

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Ottawa, May 10, 2004** - The Canadian Research Knowledge Network (CRKN) has released a series of evaluation reports that document the impact of its pilot phase initiatives on Canadian university researchers and libraries.

Pilot phase activities from 2000 – 2003 took place through the Canadian National Site Licensing Project (CNSLP), with funding totaling \$50 million from 75 funding partners, including the Canada Foundation for Innovation (CFI), provincial and regional government sources, and 64 universities. The project's aim was to strengthen the research and innovation capacity of Canada's universities by expanding the range of research information for Canada's academic research community. Under the project, content from more than 2200 scholarly publications and research databases has been made available online to over 650,000 researchers and students at Canadian universities coast-to-coast.

The evaluation reports present compelling evidence that CNSLP fostered research and innovation by making more and better scholarly research publications available to researchers through networked means. The reports were prepared by The Impact Group, a Toronto-based consulting firm engaged by CNSLP to conduct studies of the user and stakeholder communities. One study focused on the impact of CNSLP on university researchers – the end users of scholarly publications – from the time of CNSLP inception to 2003. A second study concentrated on CNSLP's impact on university libraries, as reported by library directors in 2003. A summary report entitled "Impact of the Canadian National Site Licensing Project: A Report to Partners and Stakeholders" synthesizes these two studies and documents the project's impacts on improving research, teaching and networking. The reports are available on the CRKN website at: <[www.ResearchKnowledge.ca](http://www.ResearchKnowledge.ca)>

Ellen Hoffmann, chair of the task group that oversaw evaluation activities and former university librarian at York University, remarks, "These Canadian studies, like recent American and British studies, document the pervasive and positive impact that increased access to electronic journals and indexes has on the behaviour of researchers. The success of CNSLP is evident in just two measures: 87% of researchers reported increased access to electronic journals as having a positive impact on their research, and 82% of library directors reported satisfaction with their participation in the CNSLP initiative."

These conclusions come as no surprise to Dr. Howard Alper, Vice-Rector (Research) at the University of Ottawa and Chair of the CRKN Board of Directors. Alper commented, "CNSLP has acted as a research catalyst, enabling new enquiry and partnerships, and positioning Canadian researchers to be highly competitive internationally. The evaluation studies also demonstrate CFI's pivotal role in seeding research infrastructure initiatives in Canadian universities. The university community welcomes the evaluation reports as a foundation for expanding the initiative through the Canadian Research Knowledge Network. "

The Canadian Research Knowledge Network is a program of Canadian universities aimed at bolstering the research and innovation capacity of Canada's universities. CRKN's mission is to expand the universe of digital research information available to Canada's academic research community, through the coordinated services and expertise of academic libraries.

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