



The Information Commissioner of Canada

February 17, 2017

Dear Commissioner Legault,

The Canadian Association of Professional Academic Librarians (CAPAL) is a national non-governmental membership organization representing academic librarians and the profession of academic librarianship in Canada. We have members from universities across Canada.

We understand that you will be hosting a conference in late March on the topic of transparency with various panels of interest to researchers, teachers, and students at Canadian universities. As this conference is central to our professional principles, we would like to send two delegates as observers.

Librarians play an integral role in supporting the academic missions of post-secondary institutions. Amongst other important roles, we teach undergraduates students, graduates students, and faculty members how to effectively seek, evaluate, and use information to advance knowledge.

As professional librarians, we pursue core principles, including access to uncensored and unbiased information¹. Through access to uncensored information, Canadians are better able to participate in the democratic process, advance social knowledge, and contribute to society's wellbeing.

Access to information legislation is important tool to these ends. Between 2009 and 2015, academic use of the Access to Information Act increased by 429 percent². In recent years, access to information legislation, has helped advance knowledge of Canadian

¹ Statement of Principles <http://capalibrarians.org/membership/#principles>

² Based on data acquired through InfoSource.gc.ca

multiculturalism³, drug policy⁴, fish habitat protection⁵, and oil spill responses in Newfoundland and Labrador⁶.

We look forward to opportunities to engage with you on our shared values.

Sincerely,

Board of Directors,
Canadian Association of Professional Academic Librarians / L'Association canadienne
des bibliothécaires académiques professionnels

Colleen Burgess (Huron University College)
Douglas Fox (Victoria University in the University of Toronto)
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Mary Kandiuk (York University)
Eva Revitt (MacEwan University)
Lisa Richmond (Wheaton College)
Harriet Sonne-de-Torrens (University of Toronto Mississauga)
Ali Versluis (University of Guelph)
Anna Wilson (University of Alberta)

³ Uberoi, V. (2016). Legislating Multiculturalism and Nationhood: The 1988 Canadian Multiculturalism Act. *Canadian Journal of Political Science*, 49(02), 267-287.

⁴ DeBeck, K., & Kerr, T. (2016). *The use of knowledge translation and legal proceedings to support evidence-based drug policy in Canada: opportunities and ongoing challenges* (Doctoral dissertation, University of British Columbia).

⁵ Favaro, B., & Olszynski, M. (2017). Authorized net losses of fish habitat demonstrate need for improved habitat protection in Canada. *Canadian Journal of Fisheries and Aquatic Sciences*, (ja).

⁶ Fraser, G. S., & Racine, V. (2016). An evaluation of oil spill responses for offshore oil production projects in Newfoundland and Labrador, Canada: Implications for seabird conservation. *Marine pollution bulletin*, 107(1), 36-45.