



Dear Queen's University Administration,

We are writing to you today to firmly stand in solidarity with the Queen's Postdoctoral Scholars represented by PSAC 901. We strongly condemn the distasteful tactics used by Queen's University in the bargaining process with these workers. The steps taken by the Employer to intimidate and bully their own workers into accepting an insufficient offer displays a lack of respect and dignity for workers on campus who are critical to Queen's University's research productivity and prestige.

PSAC 901's negotiating team is seeking the following on behalf of Postdoctoral Scholars:

**1) Access to comprehensive healthcare**

The Queen's Health Team Pilot Project, once a pioneering initiative as the first healthcare access program for Postdocs in Canada, was a symbol of Queen's leadership and commitment to supporting its research community. However, instead of preserving this groundbreaking legacy, Queen's cancelled postdoc access to the program on the very first day of negotiations without justification—a shameful decision that undermines their commitment to Postdoctoral Scholars. While Queen's continues to provide basic healthcare services to nearly 30,000 undergraduate and graduate students, it refuses to extend the same care to the 200 postdocs who conduct cutting-edge research and bring in millions in grants to the University. It is unjust and unreasonable to deny healthcare access to such a vital group.

**2) Livable wages**

The minimum wage for Postdoctoral Scholars at Queen's is \$35,958, a mere \$182 above the Ontario provincial minimum wage—this is shameful. As of September 1, 2024, the Federal Government of Canada has increased Tri-agency Postdoctoral Fellowship funding to \$70,000 per year. The Federal Government has recognized the need for increased funding to match increased cost of living—why does Queen's refuse to follow suit? With their most recent offer, the University continues to undervalue Postdoctoral Scholars and does not meaningfully address the need for fair compensation in research environments.

**3) Mental health and hardship support**

As precarious workers, Postdoctoral Scholars are under immense pressure. Between heavy research responsibility, uncertainty resulting from financial precarity, and inadequate access to healthcare, they have serious concerns for their mental health and wellbeing. Postdoctoral Scholars are demanding the creation of a mental health fund and an emergency hardship fund



to support postdocs facing significant financial or emotional distress. Queen's has demonstrated a commitment to providing mental health support to undergraduate students, graduate students, faculty, and staff—it is disgraceful that the same support is not being extended to Postdoctoral Scholars.

#### **4) Relocation assistance**

Postdoctoral Scholars who are relocating for their positions, especially those relocating internationally, face significant financial burdens. Many of them are incurring thousands of dollars in expenses to move without any support from the University; a cost that can be prohibitive for some people to even accept a position at the University. Relocation assistance would remove barriers to Postdoctoral Scholarship for marginalized groups in line with Queen's commitment to Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion.

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Postdoctoral Scholars are essential to almost every part of the University's strategic plan and the quality of research produced by the institution. They, like all workers, deserve wage increases commensurate with the rise in the cost of living. To begin to approach the minimum earnings to meet the cost of living in Kingston, Ontario, a significant increase in wage is necessary. Postdoctoral Scholars are underpaid and overworked. It's time for Queen's to step up and provide these precarious workers with the support they deserve

We urge you to return to the bargaining table with a new resolve to address the very reasonable bargaining demands of these workers, and treat them with the dignity and respect that they deserve.

**In Solidarity,**

#### **PSAC Local 610**

Graduate Teaching Assistants and Postdoctoral Associates  
Western University  
London, Ontario