

Fact Sheet: Post-Secondary Institutions Strategic Invest Fund – Frost Campus GeoCentre and Environmental Sciences Renewal

Cost: \$4.52 million

Estimated Completion Date: Spring 2018

Renovations

The GeoCentre and Environmental Sciences Renewal would renew and modernize the specialized training facilities at the campus, creating best-in-class labs. These new spaces would provide state-of-the-art facilities for programs such as Earth Resources Technician, Advanced Water Systems Operation and Management, Aquaculture, and Environmental Technician.

While there have been improvements and upgrades to other parts of Frost Campus, the areas designated within this project have been mostly unchanged since the campus opened in the 1970s. There are increasing constraints on capacity of the programs using these facilities to grow and to meet industry needs. Teaching areas and equipment no longer reflect advances in technology or current industry standards, impairing the college's ability to attract and retain students, employees and applied research opportunities.

Here is a summary of the renovations:

- Renovation and expansion of the existing GeoCentre laboratories - the area will be reconfigured as two new geology labs, two new storage rooms, four new offices, and a realigned corridor.
- Renovating the existing Hatchery Lab/classroom into a dedicated classroom and adding two new Environmental Science labs at the east end of the main building.
- Labs will be improved with contemporary material finishes, new furnishings, and state-of-the-art learning technologies. The labs will feature flexibility in design and layout to accommodate changing needs over time.
- Adding a secondary entrance to the east wing, along with an elevator and ramp, to improve access and circulation among the labs and classrooms on the three levels of the building in the east wing.
- Renewing technology and AV infrastructure that is outdated and not able to support current skills training needs and future trends

Sustainability

The project includes significant sustainability improvements. The new lighting, mechanical and electrical systems will provide the building with a much higher level of efficiency. When the areas are not in use, systems can be set so that minimal amounts of energy are being used.

As well, portions of the building envelope and roof will be refitted to be fully insulated, minimizing heat loss and gain. The current envelope contains little insulation value and suffers from air and water infiltration.

Impacts

- This project would provide a significant boost to local/regional economic activity with an estimated 90 jobs created for the duration of construction.
- Newer facilities are a key attractor for students. This project will increase the awareness and attractiveness of various career options in environmental sciences, natural resources and related fields. The upgrades will further impact local employers and communities via a larger, highly-skilled and highly-trained labour pool.
- ECO Canada predicts on-going growth in the number of environmental professionals in Canada, with specific focus on demand for employees with skills in hydrogeology, green building technology, water quality, land management planning, monitoring, site assessment, remediation and reclamation of project sites (Profile of Canadian Environmental Employment Labour Market Research Study, 2013, ECO Canada). All of these curriculum areas are taught in spaces that are the subject of this proposal and will benefit from the documented enhancements.
- Updated facilities will also enhance our ability to work in partnership with industry employers and partners on applied research and customized training and development. And having upgraded and new GeoCentre and Environmental Sciences labs and teaching spaces will support the Centre for Alternative Wastewater Treatment in continuing its leadership role in applied research.