

EVALUATION OF THE CANADA EXCELLENCE RESEARCH CHAIRS PROGRAM AND THE CANADA 150 RESEARCH CHAIRS PROGRAM

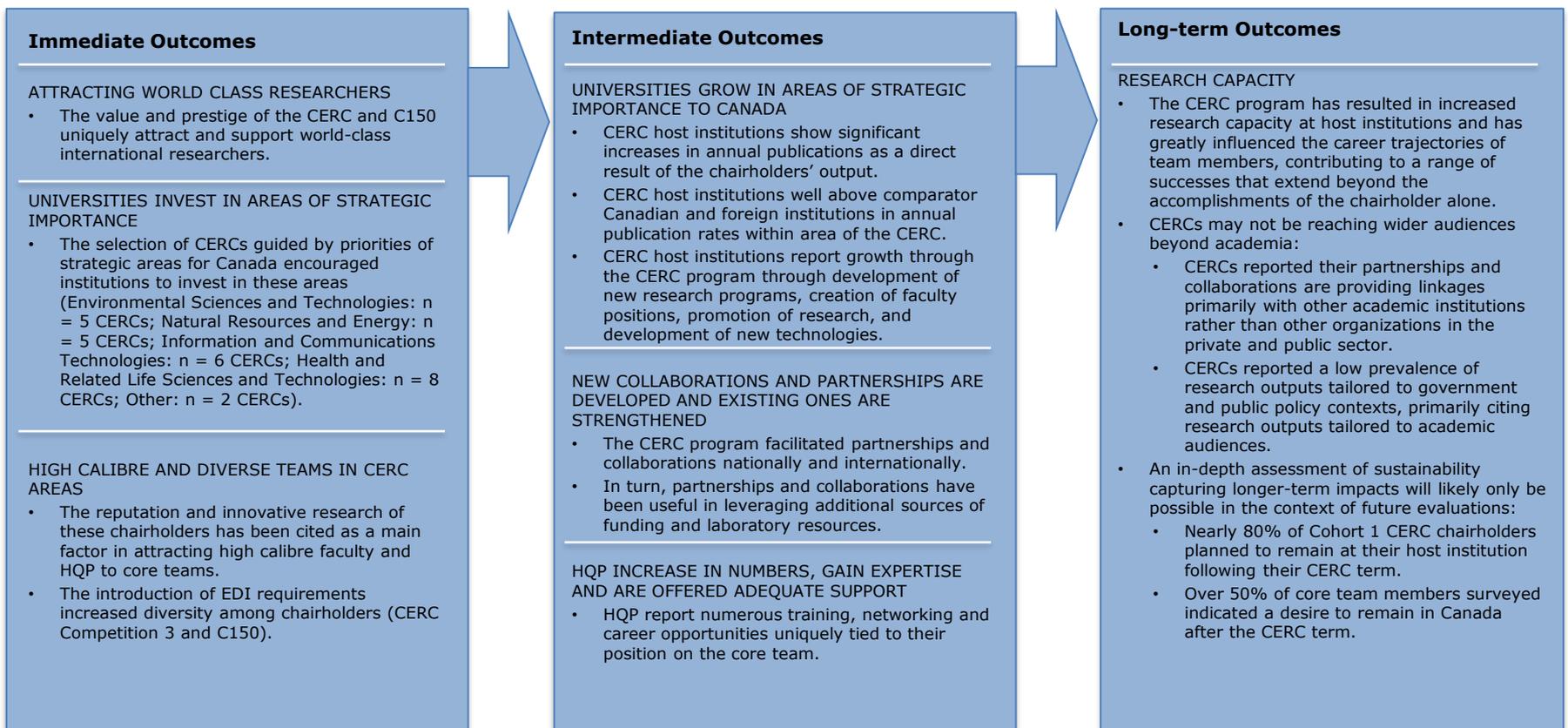
ABOUT THE PROGRAMS

- **Canada Excellence Research Chairs (CERC)** supports Canadian universities with an award of \$10 million over 7 years to facilitate the attraction of world-class researchers to become chairholders in areas of strategic importance to Canada. These chairholders build core teams at the host institution to develop and expand research programs in their respective areas of study.
- **Canada 150 (C150) Research Chairs** aims to attract top-tier, internationally-based scholars and researchers of all disciplines and career stages to Canada. In celebration of Canada's 150th anniversary, it offered a one-time investment to Canadian institutions of either \$350,000 or \$1 million per year for seven years per chair.

ABOUT THE EVALUATION

- The evaluation covers the period from 2013-14 to 2017-18 for CERC, and from 2017-18 to 2018-19 for C150.
- Data collection included case studies of a sample of CERCs from the first cohort, a survey of CERC core team members, and key informant interviews. Interviews were conducted with CERC chairholders (those not included in case studies, those who left before the end of their term), C150 chairholders (including those who declined the award), VPs of Research as well as selection committee and review panel members.

KEY FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS



RECOMMENDATIONS

1. (CERC) Continue funding the CERC program conditional on future evidence of sustainability, and contingent on the government maintaining its priority to remain globally competitive by attracting world-class researchers to Canada in order to build capacity in areas of strategic importance to our social and economic landscape.
2. (CERC) Develop strategies to further promote the CERC program as a whole and encourage institutions to enhance their knowledge dissemination and external communication strategies related to CERC teams.
3. (CERC) Ensure that all CERC institutional commitments and sustainability plans are concrete, transparent, and developed as early as possible (beginning at the application stage) so as to ensure that chairholder and institutional commitments are fulfilled. This should include sharing or creating the opportunities to share promising practices for CERC sustainability among host institutions and CERCs (e.g., forums) and requiring concrete commitments by institutions with regular follow-ups to ensure commitments are honoured.
4. (CERC) Provide more clarity and transparency to institutions and chairholders at the outset and throughout the term of the award about extension possibilities.
5. (CERC) Further streamline the chairholder recruitment and review process with a view to balance the need to thoroughly vet nominees and their research programs with the need to remain competitive and avoid "losing good candidates."
6. (CERC/C150) Continue to encourage proactive consideration of EDI in recruitment and selection processes for CERC chairholders and core team members through mechanisms such as additional training on EDI best practices and unconscious biases.
7. (CERC/C150) Improve communication of EDI requirements to provide greater clarity on how and why EDI should be considered in the recruitment, application, and selection processes for the nominees, the institutional recruitment committees, and the review panels. Additional tools and resources should also be provided to help institutions and chairholders further develop their understanding of the systemic barriers that impact individuals from underrepresented groups within the research ecosystem.
8. (CERC/C150) Revise the institutional and recipient reporting strategy, as well as the program protocol for reviewing the collected information through the following: (1) Clearly define key constructs on the reporting template itself to ensure a common understanding among respondents (e.g., partner vs. collaborator, core team member, etc.); (2) Clearly identify portions of the annual reports that should be reviewed promptly by TIPS staff (e.g., issues, obstacles, suggestions for improvement) to ensure timely follow-ups and check-ins as needed.



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