

REVISED
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VPR Report to Senate #704 - November 16, 2022

1. Canada Research Chair news

It is a great pleasure to recognize two Brock colleagues for their Canada Research Chairs. Dr. Yifeng Li (Computer Science) was confirmed as a new CRC (Tier II) on November 16 by Minister of Innovation, Science and Industry François-Philippe Champagne. Dr. Li is CRC in Machine Learning for Biomedical Data Science, a position and project that will develop machine learning to parse biochemical information in microscopy imagery.

Congratulations also to Dr. Julia Baird (ESRC) on the renewal of her CRC (Tier II) in Human Dimensions of Water Resources and Water Resilience - a happy endorsement of the outstanding research and leadership she has shown in her first term as a Chairholder.

2. Mitacs news

In early November, Mitacs announced that a refreshed funding arrangement with the provincial government for 2022-23 would enable the reopening of submissions for the Accelerate, Elevate, and Mitacs international programs, ending the hold that had been in place since August 28, 2022. The Business Strategy Internship (BSI) program remains on pause.

By investing in business development support for Mitacs, Brock has seen significant increases in internship opportunities and research partnerships, despite the pause on placements this fall. Brock has submitted 28 “internship units” to date, compared with 16 last year, with another 24 actively in development.

Colleagues in the Faculty of Applied Health Sciences have been especially open to partnering on student placements, with Kinesiology and Sport Management leading the way, but there has been increased uptake across Faculties and disciplines. I encourage all researchers to follow up with Mitacs Business Development Officer Greg MacNeill in the Office of Research Services to learn more about partnership and internship opportunities.

3. Niagara Economic Summit

I joined President Rigg, Vice-President Chan, and other Brock colleagues at the Niagara Economic Summit on November 8. President Rigg delivered opening remarks reflecting a deep optimism about the continued successes of Brock University and its inextricable connections to the vitality of Niagara. Panel members at the Summit included Brock Professor Liette Vasseur (Biological Sciences), speaking on the current and future states of the Niagara economy, and what key factors - including climate change - will continue to shape it.

4. FedDev Minister Tassi tour of VPMI

On November 8, President Rigg and I were delighted to welcome The Honourable Filomena Tassi, Minister responsible for the Federal Economic Development Agency of Southern Ontario, to Brock University. Minister Tassi was joined by FedDev leadership in touring the new site of the Validating, Prototyping, and Manufacturing Institute at Brock University, with VPMI Director Dr. Paul Zelisko (Chemistry). The VPMI was launched to facilitate the multi-million dollar applied research and industry partnership project founded on a \$5m award from FedDev.

5. Ontario Council for University Research

The October OCUR meeting in Ottawa included meetings with executives from the Canadian Museum of Nature, the federal granting councils NSERC, CIHR, SSHRC, and CFI; the Canadian Security and Intelligence Service, and the Ontario Ministry of Colleges and Universities, as well as Dr. Mona Nemer, Canada's Chief Science Officer, and Francis Bilodeau, Associate Deputy Minister, Innovation, Science, and Economic Development.

Results of these meetings include a conversation about Science Communication and Knowledge Mobilization with stakeholders at Brock, to enable effective institutional partnership with entities like the Canadian Museum of Nature; and a helpful follow-up meeting between ORS staff and representatives from MCU, to discuss the forthcoming Commercialization Mandate Policy.

6. Niagara College Greenhouse partnership development

In late September, the Federal Economic Development Agency for Southern Ontario (FedDev) approved Niagara College's proposal to grant Brock University access to funding for the Greenhouse Technology Network (GTN) pilot. A Collaborative Network Research Project Agreement between Brock and Niagara College is now being drafted to outline the terms of this arrangement.

GTN is a FedDevOn-funded consortium of research-focused centres that increases innovation capacity to grow the Ontario greenhouse industry. GTN members, including Niagara College, University of Guelph and the Vineland Research and Innovation Centre, collaborate with greenhouses and related technology businesses in Southern Ontario on applied research projects. Businesses, primarily SMEs, contribute cash and in-kind value to leverage up to \$50K for each project that is led by a research team.

T. Kenyon, Vice-President, Research