

# 2026 Federal Budget

CARL Brief to House of Commons' Standing  
Committee on Finance

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Canadian Association of Research Libraries –  
Association des bibliothèques de recherche du Canada

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## Summary

- **Recommendation 1:** The government support the report of the External Advisory Panel on the Creation and Dissemination of Scientific Information in French by investing \$40 Million per year into a new Research in French Support and Promotion Fund (RFSPF) and assure that libraries are recognized as integral players in the dissemination infrastructure and in knowledge promotion.
- **Recommendation 2:** That the government invest \$7M over three years through the Tri-Agency and the Research Support Fund to enable Canadian research libraries to build the repository infrastructure and researcher support services required for successful implementation of the revised Tri-Agency Open Access Policy on Publications.
- **Recommendation 3:** Continue to recognize, support and appropriately invest in Libraries and Archives Canada so that it can fulfill its vital role and obligations in preserving Canada's documentary and cultural heritage, providing accessible knowledge, and serving as the enduring memory of the federal government.

# Introduction

The Canadian Association of Research Libraries (CARL) is the leadership organization for Canada's research library community. The Association includes the 29 largest university libraries across the country, and aims to foster a sustainable, inclusive and effective Canadian research ecosystem.

## Recommendations

### Supporting Open Science and Research Sovereignty

#### Creation and Dissemination of Scientific Information in French

University libraries are a central pillar of the Canadian research ecosystem. In addition to serving their community, they support the creation, dissemination, preservation and mobilization of scientific knowledge, particularly in terms of open science infrastructure. Despite the rigorous work of librarians and experts to improve access and research services in French, the ubiquitous use of English as the language of science presents important challenges for the vitality and recognition of knowledge in French.

The challenges for university libraries raised by the Partenariat des bibliothèques universitaires du Québec (PBUQ), which are also experienced by institutions across Canada, particularly in French-speaking and French-speaking minority linguistic contexts is important to highlight.

We experience limited access to resources in French to develop French collections because Francophone scientific sources are less abundant than anglophone ones and therefore university libraries offer collections where English is overrepresented compared to French-language productions.

There is reduced visibility of research in French because the databases and search engines commonly used within university communities prioritize English-language content, which makes research in French less discoverable.

It is difficult to implement joint funding programs to collectively support open access publication initiatives since the number of university libraries interested in co-financing and co-producing titles in French is significantly lower than the number

that contribute funds for English-language publications. Projects for the production of English-language titles are more likely to be successful.

Creating a Francophone discovery layer between institutional repositories would provide an integrated ecosystem for content discoverability at the national level and allow increased visibility of research published in French across Canadian post-secondary institutions and internationally.

Digitization projects, open access publishing, the production of open educational resources (OER) or scholarly publishing in French receive little specific support. The projects selected in the funding programs for digitization are those with a broad scope (thus targeting the largest volume of users).

We support the recent [report](#) of the External Advisory Panel on the Creation and Dissemination of Scientific Information in French, and highlight Recommendation 2 which encourages the government to provide a New Dedicated Investment of \$40 Million Per Year, into a new “Research in French Support and Promotion Fund (RFSPF)”. While we support some of the items identified through “Stream 2: Dissemination Infrastructure and Knowledge Promotion” we would expand those recommendations to include:

Investing in French-language infrastructure for dissemination through support for bilingual, interoperable and accessible institutional repositories with high quality French-language interfaces. Ensuring their interoperability with other national and international infrastructures (such as OpenAIRE, ORCID, Dataverse, etc.) so that French-language content is visible, indexed, and reusable on a global scale.

Providing ongoing support to Érudit for the publication, dissemination, indexing and preservation of research in the humanities and social Canadian Association of Research Libraries | Bibliothèques de recherche du Canada 2 sciences. This infrastructure benefits Francophone researchers as well as users in the rest of Canada and internationally by providing visibility and access to this research.

Studying and taking advantage of the opportunities offered by cutting-edge artificial intelligence (AI) tools which offer possibilities for the development of fluid infrastructures and functionality in the scholarly ecosystem in both official languages. The rapid rise of AI technologies – including natural language processing models, indexing automation, rich metadata generation, and smart recommendation systems

– offer powerful levers to modernize and strengthen management practices, dissemination and access to knowledge in French and English.

Sustaining and strengthening the funding of the Répertoire de vedettes-matière (RVM), the national open access indexing standard in the French language, so as to fully support francophone and bilingual libraries in Canada. The RVM, a central pillar of documentation, offers five specialized thesauri and is subject to continuous enrichment, including an important work of revision of the vocabulary related to Indigenous peoples. In a context where access to resources in French remains a crucial issue for Francophone communities, increased financial support is necessary to ensure viability, updating and adaptation of the RVM to their specific needs. Enhanced funding represents a concrete means to support linguistic equity, promote access to knowledge in French and promote the vitality of francophone institutions at the national level.

Recognizing the work of librarians as contributors to science by valuing their role in research data management, open science and scientific mediation in French. University and college librarians play a strategic role in the ecosystem of contemporary research. Their contribution goes far beyond traditional documentary support: they actively participate in the construction, organization, preservation and dissemination of knowledge.

