



News Release

For Immediate Release

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Impact of Provincial Funding for University Research Not Evaluated: Auditor General

(TORONTO) The Ministry of Research and Innovation (Ministry) does not track the total amount of money all ministries and agencies are investing in research and is not evaluating the impact from research funded by the province, Auditor General Bonnie Lysyk says in her *2015 Annual Report*.

“As a result, it is difficult for the government to demonstrate whether it is getting value for money from the significant investments being provided,” Lysyk said today following tabling of the Report.

Ontario provides research grants to post-secondary institutions, research hospitals and not-for profit research institutions. The recipients of the largest share of the Ministry’s research funding are universities. Lysyk’s Office estimated that \$1.9 billion has been provided to universities for research by ministries and provincial agencies over the last five years, ending in fiscal 2014. Under Ontario’s Innovation Agenda of 2008, the Ministry is responsible for extracting “more value from all provincial investments in research and innovation.”

Significant findings also included the following:

- The Ministry has a comprehensive selection process for awarding university grants and is generally following its guidelines in awarding the grants.
- The province does not share in the revenue from the intellectual property that results from the research it funds, nor can it use the intellectual property free of charge. In contrast, U.S. federal government agencies can make royalty-free non-commercial use of intellectual property developed with government funding.
- In order to address barriers to commercialization, the Ministry needs to develop a strategy and action plans with timelines for implementation, and monitor progress.
- None of the universities visited during the audit highlighted revenue generation from research as a driving force. They also did not have formal policies or guidelines on managing costs associated with commercialization.
- Documentation at universities visited was not available to confirm that formal processes were used to assess the feasibility of commercialization and to track decisions/actions being taken.
- Universities visited may not always be taking out patent protection in time to prevent others from obtaining patents on the universities’ inventions.
- Universities visited also need to improve how they collect revenue from intellectual property to ensure that what they are owed is billed and collected on a timely basis.

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For more information and to view the full report, please visit www.auditor.on.ca

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