Given declining COVID-19 case counts in Nova Scotia, and now that our province is entering Phase 3 of its reopening plan, plans for an expanded Return to Campus at Dalhousie are now underway. A comprehensive update for the entire university community is expected to be released next week. I am writing today, however, to provide you with an update specifically on Return to Research (R2R) at Dalhousie. Please share this information with your Department Heads and any other members of your research community, as appropriate.

As part of the return process, we are planning to expand research activity when Nova Scotia enters Phase Four of its reopening plan, currently expected to occur on July 14, 2021. Provided this occurs as expected, we will transition management of the expanded return approval process to individual Deans and Department Heads at that point. Deans and Department Heads will be responsible for assessing and approving any new returns into research spaces, including requesting assessment of research space by Environmental Health & Safety and Facilities Management (if required) and maintaining any current ventilation-related occupancy restrictions that were applied to previously approved research spaces through the R2R process.

Once this transition begins, our previously-established three-step R2R approval process will be suspended.

Thank you for all you have done over the past sixteen months to allow our research and innovation enterprise at Dalhousie to continue safely. With continued strong uptake of vaccines here in Nova Scotia, we can look forward to the prospect of an autumn return to largely normal research operations.