Ontario supports York's research excellence

York University was among 20 research institutes in Ontario to receive funding to support research infrastructure. The University received just over $2.3 million for 13 unique projects in an announcement made Oct. 28 by Dalton McGuinty, Ontario's premier and minister of research & innovation.

"We need to ensure that Ontario can compete in the marketplace of ideas," said McGuinty. "By building a world-class research infrastructure in Ontario, we can attract and retain the best and brightest people and provide jobs and prosperity for Ontarians well into the future."

"Government investments into university research infrastructure are crucial to sustaining high quality, globally competitive research programs at York and to retaining and attracting the best researchers and students," said Stan Shapson, York's vice-president research & innovation. "The Government of Ontario's investments through the Ontario Research Fund that match federal investments from the Canada Foundation for Innovation are greatly appreciated."

The government is investing $48 million to support 312 innovative projects under the newly created Ontario Research Fund (ORF). Some of the researchers at York University who were included in this funding announcement are:

- York Professor **Caitlin Fisher**, Department of Film, Faculty of Fine Arts, received $264,379 in funding for a New Media Collaboration Centre (NMCC) to support augmented reality research, digital archives of Canadian Culture and Canadian Digital Policy Initiatives.
- **Kerry Kawakami**, professor of Psychology, Faculty of Arts, received $98,191 for her research project for infrastructure to research stereotyping and discrimination towards minority groups.
- **Baoxin Hu**, a researcher in the Department of Earth and Space Science and Engineering in York's Faculty of Science & Engineering, received $83,650 in infrastructure funding for new equipment for a state-of-the-art laboratory for research in remote sensing of vegetation that can quickly create complex three-dimensional models of a forest.
- Kinesiologist **Thomas Hawke** received $212,865 to develop a specialized cellular and molecular biology wet lab to study the unique attributes of skeletal muscle progenitor cells. Specifically, progenitor cells are the parent or stem cells, and Hawke’s study will seek new information about the molecular mechanisms that regulate these cells to
assess their unique potential.

- **Diane Duff**, a professor in the School of Nursing, Atkinson, received infrastructure funding to develop a two-way video, voice and peripheral devices to measure and monitor the vital signs and health symptoms of the homebound and chronically ill.

The $48-million provincial investment matches the funding commitment made by the Canada Foundation for Innovation (CFI). Project funding is shared among the CFI (40 per cent), the province of Ontario (40 per cent), and the research institutions (20 per cent).

Ontario’s Ministry of Research and Innovation was created in June 2005 to ensure that Ontario is competing and winning in the marketplace of ideas. The provincial government has committed $1.8 billion over four years to support research and commercialization.