



BE WHAT THE WORLD NEEDS

## Provost's Report to Council

### March 2023

Hello Council Chair, members, and visitors. Bonjour.

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[English. French. Cree. Dakota/Lakota/Nakota. Dene. Michif. Sauteaux]

### GENERAL REMARKS

This report provides updates as well as indications of our progress toward achieving the five aspirations outlined in the [University Plan 2025](#).

### USask to create Provost's Advisory Committee – Scarborough Charter

In November 2021, the University of Saskatchewan signed the Scarborough Charter alongside [partner institutions across Canada](#). Signatories of the [Scarborough Charter](#) are committed to redressing anti-Black racism and fostering Black inclusion in post-secondary institutions, based on four overarching principles: Black flourishing, inclusive excellence, mutuality, and accountability. The Scarborough Charter aligns with [USask's commitments to equity, diversity, and inclusion](#), and to anti-racism and anti-oppression initiatives. It also aligns with the goals, commitments, and aspirations outlined in the [University Plan 2025](#).

Signing the Scarborough Charter means that USask will engage in “a process of continuous improvement through ongoing, sustained implementing of the Scarborough Charter’s principles-based commitments to action, and to be answerable for concrete outcomes” (*Scarborough Charter, 2021*). To amplify this important work, an advisory committee will be created to provide the provost and vice-president academic with advice on priorities and actions stemming from the commitments to action outlined in the Scarborough Charter. This will include making recommendations on institutional strategy and transformative actionable steps to assist USask in achieving a more respectful, accountable, equitable, diverse, and inclusive community. The Provost's Advisory Committee – Scarborough Charter (PAC-SC) will also assist USask in preventing anti-Black racism by critically reviewing policies, processes, and practices to understand how they may contribute to systemic anti-Black racism and by providing recommendations that will further Black inclusion and excellence.

The PAC-SC will be co-chaired by the deputy provost and will include faculty, staff, students, a dean or an executive director, and the special advisor to the president on anti-racism and anti-oppression. The PAC-SC members will be appointed in spring 2023, and the advisory committee's inaugural meeting with the provost and vice-president academic will be held once the appointments have been made.

[The terms of reference for the PAC-SC were developed by a working group](#) that included Deputy Provost Dr. Patti McDougall and faculty and staff who are members of the [Black Faculty and Staff Caucus](#) (BFSC-USask). Thank you to the following working group members for their valuable insights and advice: Dr. Jacob Alhassan; Charlene Brown; Edith Conacher; Dr. Eriq Lukong; Natalya Mason; Dr. Patti McDougall; Florence Mudzongo; and Dr. George Mutwiri.

## **Indigenous Achievement Week celebrated from March 6 - 10**

[Indigenous Achievement Week](#), an annual University of Saskatchewan week that celebrates the successes and contributions of Métis, First Nations, and Inuit students, staff, faculty, and alumni, was held on campus from March 6 - 10, 2023. Events and activities were hosted by USask units and colleges. A key part of the week was the Indigenous Student Achievement Awards Ceremony, held on March 9 at the Gordon Oakes Red Bear Student Centre. The awards celebrate Indigenous student success at USask and honour academic achievement, community engagement, leadership, research, and resiliency.

## **USask celebrates UN Sustainable Development Goals and Open Education Week**

From March 6 - 10, 2023, USask celebrated the United Nations' [Sustainable Development Goals](#) and [Open Education](#) with a series of panels, workshops, professional development sessions, and other opportunities. [USask SDG Week](#) is an amalgamation of two nationally coordinated weeks: [SDG Week Canada](#) and [Open Education Week](#).

## **USask implements deybwewin | taapwaywin | tapwewin: Indigenous Truth policy**

The [deybwewin | taapwaywin | tapwewin: Indigenous Truth policy](#) establishes a documentation verification process to be completed by Indigenous people holding Indigenous-specific employment positions, student scholarships, or other forms of material advantage created for Indigenous Peoples. Verification documentation will be required for all incoming assertions of Indigenous membership/citizenship by members of the university community where that claim may result in a material advantage or where the absence of verification would be otherwise contrary to the principles recognized in the policy.

The name of the policy, deybwewin (Saulteaux) | taapwaywin (Michif) | tapwewin (Cree), means truth—truth to self, truth to each other, truth to the ancestors, and truth to the land. Responsibility for the deybwewin | taapwaywin | tapwewin: Indigenous Truth policy is situated within the Office of the Provost and Vice-President Academic. The interim vice-provost of Indigenous engagement is chairing a permanent Indigenous-led standing committee that will play an integral role in the implementation of the policy.

