

**CANADIAN ASSOCIATION
OF RESEARCH LIBRARIES
(CARL)**

CARL is the leadership organization for the Canadian research library community. The association's members are Canada's 27 major academic research libraries plus Library and Archives Canada, the Library of Parliament and the Canada Institute for Scientific and Technical Information (CISTI).

CARL members are the backbone of Canada's intellectual holdings in all disciplines, with an annual expenditure of over half a billion dollars, monograph holdings of over 75 million items and nearly half a million journals.

Canada's research libraries play a critical role in providing the information resources that are essential to the success of Canada's researchers in all fields, and so to Canada's ability to flourish in today's internationally competitive knowledge economy.

Pre-Budget Submission To

**The House of Commons Standing
Committee on Finance**

by the

**Canadian Association of Research Libraries
(CARL)**

August 2008



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Canadian Association of Research Libraries (CARL) is pleased that the government has shown its continued commitment to enhancing research and research infrastructure as outlined in Budget 2008. The government recognizes that Canada's edge in the global economy lies in its investment in education, the effectiveness of knowledge transmission and adaptability to changing technologies.

Research libraries play a crucial role in providing access to research materials and facilitating researchers' use of them. They benefit from a continued and increased investment in the government program to reimburse the indirect costs of research. This program is the source of valuable funds which allow access to the electronic journals, databases, and other materials on which researchers and graduate students rely. It is important that the investment in indirect costs of research grow to reach an internationally competitive level of 40 percent of direct federal investment in university research.

Recommendation:

Increase funding for the Indirect Costs of Research program to reach an internationally competitive level of 40 percent of direct federal investment in university research.

THE INDIRECT COSTS OF RESEARCH

We thank the House of Commons Standing Committee on Finance for inviting the Canadian Association of Research Libraries (CARL) to contribute a recommendation reflecting our most important federal program spending or taxation priority.

In the 2007 Pre-Budget Consultation, CARL submitted three recommendations, one of which was that there be an increase in funding to the Indirect Costs of Research program such that these costs are covered at 40% of the amount of the federal research grants received by universities. The others, which remain important to us, were greater support for e-learning and its broadband infrastructure and a change in tax law such that the current GST rebate for scholarly printed materials would also apply to such materials when obtained in electronic formats. This year, we shall make our key recommendation the continued increase in funding of the Indirect Costs of Research program.

The Indirect Costs of Research program has been important for Canadian universities because they must provide a large part of the material and human infrastructure to support research projects that are directly funded by the federal granting agencies. The direct grant to a researcher covers the costs of a proposed research project that are specific to that project, but does not cover the more general costs of providing and maintaining such general infrastructure as laboratories, computing networks, library

collections, and other institutional research support services: these are, in general, provided by the university where the research will be conducted.

In Canada, universities are directly funded primarily by the provincial governments. The emphasis in provincial funding of universities has been on their educational role, with provincial dollars being allocated largely on a per-student basis. This does not fully provide for the infrastructure for the research carried on by the universities in their knowledge discovery role; an activity whose high costs might bear little relation to the number of students enrolled at an institution.

The Federal Government has been funding the Indirect Costs of Research as an ongoing program since 2003, and the dollar amounts invested by the government have risen. We are very appreciative of the \$15 million increase in the yearly amount of the fund that was announced in Budget 2008. With the welcome increases in research funding through the federal funding councils, however, the Indirect Costs of Research program continues to represent an overall rate of reimbursement of only about 25 percent. This is still significantly below the 40 percent required to develop research support conditions at Canadian universities that are internationally competitive.

As we have noted in earlier briefs on this topic, the United States government not only generously funds university research directly, but also, since 1947, has funded the indirect costs associated with that research. The level of funding through its indirect costs support is 40-70 percent of the value of the direct research funding, depending upon the public or private status of the university. The best scientists and scholars can choose to work where they can rely on having the best research conditions, which coverage of indirect costs help to create. If Canadian universities are to attract the best researchers and be engines of development of similar strength as their American counterparts, the Government of Canada would do well to cover the indirect costs of research at a similar level as in the United States.

We have also previously noted that in the United Kingdom, the government granting councils meet 80 percent of the “full economic costs” of research projects, whether direct or indirect, and the British government has promised to raise this coverage to 100 percent by 2010.

CARL very much supports the position put forward over the years by the Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada (AUCC) that the government continue to invest in Canadian university research in a balanced manner, addressing the direct costs of basic research, its human capital, leading edge infrastructure, and the indirect costs of research.

The Indirect Costs of Research program has been important for Canadian research libraries in their role as support units to campus researchers. The Indirect Costs of Research funding that is apportioned through their parent institutions has allowed university libraries to more easily support research in various important and exciting ways. The paragraphs below give some examples of these.

