



To: Dr. B. Mario Pinto, President, Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada;
rpr@nserc-crsng.gc.ca

Re: **NSERC'S NEW RESEARCH PARTNERSHIPS PROGRAM**

Date: October 4, 2018

From: Michael R. Twiss, PhD, President, International Association for Great Lakes Research; president@iaglr.org

The International Association for Great Lakes Research (IAGLR) is a scientific organization made up of more than 800 researchers studying the Laurentian Great Lakes, other large lakes of the world, and their watersheds, as well as those with an interest in such research. IAGLR members encompass all scientific disciplines with a common interest in the management of large lake ecosystems on many levels. Of these members, 38 percent are Canadian.

IAGLR is aware of the new initiative to condense several programs at NSERC into a new Research Partnerships program. I am writing to counsel NSERC to consider the impact that eliminating the NSERC Strategic Grants program would have on Great Lakes research. Doing so would adversely impact important environmental research partnerships with a burdensome cash requirement that makes it challenging to secure vital industry involvement. In addition, these research efforts face the loss of valuable in-kind contributions related to infrastructure (such as ships, aircraft, access to satellite data, expert technical staff) that most university researchers do not have.

IAGLR recognizes that the NSERC Strategic Grant program serves an important collaborative point between researchers in Canadian academia, industry and government at both federal (e.g., ECCC, NRCAN, DFO), and provincial (e.g., MNRF, MOECP, OMAFRA) levels. It allows for training of HQP that then advance to serve in industry, government, and academia. In addition, IAGLR acknowledges that the NSERC Strategic Grants Program provides for important research that reduces risk to government and allows its mission to be served to the greatest extent.

On behalf of IAGLR and its members, I encourage the president of NSERC to consider the voices of those Canadians who consider that termination of the NSERC Strategic Grant Program to support environmental research will jeopardize the advancement of important research needed by Canadians now and in the future.

On a personal note, I started my career as an NSERC USRA and have been successfully funded by NSERC grants. Many researchers in the Great Lakes have career flexibility and will move to other institutions, usually at least once in a career. There are many Canadians who work in U.S. academic institutions and attracting them back to Canada to have HQP ROI realized requires maintaining productive research programs like the NSERC Strategic Grants.

cc. The Honourable Navdeep Bains,
Minister of Innovation, Science and Economic Development; ised.minister-ministre.isde@canada.ca