[USask has launched a new website](#) that includes an online system through which USask faculty, staff, and students can upload verification documentation. Verification with documentation can take many forms. These will be defined by Indigenous governments and conveyed to the deybwewin | tapwewin | taapwaywin Standing Committee. Examples of verification with documentation can be, and are not limited to, a letter from a community's governance body, an Indigenous government-issued membership or citizenship card, or a status card issued by Indigenous Services Canada. In situations where Indigenous government-approved documentation is not available, the [deybwewin | tapwewin | taapwaywin Standing Committee](#) will guide and support the individual and the university through a verification process.

The new website also features a frequently asked questions section and information for people who are members of First Nations, Métis, and Inuit communities in Canada, as well as for Indigenous people coming to USask from international locations.

The deybwewin | taapwaywin | tapwewin policy was created through the groundbreaking work of a task force led by Indigenous Elders, faculty members, staff, and community members, and was supported by an internal advisory circle of university representatives. The policy acknowledges that the documentation of Indigenous membership/citizenship must be determined by Indigenous

governments, not the university. USask is committed to reconciliation and recognizes the inherent right of Indigenous Peoples to determine their own membership/citizenship through their governance, customs, traditions, and procedures.

The policy, which was approved by the USask Board of Governors on July 8, 2022, applies to all members of the university community. This includes, but is not limited to, students, researchers, post-doctoral fellows, staff, faculty, institutional leadership, members of governing bodies, Elders, Cultural Advisors, and Knowledge Keepers, and any person participating in university business or activities (e.g., service provider, contractor, volunteer).

### **Positive accreditation results for College of Medicine**

[USask's College of Medicine has achieved further strong results for its medical doctor program](#) from the Committee on Accreditation of Canadian Medical Schools (CACMS). Following the most recent January 2023 report, the College of Medicine has earned the satisfaction of the accrediting body across 96 elements, up from 93 in a 2020 update.

The College of Medicine achieved full accreditation in the wake of a complete onsite review in 2017. Over the past few decades, the school has worked through accreditation challenges that required a significant overhaul of the program to permanently address ongoing issues. The college followed a plan, *The Way Forward*, which was developed specifically for this purpose and released in 2013. The next CACMS visit is scheduled for 2026.

### **Training seats added to USask health programs**

USask will [expand the number of training seats in the physical therapy and clinical psychology programs](#) beginning in fall 2023. As part of Saskatchewan's [Health Human Resources Action Plan](#), the provincial government has made an initial investment of more than \$5.5 million to help create more than 550 new post-secondary training seats across 18 health-care training programs that have been identified as immediate priorities to help address chronic and urgent vacancies in key health professions.

This commitment will increase training capacity at the province's post-secondary institutions and reserve training seats for Saskatchewan students in highly specialized programs in other provinces. Included in this expansion at USask is 15 seats, making a total of 55, in the physical therapy training program, and 15 seats, making a total of 20, in the clinical psychology (MSc/MA/PhD) training program.

### **30th annual Life and Health Sciences Research Expo scheduled for May 4**

USask's 30th annual [Life and Health Sciences Research Expo](#) is planned for Thursday, May 4, 2023, and is returning as an in-person event for the first time since being cancelled in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Organized by USask Health Sciences, this annual showcase of interdisciplinary life and health science research includes competition categories exploring basic, translational, clinical, and applied science, as well as social and population health.

This year, Health Sciences has collaborated with the Office of Sustainability and the Gwenna Moss Centre for Teaching and Learning to offer an optional [Sustainable Progress Award](#) for students presenting life and health sciences research addressing the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Based on the quality of the research presented, there may also be additional awards presented for achievement aligning with COVID-19 pandemic research, response, and/or outreach; Indigenous health research; and interdisciplinary/interprofessional collaboration.