Indirect Costs of Research funding has made it easier to develop collections to support researchers working in new and specialized fields of inquiry. Researchers need access to the published scholarly, scientific, and professional literature of their fields, material that must be current and which may be published anywhere in the world and in any language. Because this material is very specialized (and expensive), a library may find it difficult to purchase or license it through regular funding because it may not serve to support undergraduate teaching as much as other more general materials. Yet without access to specialized research materials at their universities, Canadian researchers and their graduate students would be greatly disadvantaged. CARL notes with continuing appreciation that the federal government has recognized this need by supporting under other programs the Canadian Research Knowledge Network (CRKN) and its forerunner, the Canadian National Site Licensing Program (CNSLP), but the Indirect Costs of Research program also remains important in this regard.

Canada's research libraries have rich stores of print resources, both published and archival, that could be located and used much more easily and economically by researchers and their graduate students were they digitized and placed online (insofar as copyright allows). Canadian research libraries have created and developed such important digitization initiatives as AlouetteCanada and Early Canadiana Online, as well as their successor project, Canadiana.org. The results of these digitization initiatives have already proven a boon to academic researchers and the Canadian public at large. The ability to use digital primary resources saves researchers much time and money since they do not need to travel to consult them at their original location. The work of research libraries in the assembly and management of these digital resources so valuable for research in the humanities also represents an indirect cost of research.

University libraries support research beyond simply providing resource collections. Research materials have become available online, and libraries have grown in the range and depth of their collections and in their ability to access materials held elsewhere or in databases of many kinds. Researchers have increasingly involved librarians in the work of their research teams in order to facilitate and make more thorough and efficient the navigation of this world of information. While a high level of collaboration between researchers and librarians has been found to be advantageous, a library still has to staff its more general reference and teaching role. The Indirect Costs of Research program has made it easier for libraries to support research teams at a high level and fulfill its ongoing responsibilities in teaching and learning.

Libraries have come to have a new and important role in the preservation of research data. Data collected in the course of research projects funded by the federal granting agencies is required to be preserved and made available for future research. Canadian research libraries are taking an active role to advise and facilitate the orderly preservation of research data in digital form: a complex matter if this information is to be accessible and understandable to a future researcher wishing to use it to answer new research questions. The development of a data management infrastructure is intensive for both technological and human resources, the costs of which are ideally met by the Indirect Costs of research program.

Another growing research-related activity of academic libraries is the open access publication of the results of publicly funded research. The federal granting councils have very rightly come to ask that such research results—already paid for by Canadian tax payers—be made publicly available without further direct cost to Canadian public institutions and the Canadian public at large¹. Many libraries have developed institutional or disciplinary online repositories for research reports and articles². Libraries have also been active participants in the development of formal open access publishing of peer-reviewed research journals. Initial development costs for these efforts are being covered in part by federal government support of the Synergies project, but various other associated costs of the publishing process remain to be covered by academic libraries as an indirect cost of the university research enterprise.

All of the research-related library activities described above depend upon state-of-the-art computing infrastructures that are administered and staffed in part by the campus computing service and in part by the library's internal computing services. These systems require considerable development work: much of the necessary hardware and software is not available, or at least usable "off the shelf", and regular maintenance and upgrades are necessary. Information technology is a major expense for research libraries, but extremely important for supporting today's university researchers.

Canada's research libraries provide crucial support to researchers at our universities by providing the scholarly resources and scientific literature on which researchers depend. They also provide the professional expertise and information technology that make these research materials available and usable. The Indirect Costs of Research program has greatly assisted libraries in their efforts to support researchers whose work is important in Canada's economic and social development. We strongly encourage the government to increase its funding of the Indirect Costs of Research program to reach an internationally competitive level of 40 percent of direct federal investment in university research.

We thank the House of Commons Standing Committee on Finance for its consideration of our recommendation. We would be pleased to have the opportunity to appear before the Committee and to provide any additional information that the Committee may find helpful.

¹CIHR Policy on Access to Research Outputs <http://www.cihr-irsc.gc.ca/e/32005.html>

² http://www.carl-abrc.ca/projects/institutional_repositories/canadian_projects-e.html

Canadian Association of Research Libraries

Room 239, Morisset Hall
65 University Private
Ottawa, Ontario, Canada K1N 9A5
Telephone: 613.562.5385
Facsimile: 613.562.5297
Email: carladm@uottawa.ca
Website: www.carl-abrc.ca

President

Leslie Weir (Ms)
University of Ottawa

Executive Director

Brent Roe



Member Institutions

University of Alberta
University of Calgary
Canada Institute for Scientific and
Technical Information
Dalhousie University
Université Laval
Library of Parliament
McGill University
Memorial University
University of New Brunswick
Université du Québec à Montréal
University of Regina
Université de Sherbrooke
University of Toronto
University of Waterloo
University of Windsor

University of British Columbia
Carleton University
Concordia University

University of Guelph
Library and Archives Canada
University of Manitoba
McMaster University
Université de Montréal
University of Ottawa
Queen's University
University of Saskatchewan
Simon Fraser University
University of Victoria
University of Western Ontario
York University