



To: Governing Council  
Staff in the Government Relations Portfolio  
Staff in Simcoe Hall

From: Melanie Woodin, President

Date: April 7, 2026

Re: **Appointment of Forrest Parlee as Chief of Government Relations**

---

I am pleased to announce the appointment of Forrest Parlee as Chief of Government Relations, effective April 13, 2026.

Forrest steps into this role at an important moment for the University of Toronto, as we strengthen our engagement with all levels of government and advance our position as a leading global institution. As a member of the senior leadership team, he will work closely with the President to guide the University's government relations strategy, shape our policy agenda, and build the relationships that support our academic, research, and institutional priorities.

Forrest brings more than twenty years of experience in government relations, public policy, and stakeholder engagement. He has built a strong record of success across the public, private, and post-secondary sectors. Since joining the University in 2018, he has held progressively senior roles within the Government Relations Office and currently serves as Deputy Chief of Government Relations.

In this capacity, Forrest has led complex advocacy efforts and played a central role in securing significant public investments that benefit both the University and the broader sector. His work has contributed to major federal and provincial funding commitments, strengthened key government partnerships, and advanced critical institutional priorities across our three campuses.

Before joining the University, Forrest served as Vice President, National Partnerships at Mitacs, where he led national strategies that secured substantial government investment and expanded university-industry collaboration across Canada. His earlier career includes senior public affairs and political advisory roles, where he developed deep insight into the policy and decision-making processes at all levels of government.

Forrest brings strong political judgment, a clear strategic mindset, and the ability to translate complex issues into effective advocacy. He builds trust with partners, aligns diverse

stakeholders, and delivers results in complex environments. These strengths will serve the University well as we continue to advance our mission.

I would like to thank Forrest for the leadership, advice, and steady support he has provided since the start of my term in July, and throughout this period of transition. His counsel and commitment have made a meaningful impact on the University and on our work together.

Please join me in congratulating Forrest on his appointment.