



# 2023 -2024 ADVOCACY ROADMAP



# Land Acknowledgement

CUSA acknowledges that our offices, service centres and businesses are situated today on the traditional territory of the Algonquin Anishinaabe, lands never ceded or surrendered in peace to the Crown of Canada. Indigenous peoples living under the modern colonial state of Canada have suffered disproportionate injustice and marginalisation.

A mere land acknowledgement is not enough to make reconciliation and reparation to the Indigenous peoples of Turtle Island. We must stand in solidarity against colonialism and remember our responsibility to the land and the peoples who have kept it for generations— which means affirming their call for the free and unencumbered return to their ancestral land. It is also fitting, for this body of lawmakers, to remember the spirit and wisdom of Indigenous governance models—from the collaborative bicameralism of the Haudenosaunee Confederacy to the consensus-based government of the Inuit—to deliver to students a better student union.

We recognize that our presence on this land is the result of a history marked by injustice, and we are dedicated to honouring and strengthening our relationships with Indigenous nations across Turtle Island. This includes acknowledging and respecting the diverse First Nations, Métis, and Inuit peoples who call this land home.

We encourage all students to learn about current movements to support Indigenous self- determination and self-governance. To learn more about the stolen land you live on and the movements occurring on that land, visit [www.native-land.ca](http://www.native-land.ca) or CUSA's Mawandoseg Centre located at 426 Nideyinàn (formerly University Centre).

# Summary and Introduction

Welcome to the Carleton University Students' Association (CUSA) 2023-2024 Advocacy Roadmap - a comprehensive guide outlining our advocacy priorities and commitments for this academic year. After thorough consultation via our Advocacy Roadmap Consultation Form during the summer, we've identified 12 key commitments crucial to our student body. These priorities encompass a diverse range of concerns, addressing issues like housing, tuition, food insecurity, and EDI Policy.

We're excited to announce the release of [CUSA's Advocacy Concern Submission Form](#). If you believe there are additional issues that warrant CUSA's advocacy on behalf of our student community, please utilize this form to detail your concerns. Expect an email follow-up from CUSA within a week, and you'll also have the option to request a meeting for a more in-depth discussion.

In conjunction with CUSA's Executive Roadmap, this document aims to enhance transparency with our students, providing insight into a significant aspect of our work. For any further inquiries or concerns, don't hesitate to contact us professionally at [research@cusaonline.ca](mailto:research@cusaonline.ca).

It's important to note that this advocacy map is an extension of the previously published executive roadmap, continuing our commitment to transparency and student-focused initiatives.

## **Domestic Tuition**

### *Area of Advocacy: Provincial and Federal*

Work to demand the province maintain the university tuition freeze into 2024, and to extend the existing tuition freeze to include out-of-province domestic students. Lobby the federal government to expand the current grants offering under the Canada Student Financial Assistance Program. Advocate for a reduction in overall interest rates on the federally-appointed portion of OSAP loans and work to put pressure on the federal government to offer debt forgiveness for student borrowers.

## **Food Insecurity and Rising Costs of Living**

### *Area of Advocacy: University, Municipal, Provincial, and Federal*

Advocate in all possible areas for increased food security for Carleton students and a sound policy-making process in different levels of government to combat the rising costs of living and inflation. CUSA is also committed to implementing the revenue of its Unified Support Centre (USC), in order to allow the program to keep pace with skyrocketing demand, increase administrative efficiency, and its ability to cater to students with diverse dietary needs.

## **EDI Policy**

### *Area of Advocacy: University, Municipal, Provincial, and Federal*

Advocate in all possible areas for students from underprivileged backgrounds to be given equal opportunity. All students, particularly those from marginalized communities, should feel represented by all areas of policy, and that such policy and practices on and off campus are sensitive to the disadvantages and unique experiences of equity seeking students living in Canada. Students should be represented at all levels of government and university management when decisions are made that affect them and their community. Diversity in experience and opinion leads to better and longer-lasting decisions.



## **Housing and Accessibility**

*Area of Advocacy: University, Municipal, Provincial, and Federal*

With three higher education institutions in the city, CUSA is committed to advocate in all possible areas for accessible and affordable student housing in the Greater Ottawa region. Within the university and different levels of government, CUSA shall advocate for policy-makers and government stakeholders to make access to affordable and safe housing for moderate to low-income residents a top priority. The federal government should consider proposals put forward by the Ontario Real Estate Association to allow graduates to alleviate a portion of their student loans when they add funds to a Canada 'First Home Savings Account' (FHSA).



## **International Tuition**

*Area of Advocacy: University and Provincial*

Advocate within the university for the establishment of a tuition guarantee for international students, similar to the caps on domestic student tuition. A five-year fixed cost guarantee at the time of admission to the University would allow for students to plan accordingly for the cost of their studies, while the university can benefit from the financial stability from knowing the exact amount of tuition they will be receiving annually from each cohort of students. At the provincial level, we will advocate for the province to reinstate legislation capping international student tuition in 2024.

## **Mental Health and Counseling Services**

### *Area of Advocacy: University and Provincial*

Negotiate an additional service access point for the CUSA Wellness Centre as a part of the Carleton Wellness Desk within the MacOdrum Library to allow more options on when and where students access resources. Additionally, negotiate with the university the inclusion of three Bachelor of Social Work students to be placed within CUSA Service Centres to support students who access CUSA spaces in their mental health journey. We will advocate to the province for the expansion of mental health services in public health and for including drug therapy in public health coverage.

## **Opening Spaces for Students**

### *Area of Advocacy: University*

Advocate to the university to expand the number of free bookable spaces, available in a variety of buildings across campus for clubs, study groups, socialization, and religious purposes.

## **Sexual Health, Menstrual, and Reproductive Rights Initiative**

### *Area of Advocacy: University*

Lead an on-campus initiative that consists of promoting student awareness regarding sexual health, menstrual, and reproductive rights. This initiative entails an increase in access to emergency lines and infographic educational resources across campus. CUSA will also work in partnership with Carleton's Department of Equity, Inclusive and Communities to increase student access to menstrual and sexual health products across campus.



# Student Loan Integration

*Area of Advocacy: Provincial and Federal*

Advocate at the provincial and federal levels for the implementation of a single-payer, 'One student, one loan' through respective provincial and federal programs, harmonizing payment into a single system for ease of student use, as has been accomplished in other provinces.

# Scholarship Opportunities

*Area of Advocacy: University, Municipal, Provincial, Federal, and International*

Advocate to all possible stakeholders and partners at different levels to expand scholarship and award opportunities for Carleton students. Advocate to the university, municipality, province, and federal government to value research and academic endeavours through expanded scholarship availability, reducing eligibility requirements, or raising caps on a per person scholarship basis. Furthermore, CUSA shall strive to partner with different embassies and government representatives to establish more scholarships for international students.



## **Tax Free Textbooks**

### *Area of Advocacy: Provincial and Federal*

Advocate for the elimination of the provincial sales tax (PST) and goods and services sales tax (GST) on textbooks.

## **Transit**

### *Area of Advocacy: Municipal and Provincial*

Request that the City of Ottawa and OC Transpo prioritize access to a safe, organized, reliable, and predictable public transit service tailored to the needs of Ottawa's student population. At the Provincial level, advocate for the expansion of affordable forms of provincial and trans-provincial transportation for out-of-city and out-of-province students.