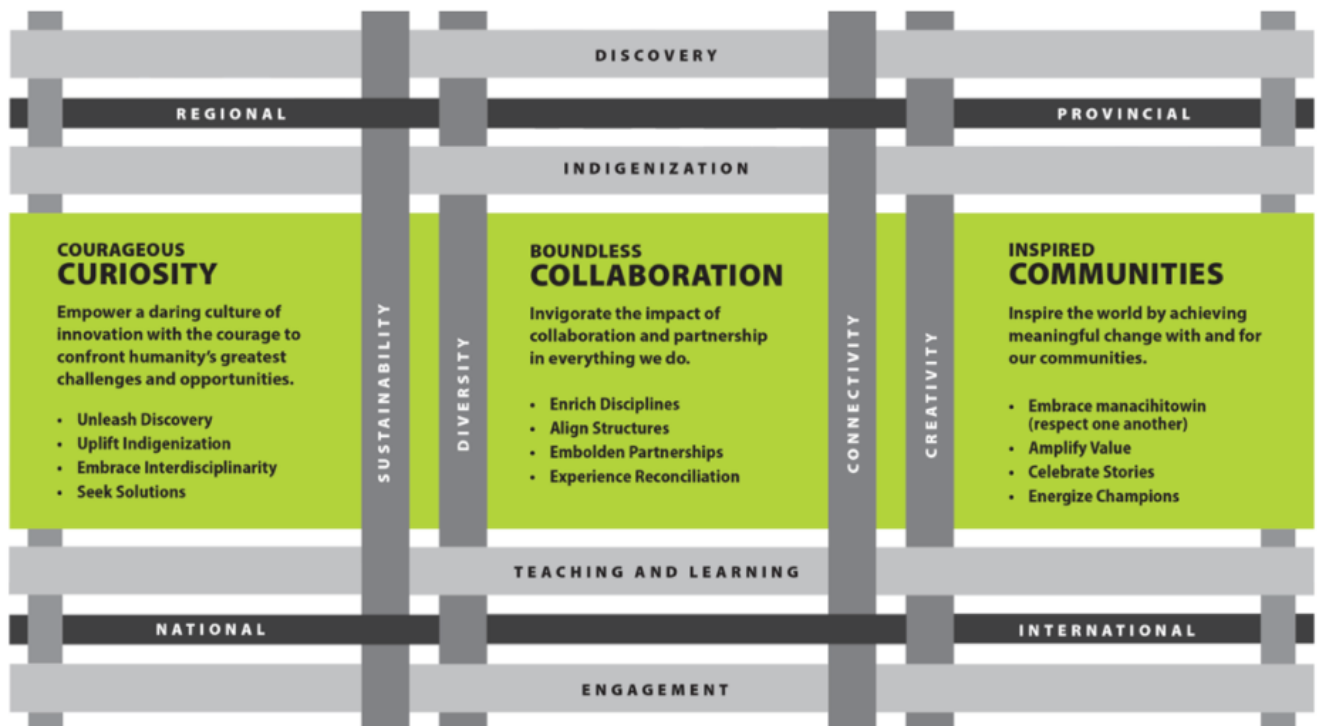
### This month's appreciation:

I would like to acknowledge the members of our USask community who contributed to Black History Month activities and events throughout the month of February. The 2023 theme for [Black History Month at USask](#) was "Making History and Building with Momentum," and it was wonderful to see this momentum on our campus as we celebrated community, built connections, and engaged our collective power to shape our future. Thank you to the members of the Black History Month planning committee, led by Deputy Provost Dr. Patti McDougall, for their hard work and thoughtful planning throughout the month. Thank you to the colleges, schools, departments, and units on campus that hosted events, including panel discussions, book clubs, social media events, a film screening, and more.

I would also like to extend my gratitude to the faculty, staff, and students who attended the Provost's Book Club, which took place weekly during the month of February. The Provost's Book Club was held for the second consecutive year during Black History Month, and attendance doubled from 2022 to 2023. I enjoyed getting to know the book club members and appreciated hearing their observations and insights about the book *The Black Prairie Archives: An Anthology*, edited by Karina Vernon (2020). Thank you for joining me on my journey to learn more about Black history and life on the Prairies.

## UNIVERSITY 2025 PLAN: THE UNIVERSITY THE WORLD NEEDS

### nīkānītān manāchitowinihk / ni manachīhitoonaan



### Meaningful Impact

#### Edwards School of Business: Haddock Entrepreneurial Speaker Series marks 16 years

The Edwards School of Business celebrated the 16th annual presentation of the Haddock

Entrepreneurial Speaker Series in January 2023. [Guest speaker and alumna Cindy Lowe \(BComm'96\) spoke to students, staff, and the business community about her educational and professional journey.](#) She highlighted how the Canadian educational system needs to strengthen the financial literacy skills of students. Sponsored by two passionate and dedicated alumni, Gordon and Maureen Haddock, the annual event included the "Get a Bigger Wagon Young Entrepreneur Awards." These awards celebrate and reward children with cash prizes for their innovative businesses.