**Recommendation: The government support the report of the External Advisory Panel on the Creation and Dissemination of Scientific Information in French by investing \$40 Million per year into a new Research in French Support and Promotion Fund (RFSPF) and assure that libraries are recognized as integral players in the dissemination infrastructure and in knowledge promotion.**

## Library Infrastructure in Support of Open Access to Publicly Funded Research

The forthcoming [revised Tri-Agency Open Access Policy on Publications](#) represents a significant commitment by Canada's federal granting agencies — CIHR, NSERC, and SSHRC — to ensure that peer-reviewed research arising from public investment is freely and immediately available to all Canadians. Where the earlier policy permitted embargo periods of up to twelve months, the revised policy will require immediate

deposit of author-accepted manuscripts or versions of record into a Canadian institutional repository at the time of publication, under an open license.

CARL supports the Tri-Agency's ongoing commitment to open access and believes that this updated policy will harmonize Canada's research landscape by aligning with the [Fonds de recherche du Québec \[FRQ\] revised policy](#) which requires immediate access and the use of open licenses and better situate Canada with leading research funders internationally, including the European Commission's Horizon Europe and the U.S. National Science Foundation. Importantly, the revised Policy will also support the government's broader priorities to champion data sovereignty, and technological autonomy. Situating Canada's publicly funded research in Canadian institutional repositories ensures that that knowledge generated with governmental funds remains housed on Canadian infrastructure.

Delivering on this policy requires more than a mandate; it requires infrastructure and enhanced capacity. Research libraries are going to be crucial to operationalizing the revised policy. They maintain the repositories and associated technological infrastructure that will facilitate compliance, provide the author support services that guide researchers through rights-retention and licensing requirements, and ensure that deposited materials are discoverable, preserved, and accessible over the long term. Immediate deposit requirements, open-licensing compliance, persistent identifier integration, and metadata quality management all place new and ongoing demands on library staff, systems, and technical infrastructure.

Fortunately, CARL member libraries have robust institutional repository infrastructure in place that is well developed to support these requirements. Canada has been working for the last several years to build a strong network of over 60 institutional repositories that collaborate on the adoption of standards and good practices. In addition, a hosted platform for institutional repositories has recently been launched by [Scholars Portal \(Scholaris\)](#), strengthening the repository network through cost-sharing, increased standardization, and economies of scale.

Despite having a strong foundation upon which to build, the revised Policy will put significant additional strain on current library resources as both the volume and complexity of research deposits into institutional repositories will greatly increase. A targeted investment of \$7 million over three years, to be granted through the [Tri-Agency Research Support Fund](#) would allow libraries to upgrade repository

infrastructure, expand author support services, and coordinate nationally to ensure consistent implementation across institutions of all sizes.

**Recommendation: That the government invest \$7M over three years through the Tri-Agency and the Research Support Fund to enable Canadian research libraries to build the repository infrastructure and researcher support services required for successful implementation of the revised Tri-Agency Open Access Policy on Publications.**

## Supporting Libraries and Archives Canada essential function in Canadian society

CARL applauds the federal government's recent provision of additional permanent annual funding for Libraries and Archives Canada (LAC) to improve response times and clear backlogs in the access to information and privacy system. Access to Information and Privacy (ATIP) is one of the foundational services that LAC provides to Canadians and upholds transparency and accountability in governance. The Government of Canada's acknowledgement and commitment to this essential service is commendable.

ATIP services are only one of the critical liberties LAC enables for Canadians. LAC records the nation's governance. They capture, preserve and share records of enduring value from all branches of government, set standards and rules for record-keeping and provide schedules to departments, agencies and other organizations of the government for the transfer of the records' safekeeping responsibility to the archives and for public release of records. LAC holds archival records for 107 active and over 100 defunct government departments and has worked diligently to address the digital shift. They have established new processes for digital content and seek to benefit from operational efficiencies afforded by digital technologies. Their non-partisan role in the collection, preservation and access to government records fosters transparency and accountability in government practices and builds citizens' knowledge of their history and culture, an imperative in democratic society.

LAC's mission aligns with government values of respecting universal rights, freedoms and civic duty, strengthening Canadian culture and identity and reinforcing Canadian sovereignty. This is achieved through programs such as [Listen, Hear our Voices](#), a digital initiative to support First Nations, Inuit and Metis governments preserve and

revitalize Indigenous languages and cultures. The [Documentary Heritage Communities Program \(DHCP\)](#) was also notable as it provided support to local histories societies and community archives. The program documented, preserved and made accessible local and regional historical content that otherwise may be lost. Unfortunately, owing to recent budget cuts, this important program has ended. These initiatives serve as examples of LAC's commitment to the preservation of Canadian history, promoting Canadian identity and serving the public interest and Canadian society and demonstrate the need for ongoing sufficient funding.

**Recommendation: Continue to recognize, support and appropriately invest in Libraries and Archives Canada so that it can fulfill its vital role and obligations in preserving Canada's documentary and cultural heritage, providing accessible knowledge, and serving as the enduring memory of the federal government.**