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2015 Federal budget – Good news for the CFI, but continued erosion of funding for Discovery research.

The CSMB is encouraged by the fact that the Government of Canada considers research and innovation as priorities that figure prominently in the 2015 budget announcement. The new 1.33 billion \$ funding for the Canada Foundation of Innovation (CFI) is a critical investment to ensure that Canadian researchers will continue to have access to cutting edge equipment. The fact that the core operating budgets of the Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR) and of the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council (NSERC) were exempt from the cuts facing other federal agencies shows a commitment to research despite a challenging budget environment. However, the limited new investments of 46 million \$ into tri-council funding are largely targeted to specific programs such as the strategy for patient-oriented research and to industrial collaborations. As a consequence, funding for Discovery Research in Canada continues to stagnate thus further eroding our nation's capacity for research and future innovations.

The fact that significant new investments continue to be made into targeted programmes, such as the Canada First Research Excellence Fund (CFREF), shows that we need to further educate decision makers about the nature of the scientific process and about the essential role of Discovery Research in the innovation process. Nobody, neither the best scientists, nor government can pick winners and predict what research will lead to the next 'big discovery', making targeted investments a questionable use of taxpayer's money.

The board of the CSMB strongly encourages all our members and their colleagues and fellow students to educate those who want to be elected in October 2015 about the needs of the scientific community. We as scientists need to speak up clearly and in large numbers to ensure that the next federal government, no matter which colour it has, will make more inspired choices!

Sincerely,
Christian Baron, President