

NEWS RELEASE

Wilfrid Laurier
University



For Immediate Release

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New centre for science research and innovation at Laurier

WATERLOO – Wilfrid Laurier University will celebrate an important milestone in its commitment to science research on Monday, September 9, with a public groundbreaking ceremony for the Laurier Science Research Centre. Construction of the \$11.5 million facility was made possible by \$4.3 million in funding support from the Canada Foundation for Innovation (CFI), and a similar grant from the Ontario Innovation Trust (OIT). The groundbreaking ceremony begins at 3 p.m.

Participating in the event are Elizabeth Witmer, Ontario's Deputy Premier, Minister of Education and MPP for Kitchener-Waterloo, David Turnbull, Ontario's Associate Minister of Enterprise, Opportunity and Innovation, Andrew Telegdi, MP for Kitchener-Waterloo, Lynne Woolstencroft, Mayor of Waterloo and Carmen Charette, Senior Vice-president, Canada Foundation for Innovation. Representing Wilfrid Laurier University are Robert Rosehart, President, Rowland Smith, Vice-president, Academic and Arthur Szabo, Dean of Science.

The new centre will provide the necessary space to accommodate both the current and enhanced level of research activity resulting from 17 other projects funded through the CFI and the OIT. The four-storey, 50,000-square-foot addition to the west end of the existing Science Building will house research activities of Laurier faculty in the six departments of the faculty of science – Biology, Chemistry, Kinesiology and Physical Education, Mathematics, Physics and Computer Science, and Psychology. Scheduled for completion in the fall of 2003, the new research centre will be a drawing card for new faculty members in science.

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The Laurier Science Research Centre reflects the university's commitment to science, said Arthur Szabo, dean of the faculty of science. "Given our relatively small size in the overall university system, our contributions to science research and innovation must be carefully focused. But in selected areas, Laurier's research productivity in science is world class. As the first science dean at Laurier, I've been very pleased to see the quality of our research acknowledged by these funding partners. Their support represents a significant enhancement of Laurier's research infrastructure. It makes an enormous difference for our scientists."

"This investment will help preserve our region's intellectual capital and contribute to the creation of jobs and increased productivity," said Andrew Telegdi, MP Kitchener-Waterloo. "Ultimately, investing in our local research community will help ensure a better quality of life for Canadians."

"These researchers are now equipped to carry out the leading edge research they are capable of," said Carmen Charette, senior vice-president of the Canada Foundation for Innovation. "Their findings will have great potential to improve the quality of our lives, both socially and economically. We must continue to invest in our researchers and in Canadians."

The CFI is an independent, not-for-profit corporation established by the Government of Canada to strengthen the capacity for innovation in Canadian universities and research institutions. The CFI has been entrusted with a capital investment budget of \$3.15 billion and contributes 40 per cent towards eligible project costs, with universities identifying the remaining 60 per cent matching funds.

"Investing in research facilities and initiatives is integral to ensuring that innovative and progressive research continues to develop and grow in Ontario's universities," said Elizabeth Witmer, Ontario's Deputy Premier, Minister of Education and MPP for Kitchener-Waterloo.

"Investing in our researchers and research infrastructure will help Ontario become one of North America's top jurisdictions for research and innovation - the building blocks for economic growth and job creation," said David Turnbull, Associate Minister of Enterprise, Opportunity and Innovation. "Investment in facilities, equipment and technology will help Wilfrid Laurier University attract and retain top scientists and continue its groundbreaking research."

The \$1 billion Ontario Innovation Trust, established in 1999 by the Province, helps fund capital costs of research for Ontario's universities, hospitals, colleges and research institutes to enhance the infrastructure needed for scientific research and technology development. The OIT maintains close contacts with CFI, particularly in providing complementary investments in Ontario for CFI supported projects.