### **College of Education/University Library: Khodi Dill (MEd'13) presents during Black History Month**

On Feb. 15, 2023, the College of Education and the University Library hosted a Black History Month event featuring USask graduate Khodi Dill (MEd'13), an award-winning Bahamian-Canadian spoken word artist, author, and anti-racist educator from Saskatoon. The event was held at the Education and Music Library with nearly 100 people in attendance in person and online. Titled [Soul's Poetry: Affirming Black Identity Through Art](#), the event centred on a conversation between Dill and USask graduate and educator Mel Sysing (BA'97, BEd'99, MEd'12) and explored topics such as anti-racist education, the experience of Black and racialized students in the K-12 and higher education systems, and the ways anti-racist teachings and art can effect change. Dill is the author of two picture books, including *Welcome to the Cypher*, which introduces young people to the transformative power of rap music, and *Little Black Lives Matter*, a book of affirmation and Black history for children. In the fall of 2023, Dill will be releasing a non-fiction book titled *Stay Up: Racism, Resistance, and Reclaiming Black Freedom*.

### **College of Arts and Science: Grant Cluster Development Fund to support cross-disciplinary teams**

The [Grant Cluster Development Fund](#) is a pilot initiative of the College of Arts and Science supporting cross-disciplinary teams of researchers to develop and submit multiple, complementary grant applications across funding competitions within a thematic area. The primary goal of the program is to increase the number of competitive funding applications submitted by college faculty. In doing so, the program seeks to:

- Enhance competitiveness in Tri-Agency and other external grant and contract opportunities;
- Support faculty at any career stage in research team development;
- Enable supportive funding networks for early career researchers;
- Facilitate cross-disciplinary research, scholarly and artistic work (RSAW) innovation; and
- Build and sustain a vibrant research culture within the college.

## **Productive Collaboration**

### **College of Dentistry/Edwards School of Business: DMD/MBA a first among Canadian dental schools**

The College of Dentistry is launching a dual-track Doctor of Dental Medicine (DMD) and Master of Business Administration (MBA) option in conjunction with the Edwards School of Business—a first among Canadian dental schools. The [DMD/MBA option](#), which will be available beginning in the fall of 2023, will allow future dentists to combine their dentistry training with the management skills needed to operate a practice.

### **Global Institute for Food Security: Partnership produces sequenced genome of year-round jackfruit**

On Feb. 21, 2023, the Global Institute for Food Security at USask announced that its partnership with the Bangladesh Agricultural Research Council and Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman Agricultural University has led to the [sequencing of a year-round jackfruit variety genome](#), making Bangladesh the only southeast Asian country other than China to entirely sequence a genome. This technological feat is an important outcome of the partnership, which aims to improve sustainable food security in Bangladesh while strengthening trade ties between the fast-growing country and the province of Saskatchewan.

## **Distinguished Learners**

### **College of Arts and Science: Support for study abroad opportunities**

The Arts and Science Study Abroad office, located in the [Undergraduate Student Hub](#), is positioned to support increased interest from students in study abroad opportunities. This year \$800,000 has been secured to help offset costs to students to study abroad, and an additional \$50,000 is available to support faculty in developing [study abroad courses](#). The latest success of \$300,000 through the Global Skills Opportunity 2022 Mobility project will support students and faculty under a proposal entitled “Exploring Culture, History, and Local Water Security in Costa Rica and the Yucatán.”

### **College of Dentistry: Augmented reality simulators offer preclinical training benefits**

The [acquisition of 10 mixed reality simulators](#) means College of Dentistry students now have access to a virtual training opportunity that closely replicates an in-person patient procedure. The simulators open the door to new learning opportunities in the college’s preclinical labs and will help better prepare students for transition into direct patient care. USask’s College of Dentistry is the first Canadian dental college to acquire the leading-edge technology.

