



**For Immediate Release
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Population Growth A Key Outcome of Cape Breton University's COVID-19 Recovery Plan

(Sydney, NS) – Today, Cape Breton University (CBU) President David Dingwall announced plans for the Centre for Discovery and Innovation at CBU, a project that will sustain the University well into the future and have significant impacts on Cape Breton Island. To be successful, the project requires action and support from government, both provincially and federally. Investment in this infrastructure project will help drive population growth and economic health for the entire Island. At the press conference, Dingwall boldly called on local MPs and MLAs to act and support the project.

“The Centre for Discovery and Innovation is our number one priority in this current climate. It is so much more than a building. Undoubtedly, the infrastructure is key to strengthening our strategic advantage, but the impacts will cascade well beyond the CBU campus. Communities across Cape Breton will benefit economically, culturally and socially from our ability to attract learners from here in Cape Breton and from around the world. It is no secret that the population in Cape Breton has been in decline for decades. But we can change our course, as we did in 2019, if our local MPs and MLAs will join us in this vision for a prosperous future for Cape Breton,” says Dingwall.

In 2019, Cape Breton saw its first population increase in more than twenty years as a result of international student growth at CBU, a trend that can continue with investment in the Centre for Discovery and Innovation. Equally as important, as of January 2020, international students contribute \$165 million per year to the Cape Breton Island economy. In addition to the economic benefits resulting from CBU's enrolment success, local services such as transit have improved, labour shortage gaps across the Island have been filled, communities have been infused with expanded cultural diversity and businesses have benefited from international perspectives.

The Centre for Discovery and Innovation is an \$80 million shovel-ready project that has the power to ensure the institution's sustainability and impact into the future. A modern research and instructional facility featuring cutting-edge design and clean technology, it will enable CBU to attract the brightest minds from Cape Breton Island and around the world. Home to state-of-the-art research and research training laboratories, with innovation space to facilitate industry partnerships that create local solutions for global problems, the Centre will transform Cape Breton Island through collaboration and cooperation, help stimulate the local economy, and enhance the institution's competitive advantage in the international post-secondary education market. As well, the Centre will

house the Marshall Institute which will focus on environmental justice and Indigenous approaches to climate change, collaborate with L'nu Elders, knowledge keepers, educators, and political leaders to advance understandings of the ongoing relevance of historic Treaties of Peace and Friendship.

“COVID-19 has certainly created many challenges, but we are looking to the future with determination and a strong vision for CBU and Cape Breton Island. I know Cape Bretoners have witnessed the significant impact the University has had on the community. Our students deserve modern facilities and Cape Breton needs young, educated and trained people who bring international perspectives. I encourage people from across Cape Breton Island to call, write and email our local government officials to voice their support. This project will not move forward without government.” says Dingwall.

For more information and to support the project, visit innovateourfuture.ca.

-30-

About Cape Breton University

Cape Breton University is an Atlantic Canadian post-secondary leader, with a growing national and international reputation. Currently home to nearly 5500 students, CBU's vision of post-secondary education allows students to pursue dynamic fields of study that are ideally suited for success in liberal arts, business, health, education, science and technology. Students from more than 50 countries study at CBU and benefit from the university's unique commitment to community, economic development, Aboriginal learning, and research into many aspects of environment and culture.

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