institutions have noted increased demand for mental health services on campus and are taking action.

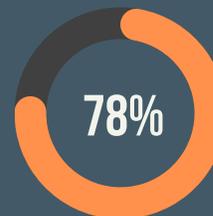
### APSN RECOMMENDS:

- **Increased funding to enable post-secondary institutions to support the mental health of students, staff and faculty.** In recent years funding has remained flat despite increased demand and enrollment growth pressures. Developing a robust response framework is important to meet shifting needs and protect the mental health of everyone on campus.

## Students are struggling with mental health



of students report feeling stressed due to the pandemic[11]



of students reported a significant increase in the worsening of pre-existence mental health challenges[11]

### Including:



FEELING DESPAIR



OVERWHELMED



SADNESS

# ENHANCING ALBERTA'S POST-SECONDARY IMPACT

## Funding to meet Demands

**Demand is increasing for post-secondary education.** The technology and skills needed by Alberta's growing economy requires more workers to have a post-secondary education.

This demand is not just coming from first time students. Many workers are returning to campus to reskill and upskill, to meet the shifting needs of the workplace.

Post-Secondary institutions require strong investment now, to ensure spaces are available for all these prospective students. Without investment, the requirements to enter these programs will increase, making it more difficult for students to enroll. If this happens there is a risk of students leaving Alberta.

35,000 new students are expected to enter the post-secondary system in the next 7 years[5]





# ENHANCING ALBERTA'S POST-SECONDARY IMPACT

## APSN RECOMMENDS:

- **All parties commit to development, in partnership with post-secondary, a stable, predictable post-secondary funding system. Critical factors the new system must consider:**
  - **Funding for new spaces must be rolled into base funding.** Institutions don't acquire space, equipment or hire faculty for 1-2 years. It's a long-term commitment. To create additional spaces for students requires new dollars to be rolled into base funding for the long-term.
  - **A general increase to base funding is needed to offset inflationary pressures and increasing costs.** Funding must recognize the protracted inflationary period the system has faced and expects to continue for the immediate future. Without offsetting funding, these pressures will limit post-secondary institutions' ability to grow and sustain programs. Inflationary pressures would need to be calculated on an ongoing basis and appropriate adjustments made to base funding.
  - The funding system must recognize shifting demographic trends, be responsive to the needs of the economy, address the skill requirements of employers, and preserve Alberta's role as an innovator.
- **Government ensure future funding takes into account the true costs of delivering high-demand programs.** Many skilled trades and professional skills programs require specialized space and equipment, much of which is constantly evolving. The current funding model often does not factor in these specialized needs, as a result institutions often can't grow programs as quickly as needed. An increase is required to base funding to meet these unique needs.

Alberta post-secondary can't hire faculty for just 1-2 years. It requires a longer term commitment.

Base level funding must be increased to facilitate long-term planning

# ENHANCING ALBERTA'S POST-SECONDARY IMPACT

## Sustainable Infrastructure

Post-secondary institutions are responsible for large infrastructure portfolios. From classrooms and labs to residences and athletic facilities. These facilities have an impact on the number of programs institutions can offer, class sizes and research. Deferred maintenance force institutions to close facilities for safety reasons, which can impact students, faculty, and research. APSN is working with its members to review their existing infrastructure to create a clear picture of the need across the province.

### APSN RECOMMENDS:

- **Make a strong investment in capital maintenance and renewal.** These dollars will allow institutions to tackle their deferred maintenance and extend the usable life of infrastructure.
- **Invest in IT infrastructure and recognize this infrastructure is a capital asset that requires maintenance and renewal.** Investments in IT infrastructure are essential to provide the best possible experience for learners. In a rapidly changing technological landscape, it's essential that post secondary institutions keep up with shifting practices and demand. This includes shifts in delivery methods to keep up with competition in other regions of Canada and around the world.





# BUILDING ALBERTA'S COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE

## Research & Innovation

Research and Innovation is a growing segment of Alberta's economy. As governments work to attract more of these companies to Alberta, it is important to recognize that investment in post-secondary can be a deciding factor.

Companies will often look at the availability of skilled workers and a jurisdiction's investment in post-secondary when determining where to locate. Many new companies emerge from research happening on campuses across Alberta. That is why investment in post-secondary research and innovation is a key factor in growing this segment of Alberta's economy.

### APSN RECOMMENDS:

- **Leverage federal grants to grow opportunities.** Expand eligibility and funding for programs like the Research Capacity Program, this would enhance post-secondary institutions' ability to leverage federal grants. There is a lot of money available from the federal government, however it often requires matching contributions from the provinces. Alberta needs to get its fair share from Ottawa.
- **Grow graduate student spaces and provide funding to attract the leaders of tomorrow.** Graduate students play a critical role in the cutting edge research functions of post-secondary institutions. They are the innovators, disruptors and leaders that drive innovation and create new opportunities. It's pivotal that we continue to invest in spaces for graduate students so they choose to remain in, or move to, Alberta.
- **Invest in research and innovation.** Continued investment is imperative to growing this increasingly important part of Alberta's economy. Provincial investment will attract private investment and lead to increasing returns both in job creation and overall economic activity.

1,845

**New technology  
companies in Alberta**  
from 2018 to 2021[12]

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81,000

**New technology jobs  
in Edmonton and  
Calgary alone,**  
from 2015 to 2020[12]

# BUILDING ALBERTA'S COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE

## Supporting Institutional Autonomy & Competitiveness

Current legislation has damaged Alberta's brand with employees and created an unfair playing field with other jurisdictions.

### APSN RECOMMENDS:

- **Working with post-secondary systems to update regulations around the Reform of Agencies, Boards and Commissions Compensation Act (RABCCA).** Alberta post-secondary institutions have to compete with the private sector and government for talented staff. Regulations in Alberta such as those created for RABCCA have made this more difficult, by hindering post-secondary institutions ability to hire and retain experienced staff in key roles.
- **Allowing post-secondary institutions to pursue financial deconsolidation or aspects of deconsolidation.** Deconsolidation is a mechanism that would give post-secondary institutions greater flexibility to grow own-source revenue, improve financial sustainability and reduce red tape. Not every institution is in a place yet to fully deconsolidate, but some aspects of deconsolidation can improve the functioning and sustainability of institutions. It's essential not to pursue a one-size fits all approach.



# BUILDING ALBERTA'S COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE

## Data & Analysis

Quality data informs decision making, shapes responses to shifting trends and improves competitiveness. In recognition of this, APSN has been undertaking a number of individual and joint research projects including:

- Partnering with the Alberta Chambers of Commerce on ensuring Alberta post-secondary institutions will be informed by some of the best labour statistics in the country.
- Working with member institutions to undertake a system wide analysis of the state of campus infrastructure.
- Conducting studies on the capacity of the post-secondary system in Alberta, and looking at why some Alberta students choose to leave the province.

There are other data projects that could be undertaken to better inform and direct the system, especially over the longer-term.

### APSN RECOMMENDS:

- **Advanced Education partner with APSN and its members to identify and develop additional data sets to better inform the post-secondary system.** One example would be the current approach to student satisfaction surveys. These surveys provide a good snap-shot in time immediately following graduation. A way to improve this would be to track graduates over time (2, 5 and 8 years) to see which skills benefited them the most and what gaps may have existed. This would allow post-secondary institutions to adapt and evolve their approaches and to improve their programs over time.



# CITATIONS



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