### **Edwards School of Business: MBA student attends Global Business Forum**

In September 2022, Master of Business Administration (MBA) student Brit Tastad [attended the Global Business Forum](#) in Banff, Alberta. Tastad was one of 10 Canadian MBA students invited to attend the forum. This event brought together world leaders to present, explore, discuss, and debate critical global, economic, and social issues. A highlight of the event for the MBA students was presenting conference takeaways in front of 200 attendees. Tastad and her fellow MBA students gained media attention and a story was published in the *Calgary Herald* regarding their experiences.

## **Transformative Decolonization Leading to Reconciliation**

### **New USask STEM+ program connects Indigenous students with mentors, career experiences**

A new program at USask is connecting Indigenous students with mentors in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) industries for early career experiences. Indigenous Student Achievement Pathways (ISAP) is an initiative within the College of Arts and Science that welcomes First Nations, Métis, and Inuit students to post-secondary studies with a small cohort learning community model. While ISAP programming focuses on enriching students’ academic experience at university, the [newly launched ISAP STEM+ program](#) will focus on building mentorship and work experiences developed specifically for Indigenous students interested in STEM-connected career pathways.

STEM+ focuses on building students’ resumes in preparation for their careers post-graduation. The program will be facilitated by ISAP STEM+ coach Sarah Gauthier as a two-year pilot sponsored by the International Minerals Innovation Institute.

### **New research chair at USask to focus on Métis governance and policy**

On Feb. 7, the Métis Nation–Saskatchewan (MN–S), USask, and Johnson Shoyama Graduate School of Public Policy (JSGS) announced their commitment to a combined \$1,130,000 over four years to support [the establishment of the JSGS Research Chair in Métis Governance and Policy](#)—the first of its kind in Canada. The funding will also support scholarships and internship opportunities for verified Métis students and the development of a Métis governance training program.

Appointed to the research chair is Dr. Kurtis Boyer, JSGS assistant professor, advisor to USask's office of the vice-provost Indigenous engagement, and citizen of MN–S. Dr. Boyer's work will enhance the genuine decision-making authority of the Métis Nation by exploring ways in which governance and the policy-making process can be guided and informed by Métis culture, values, and tradition.

### **USask project to improve soil health through knowledge-sharing network**

A [new project at USask has been awarded \\$1.4 million](#) through the Weston Family Soil Health Initiative to develop land-based training workshops for First Nations communities, land managers, and producers who farm First Nations lands. The \$10-million Weston Family Soil Health Initiative seeks to expand the adoption of ecologically based beneficial management practices including cover cropping, nutrient management, and crop diversification/rotation that increase soil organic matter to improve biodiversity and resiliency on agricultural lands across Canada. The project, Indigenous Soil Health Learning Circles for Resilient Prairie Agroecosystems, aims to establish a network to share evidence-based, culturally significant outreach and education to improve prairie soil health, biodiversity, and soil organic matter for First Nations agroecosystems.

USask soil scientist Dr. Melissa Arcand will be working in partnership with Mistawasis Nêhiyawak, Saskatchewan Aboriginal Lands Technicians, and the International Buffalo Relations Institute. The Soil Health Learning Circles will share soil health knowledge from Indigenous and Western science-based perspectives with First Nations and farmers who farm First Nations lands across the Prairies, focusing on the prairie-parkland region of Saskatchewan, Alberta, and Manitoba.

## **Global Recognition**

### **VIDO first non-U.S. organization invited to join high containment network**

USask's Vaccine and Infectious Disease Organization (VIDO) has been unanimously accepted as the first and only international organization in the Research Alliance for Veterinary Science and Biodefense BSL-3 Network (RAV3N), a partnership of 18 United States-based large biocontainment facilities focused on veterinary infectious diseases. VIDO is the largest and most advanced Biosafety Level 3 Agriculture (BSL-3 Ag) facility in Canada and the only Canadian non-government facility authorized to work with the foreign animal disease African swine fever.

The research network, headquartered at Texas A&M University's Global Health Research Complex, was established in 2020. RAV3N enables strategic and co-ordinated approaches for large-animal biocontainment infrastructure and science capacity to improve bio-surveillance, diagnostics, and countermeasure developments against high-consequence pathogens of veterinary importance. High-consequence veterinary pathogens are viruses and bacteria that have epidemic potential and lack effective vaccines or therapeutics. Examples include African swine fever virus, bovine tuberculosis, contagious bovine pleuropneumonia, and avian influenza—some of which are also zoonotic, meaning they can be transmitted between animals and humans.

