



April 12, 2023

Report to Senate #709 - April 19, 2023

### Consultations on EDI in federal research programs

As noted in my previous report to Senate, in March Brock participated in reviews and consultations regarding equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) measures in the Canada Research Chairs (CRC) program:

- On March 15, Michelle McGinn (Associate Vice-President Research) and Syna Thakur (EDI in Research Advisor) met with the internal auditors from the Tri-Agencies to discuss the EDI requirements of the CRC program. This meeting was part of the audit mandated under the terms of the 2019 Addendum to the 2006 Canadian Human Rights Settlement Agreement. Brock is expected to be the only university to provide direct feedback as part of this audit.
- On March 27, AVPR McGinn participated in a virtual engagement session hosted by the Tri-Agency Institutional Programs Secretariat (TIPS). Vice-Presidents Research or their designates from mid-sized institutions across the country discussed the challenges and opportunities for implementing the EDI requirements in the CRC Program and provided feedback regarding proposed EDI requirements for the Canada First Research Excellence Fund (CFREF) and Canada Excellence Chairs (CERC) programs.

In other related news, Brock has secured a third EDI stipend for \$50,000 to assist with meeting EDI requirements in the upcoming fiscal year, through an application submitted by AVPR McGinn.

### Other meetings and consultations

The March meeting of the Ontario Council for University Research included briefing with the provincial Deputy Minister and ADM of the Ministry of Colleges and Universities, as well as conversations with federal staff members supporting the creation of the Canada Innovation Corporation, the Assistant Deputy Minister for Innovation, Science and Economic Development, and the Director of the National Security Policy Directorate of Public Safety Canada, to whom oversight of the federal research security mandate has been assigned.

During the month of March we also saw extensive external outreach to University partners, including Niagara Health, the Hamilton-Oshawa Port Authority, Pathstone Mental Health, and a range of research and co-op education partners in the Niagara viticulture industry.

On March 28, I was one of several Brock colleagues who spoke on CKTB 610 radio about developments at the university; it was a great chance to describe the breadth of research activities that characterize the Brock community.

### **ISED funding for Alliance**

After some delays and uncertainty, it was a positive development to see that the Ministry of Innovations, Science and Economic Development has now approved funding for the Digital Research Alliance of Canada, of up to \$228.3 million over fiscal years 2023-24 and 2024-25 for digital research infrastructure.

### **Federal research panel report**

The Advisory Panel on the Federal Research Support System [released its report](#) in March Canadian Knowledge and Science Foundation (CKSF) to provide better coordination of programming than the Tri-Council system currently affords, and to “foster collaboration across the system to support urgent, multi- and interdisciplinary, mission-driven research to help address pressing social, technological, economic and health challenges.” Depending on the uptake the report receives in government, this could lead to significant revisions of structure and practice in Canada’s federal research support ecosystem; I encourage senators to review it.

### **Library support for Open Access publishing**

The Brock University Library is enhancing its investments in education and infrastructure to support researchers seeking open-access venues for research. This is a shift away from the use of institutional operating funds for article processing charges, or APCs. The Library’s Scholarly Communications Working Group found evidence that issues both of financial unsustainability and inequitable outcomes arise under a “pay to play” approach to open access, when internal grants are provided to pay journals to open up access to researchers’ publications.

### **AVPR leave and Acting Appointment**

In keeping with an approved leave for Associate Vice-President Research Dr Michelle McGinn, commencing July 1, I will soon be appointing an Acting AVPR for a period of not more than 6 months, per Section 2.5 of the Policy on Appointment of Academic Administrators. The appointment will be announced well in advance of AVPR McGinn’s leave.

### **Other big news!**

Finally, it is a distinct pleasure to congratulate Dr. Syna Thakur, Brock’s EDI in Research Advisor, on completing her PhD in March!

T. Kenyon, Vice-President, Research