

The BC Greens believe post-secondary education is a public good, and that cost or geography should never determine who gets the chance to learn, retrain or build a future.

British Columbia's colleges, universities and institutes are part of the foundation of our province. They educate nurses, teachers, tradespeople, scientists, artists and entrepreneurs, support research and innovation, and anchor communities across BC. They should be places where people can pursue ideas, develop new skills, change careers and deepen our understanding of the world around us. They have an important role in filling immediate labour shortages, but a strong public post-secondary system is also about giving people opportunities throughout their lives to build knowledge, skills and creativity that benefit all of us.

But BC has known for years that the way we fund post-secondary education needs to change. The Province launched a funding review in 2022, after more than two decades without updating its funding model, followed by another review in 2025.¹ Neither has delivered a new funding model, leaving institutions without stable, predictable public funding and increasingly reliant on international tuition. Until 2023/24, international tuition accounted for about 18% of revenue across the public system and up to 40% at some institutions. Federal changes to study permits are expected to reduce sector-wide tuition revenue by roughly \$300 million annually, contributing to hiring freezes, layoffs and program cuts.²

BC Greens do not believe we should respond to that instability by asking students to pay more or by steadily shrinking the public system. BC needs to rebuild public funding and take a serious look at how all 25 public institutions fit together. Research universities, teaching universities, colleges and specialized institutes serve different purposes, and institutions in smaller and rural communities face different realities than those in major urban centres. A new funding model should recognize those differences while protecting access to education throughout the province.

Affordability is just as important as institutional stability. Students come to post-secondary education from very different financial circumstances, and tuition is only one part of the cost of getting an education. Students need somewhere affordable to live, food to eat and a way to get to class. Some are supporting children or other family members, while others are working long hours alongside their studies just to cover their basic expenses. These costs can determine whether someone enrolls, how much time they can devote to learning and whether they make it to graduation.

The BC Greens will:

Affordability

- Freeze domestic tuition and institutionally charged mandatory fees at public post-secondary institutions.
- Cap annual international tuition and mandatory-fee increases at inflation.

¹ Government of BC, [Province launches public post-secondary funding review](#), 2022.

² Government of BC, [Province reviews public post-secondary system to ensure long-term sustainability](#), November 25, 2025.

- Double the BC Access Grant, providing up to \$8,000 per year for students with financial need, while also reviewing and increasing thresholds for students in programs longer than two years.
- Bring university and college residences under provincial renter protections for the first time, with dedicated rules under the Residential Tenancy Act that cap increases in residence rates, including between academic years, set basic standards for fees, maintenance and housing agreements, protect students from arbitrary eviction, and provide access to independent dispute resolution.
- Expand non-market student housing on public campus land, with provincial capital funding to build substantially more below-market student homes, including family-sized units for students with children. Require new publicly funded student housing to remain affordable over the long term.
- Expand open educational resources and zero-textbook-cost programs through BCcampus, reducing the cost of textbooks and required course materials for students.

Funding & system changes

- Replace BC's outdated post-secondary funding model through a public, system-wide review with new provincial funding on the table. This will include reviewing the roles and mandates of all 25 public institutions, how funding is distributed, regional access, research and teaching responsibilities, trades and technical education, transfers between institutions and the needs of communities around the province.
- Modernize post-secondary governance so campus communities have a stronger voice in the institutions where they study and work.
- Protect the right of graduate student workers to unionize by amending the Labour Relations Code to clearly recognize paid graduate teaching and research work as employment, including graduate research assistants.