### **USask-led Women Plus Water Expert List to help bridge gender inequity gap in science**

An international initiative led at USask, featuring experts and top researchers from around the globe, is increasing diversity in sustainable water management, access, and advocacy that will lead to better decisions affecting the future of the planet. [The Women Plus Water Expert List officially launched at the United Nations \(UN\) General Assembly](#) on Feb. 10, 2023, in collaboration with Cansu SITE, a program of the Royal Academy of Sciences International Trust. The launch was part of the formal event recognizing the 8th UN International Day for Women and Girls in Science, led by her Royal Highness Princess Dr. Nisreen El-Hashemite.

Born out of the Global Institute for Water Security and Global Water Futures program, the Women Plus Water Expert List aims to introduce communities, leaders, and policymakers to a new wave of leaders in water research, management, and decision-making. The inspiration came from the more than 2,000 participants in 49 countries who attend the online [Women Plus Water Lecture Series](#) events that take on topics from water diplomacy to water modelling and more. The audience, expert guests, and hosts are from all aspects of water research, management, and advocacy and include a mix of young professionals and established leaders across academia, government, civil society, art, entrepreneurs, and the private sector.

<b>Transformative decolonization leading to reconciliation</b>	A university in which Indigenous concepts, methodologies, pedagogies, languages, and philosophies are respectfully woven into the tapestry of learning, research, scholarship, creativity, and community engagement.
<b>Productive collaboration</b>	A university in which research and innovation are inspired by and accountable to community partners.
<b>Meaningful impact</b>	A university resolutely committed to measuring its own success in terms of the aspirations of the communities it serves.
<b>Distinguished Learners</b>	A university whose graduates have the drive, the curiosity, and the humility to work with others in addressing the greatest challenges and opportunities the world faces.
<b>Global recognition</b>	A university that sets the standard in learning, research, scholarship, creativity, and community engagement.

## REVIEWS, SEARCHES, APPOINTMENTS

### Appointments:

- Dr. Michael Nickerson has been appointed as acting head, Department of Food and Bioproduct Sciences, College of Agriculture and Bioresources, for a period of up to one year, effective Jan. 1, 2023, to Dec. 31, 2023.
- Dr. Chris Willenborg has been appointed as head, Department of Plant Sciences, College of Agriculture and Bioresources, for a period of up to five years, effective Jan. 1, 2023, to Dec. 31, 2027.
- Dr. George Mutwiri has been extended as interim executive director, School of Public Health, for the period of Feb. 15, 2023, to June 30, 2023.
- Dr. Suzanne Kresta has been extended as dean, College of Engineering, for a period of six months, beginning Jan. 1, 2023.



## Searches:

- Vice-Provost, Indigenous Engagement (winter 2023)
- Executive Director, School of Public Health (winter 2023)
- Dean, College of Kinesiology (winter 2023)
- Vice-Provost, Faculty Relations (winter 2023)
- Dean, College of Arts and Science (winter 2023)
- Dean, College of Engineering (winter 2023)

## 2023 AWARDS APPLICATIONS

### Students:

**Rhodes Scholarship:** If your students wish to apply for the Rhodes Scholarship, they will need to complete the 2022-2023 Rhodes Competition application in the Scholarships and Bursaries channel in PAWS by early August 2023. Information is available at the link above.

### Faculty:

**Royal Society of Canada Fellow:** All 2024 nominations must be received by the Royal Society of Canada Secretariat by Dec. 1, 2023. The RSC consists of Fellows elected in three Academies (Academy I, Arts and Humanities; Academy II, Social Sciences; and Academy III, Science), Members of the College of New Scholars, Artists and Scientists, and institutional members from across Canada. There are currently more than 2,500 RSC Fellows, more than 400 members of the College, and more than 60 institutional members. There are three pathways to Fellowship in the Royal Society of Canada, including:

- **Fellows** are those with exceptional and original publications, intellectual achievements, and creative activities. Their achievements are in the arts, the humanities, the social sciences, and the sciences. They are either Canadian citizens or permanent residents of Canada for at least three years at the time of their nomination.

**Distinguished professor:** The Distinguished Professorship Program was created to **honour and celebrate outstanding achievement in research, scholarly, or artistic work** by University of Saskatchewan faculty or emeriti. Professors emeriti or current members of the University of Saskatchewan faculty possessing academic qualifications corresponding with an appointment at the rank of full professor are eligible for appointment to the distinguished professor position. The nomination deadline is October 15, 2023.

thank you  
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