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John Lester is a former federal government economist who writes on public policy issues. In addition to his work with the School of Public Policy, John has published papers with the C.D. Howe Institute, the *Canadian Tax Journal*, *Canadian Public Policy* and the Centre for the Study of Living Standards. Many of these papers address fiscal policy issues such as the use of “fiscal rules” to control government deficits, the burden of the public debt, expenditure management systems, business subsidies and tax expenditure analysis. John has championed the use of benefit-cost analysis in evaluating business subsidy programs and other government programs.

Other research interests include innovation policy (particularly support for R&D), implementation of a preferential tax regime for the income generated from intellectual property and market failures in the financing of innovative projects. John has also undertaken an empirical assessment of the knowledge spillovers from R&D.