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Budget 2016 is taking action to support Canada's outstanding discovery research and innovation

The board of the CSMB applauds Bill Morneau's 2016 Budget as a landmark shift for science, research and innovation in Canada. At the heart of the governments' Innovation Agenda is the recognition that fundamental discovery research is essential for Canada's economy. Budget 2016 aims to strengthening science and research in Canada by investing in research excellence and infrastructure.

CSMB is pleased that the government has recognized "the fundamental role of investigator-led discovery research" and has provided an additional \$95 million per year investments into the granting councils starting in 2016-2017. This is the largest new annual investment for discovery research seen in more than a decade. Given the challenging economic situation the \$30 million increases to the budgets of both CIHR and NSERC are a clear signal that the new government is dedicated to supporting world-class discovery research. We encourage the government to ensure that these desperately needed funds are indeed allocated where they are needed most, to the open operating grant competitions that support the most innovative ideas in discovery research.

The addition of \$19 million per year to the indirect cost program for research institutions may not be flashy, but it provides an essential stimulus enabling research institutions to support their researchers and their trainees. Universities and research institutions will also greatly benefit from the new \$2 billion Post-Secondary Institutions Strategic Investment Fund. Whereas these funds are not dedicated to research programs, it is clear that the entire research community will benefit from enhancing and modernizing research facilities across Canada.

The CSMB also applauds the plan of the Minister of Science to conduct a comprehensive review of federal support mechanisms for fundamental science research. The increasing focus on targeted and strategic funding as well as on matching programs put additional pressures on discovery research over the last years. The changes to CIHR application format and peer review mechanism have raised concerns about the scientific integrity of present and future funding decisions. A thorough review of science funding in Canada will ensure that future investments in science will get it right in targeting high quality discovery research as well sound strategies for its application.

The board of the CSMB congratulates the government for these important first steps towards strengthening Canadian science, research and innovation and for the particular attention given to discovery research. We look forward to working with the Government of Canada to further strengthen research excellence Canada that will allow our great nation to become a leader in the global innovation economy.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'K Baetz', written in a cursive style.

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Organization Profile

The Canadian Society for Molecular Biosciences (CSMB) represents thousands of the country's leading biosciences faculty members and students. Our members' research programs are largely dependent on operating funding from the Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR) and the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada (NSERC).

To learn more about CSMB's initiatives, visit csmb-scmb.ca