



Federation advocacy update: 2021 federal election campaign

The 2021 Federal Election is in full swing, and candidates from all political parties are looking to engage with voters to hear about what is important to them.

For the Federation for the Humanities and Social Sciences, the election is an opportunity to increase awareness of the value of our disciplines, to continue advocating for our federal budget recommendations, and to build relationships with the new Parliament.

Last month, we participated in the House of Commons Standing Committee on Finance 2022 Pre-Budget Consultations. As part of our [pre-budget submission 2021](#), the Federation called for the federal government to:

- invest in fundamental research and improve the balance of funding across disciplines;
- invest in digital infrastructure, online learning and open science;
- support equity, diversity, and inclusion, and reconciliation between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples.

We are working to advance these priorities as we continue to advocate for the important contributions the humanities and social sciences make to society, the economy, and to communities across Canada.

How you can get involved

If you're looking for opportunities to get involved in this election, read on for our key messages and get to know your local candidates.

1. **Obtain contact and background information** on your candidates by visiting the party websites.
2. **Engage on social media.** Trending hashtags to follow include **#Elxn44**, **#cdnpoli**, **#ItsOurVote**, and **#polcan**.
3. **Make an appointment to meet with your candidates** (usually no more than 15-30 minutes).
4. **Attend events at which the candidate will be appearing.** To find out about upcoming events, contact your candidates' campaign office or keep informed from the local newspaper.
5. **Be ready** when candidates come knocking at your door. Ask pointed questions of the candidates. See key messages below.

Knowledge for a rapidly changing world: our priorities

Our world is changing fast. From climate change to the rise of global populism and now pandemic recovery. These huge global shifts require us all to have the right skills, knowledge and understanding to navigate an uncertain future. Today's employers are looking for graduates with sophisticated



communications skills, as well as an ability to work with, understand and adapt to other people. Critical-thinking, analytical and problem-solving abilities are all part of the tool kit that young Canadians need in this new environment. These skills help businesses grow and thrive. They are hallmarks of an education in the social sciences and humanities.

The value of the social sciences and humanities, however, goes well beyond skills development and the workforce. These disciplines are key to supporting a democratic society, advancing equity, diversity, and inclusion, and developing forward-thinking solutions to society's most pressing issues.

Many of the challenges we face today – including climate change, racial injustice and yes, the spread of COVID-19 – are shaped by human behaviour and public policy. They are much more than technical challenges, and their solutions urgently require the insights and discoveries of research in the social sciences and humanities.

The federal government must take action to ensure that we have the knowledge and skills to address the complex challenges facing Canadians today. To that end, the Federation for the Humanities and Social Sciences makes the following recommendations:

Invest in fundamental research and improve the balance of funding across disciplines

- Invest in fundamental research to improve Canada's long-term competitiveness
- Increase the share of overall research funding directed toward the humanities and social sciences

Invest in digital infrastructure, online learning, and open science

- Build the capacity of Canada's universities and colleges to give all students equitable access to online education, and to grow international and domestic enrollments as online learning evolves
- Commit to an Open Science strategy for federally-funded research
- Invest in Open Access book publishing to help build a vibrant Canadian publishing sector for the digital age

Support equity, diversity, and inclusion, and reconciliation between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples

- Increase investments in Indigenous education and support equity, diversity, and inclusion in all aspects of Budget 2022
- Fund new scholarships, bursaries, and research grants to create more opportunities for members of equity-deserving groups, including Black and Indigenous scholars and graduate students

Scholars in the humanities and social sciences make vital contributions that support Canada's prosperity and competitiveness. Although the federal government has taken many worthwhile steps in recent years, it must take further action now to support Canada's COVID-19 recovery. Together, we can build a more equitable, sustainable, and prosperous future.