

# MEDIA RELEASE

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## Mastercard Foundation invests \$10 million in First Nations University of Canada

*Investment marks 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Calls to Action by recognizing outstanding impact for Indigenous youth*

**Regina, SK** — Today, the Mastercard Foundation announced funding of \$10 million for First Nations University of Canada (FNUUniv), part of a \$235 million strategic investment from their *Recognizing Leadership in Reconciliation through Education* Initiative to recognize the outstanding impact of 30 organizations that are advancing education for Indigenous young people across Canada.

Through this investment of \$10 Million, the Mastercard Foundation seeks to sustain and accelerate the transformation FNUUniv is already leading in post-secondary education for Indigenous young people, their families, their communities and beyond. Marking a decade of work under the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (TRC) Final Report and Calls to Action, the investment supports the exceptional contributions of FNUUniv in elevating Indigenous youth leadership and transforming post-secondary education with First Nations, Métis, and Inuit communities.

“The Mastercard Foundation continues to be a committed partner to First Nations University of Canada, supporting our vision, leadership, local and national educational impact, and academic autonomy,” says FNUUniv President, Mizowaykomiguk paypomwayotung, Dr. Jacqueline Ottmann, “Through our partnership with Mastercard Foundation’s EleV Program, we are engaging in systemic change that will holistically nurture learners, enrich learning embedded in Indigenous Knowledge Systems, help us achieve academic independence, and further our financial strength”.

The \$10 million investment will support expanding the capacity, facilities, financial sustainability, programming, and impact of FNUUniv in responding to the needs and aspirations of Indigenous youth and their communities.

“This incredible gift further supports FNUUniv’s goals of self-determination, sustainability, and significant growth over the long term, uplifting the ambitions of this unique national Indigenous post-secondary institution for many generations into the future,” added Ottmann.

The \$10 million in one-time funding follows and amplifies the MasterCard Foundation’s previous \$22.4 million five-year investment in FNUUniv in 2024, funds which have been directed at creating systemic

change in four specific areas – institutional autonomy and self-determination, Indigenous academic leadership development, academic programming to meet community needs, and the creation of the National Indigenous Economic Prosperity Institute.

“The TRC Calls to Action pointed to education as the critical path forward,” says Jennifer Brennan, Senior Director of Canada Programs at the Mastercard Foundation. “We made a commitment to Indigenous young people that we would walk alongside them to transform post-secondary education in ways that support them to live a good life. These exemplary organizations are contributing to that change and to a stronger country for us all.”

Other recipients of this one-time Mastercard Foundation investment include national Indigenous organizations, Indigenous institutes, and mainstream post-secondaries working in deep partnership with First Nations, Métis, and Inuit communities. The investments build on the Mastercard Foundation EleV Program, which works with more than 65 partners across Canada to support 100,000 Indigenous youth to achieve post-secondary education and transition to meaningful work by 2030. Founded in 2017, EleV has committed over \$500M to transform education and employment in service of Indigenous youth to be living a good life, Mino Bimaadiziwin in the Anishinaabe language.

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#### **About First Nations University of Canada**

The First Nations University of Canada (FNUUniv) was founded in 1976 and is a unique national First Nations owned and operated post-secondary institution that aspires to have transformative impact by bridging ceremonies, knowledge keepers, languages, and traditions with the delivery of high-quality post-secondary education that will lead to the pride and success of all Indigenous and communities. FNUUniv has campuses in Regina, Saskatoon, and Prince Albert, and provides programming nationally. For more information about FNUUniv, please visit [fnuniv.ca](http://fnuniv.ca)

#### **About Mastercard Foundation**

The Mastercard Foundation is a registered Canadian charity and one of the largest foundations in the world. It works with visionary organizations to advance education and financial inclusion to enable young people in Africa and Indigenous youth in Canada to access dignified and fulfilling work. Its Young Africa Works strategy aims to enable 30 million young people to access dignified and fulfilling work by 2030, while its EleV strategy will support 100,000 Indigenous youth in Canada to complete their education and transition to meaningful work aligned with their traditions, values, and aspirations.

Established in 2006 through the generosity of Mastercard when it became a public company, the Foundation is an independent organization. Its policies, operations, and program decisions are determined by its Board of Directors and Leadership team.