

## POLICIES FOR STRONG SCIENCE AND A THRIVING DEMOCRACY

Science and research impact all Canadians. Advances in scientific research improve our health, the environment, the economy and the safety and well-being of Canadians. Building a foundation of transparent, evidence-informed decision-making in our government ensures that policy decisions are made with sound and accurate information supporting them. This builds trust in our institutions and protects government integrity. Strong science means a strong democracy and a stronger Canada.

Evidence for Democracy (E4D) is the leading fact-driven, non-partisan, not-for-profit organization promoting the transparent use of evidence in government decision-making in Canada. Through research, education and issue campaigns, we engage and empower the science community while cultivating public and political demand for evidence-based decision-making. Our network comprises over 15,000 scientists, researchers and science supporters with expertise in diverse fields ranging from ecology to health to social and political science.

E4D are encouraging all political candidates in this year's federal election to support policies that strengthen science, evidence-informed decision-making and a culture of transparency and openness. Here are some specific policy ideas that support these goals.

### EVIDENCE-INFORMED DECISION-MAKING

Evidence helps decision-makers effectively weigh complex options, and make fully informed decisions that benefit all Canadians. It is only through access to sound evidence that governments can make the best decisions for our country and its people.

#### *Recommendations:*

- **Implement Departmental Science Advisors in all science-based departments and agencies.** Departmental Science Advisors will support the Chief Science Advisor through a science advice network, provide subject-specific input, and bolster evidence-informed decision making.
- The Privy Council Office, working with departmental officials and the Chief Science Advisor, should **examine mechanisms to achieve improved whole-of-government coordination and collaboration for intramural research and evidence-based policy-making** (as recommended in the April 2017 Fundamental Science Review).

### FUNDING FOR SCIENCE AND RESEARCH

Investments in research are critical for maintaining our international competitiveness, training the next generation of business and scientific leaders, and continuing to build on the many benefits that past investments in research have yielded for Canadians. Canada is currently falling behind - we are no longer in the top 30 nations in terms of total research intensity, and decisive action is needed to reassert our position as a global research powerhouse.

## Recommendations:

- **Implement the full funding recommendations from Canada's Fundamental Science Review**, particularly in several key areas:
  - Increase funding for graduate trainee scholarships and provide an increase in funds for postdoctoral fellowships;
  - Increase the reimbursement rate of the Research Support Fund to 40% and;
  - Enhance funding to open competitions through the federal granting councils.
- **Increase funding for federal government science back to 2011 levels.** Between 2012 and 2014, \$223 million in government funding for intramural science was eliminated. Funding levels have still not reached 2011 levels.
- **Increase funding relating to climate science and environmental monitoring** including:
  - funding for atmospheric climate science and;
  - funds for climate-specific research facilities such as the Polar Environment Atmospheric Research Laboratory (PEARL).
- **Create a National Science Strategy** that aims to improve coordination on science and research between federal, provincial and territorial governments, between intramural and extramural researchers, and between scientists and decision-makers.

## TRANSPARENCY AND OPENNESS

Transparency builds trust in government, provides new opportunities for collaboration and ensures that decision makers have access to the best available information.

### Recommendations:

- **Commit to full implementation and adherence to Scientific Integrity Policies.** Publicly funded research and researchers must be open to the public. We recommend commitments to ensure that all science-based departments and agencies implement Scientific Integrity Policies that ensure federal scientists can freely talk about their work, as well as have oversight to ensure adherence to these policies.
- **Enhance transparency around federal decision-making processes.** This includes publicly sharing the evidence used to inform federal decisions and communicating federal science and policy issues to the public in a way that they can understand.
- **Advance open access to government data and government science.** This includes:
  - Implementing policies mandating that scientific publications resulting from publicly funded research be published in Open Access Journals or on Open Access Platforms (in line with the Plan S policies in Europe).
  - Ensuring sufficient platforms to find and retrieve publications by federal scientists.