

Tech-Access Canada Welcomes Strong Support for Technology Access Centres and College Applied Research in Budget 2021

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OTTAWA, ON, April 19, 2021 /CNW/ - Tech-Access Canada, the national network of Canada's 60 Technology Access Centres (TACs), welcomes Budget 2021's support for the Interactive Visits Program and the numerous initiatives to support innovation and applied research at Canada's colleges and cégeps.

Specifically, Budget 2021 announced:

- Funding to provide more businesses with access to the National Research Council's Industrial Research Assistance Program's Interactive Visits, where firms can access equipment, facilities, and expertise at college-affiliated Technology Access Centres.
- Expanding the Industrial Research Assistance Program to support additional innovative small and medium-sized firms.
- Significant support for collaborative innovation projects and increasing TAC capacity through the College and Community Innovation Program.
- Investments in clean water, housing, and other First Nations community infrastructure to create good jobs and build healthier, safer, and more prosperous communities.

"We sincerely appreciate the federal government's strong show of support for the Interactive Visits Program. The increased funding will enable the TACs to assist even more Canadian innovators and entrepreneurs, from all backgrounds and all regions, to get their innovations closer to market," says Dr. Nathalie Méthot, Chair of Tech-Access Canada's Board of Directors

TACs are nationally-recognized applied R&D centres affiliated exclusively with Canadian colleges and cégeps. TACs help 4,200 Canadian businesses each year—81% are small businesses—advance their products, processes and services by:

- conducting applied research and development projects focused on solving company problems;
- offering specialized technical services and objective advice; and
- providing training related to new types of equipment and processes.

"Our members are thankful for the new investment in the long-standing College and Community Innovation Program," says Peter Laffin, Vice-Chair of Tech-Access Canada's Board. "Even though TACs

work with 4,200 companies every year, we have long waitlists. We look forward to increasing the capacity of the TACs to serve even greater numbers of SMEs as we move towards the recovery."

Tech-Access Canada is the national network of Canada's 60 Technology Access Centres (TACs). The network enables the TACs to serve any company, anywhere in Canada, and help them access the expertise, equipment, and facilities they need to solve their innovation challenges. The network's members provide clients and partners from across Canada with access to:

- expertise and experience of 2,100 business innovation and applied R&D experts;
- over 3.8 million square feet of innovation and applied research space; and
- over \$477 million worth of highly-specialized equipment and facilities.

As a public good, Canada's TACs are designed to be a safe space for firms to de-risk the adoption of novel technologies. Their industry-friendly Intellectual Property (IP) policies put the IP in the hands of industry to commercially exploit, a tremendous benefit for small firms hoping to stay nimble and expand.

TACs are inclusive by design, with their multidisciplinary teams assisting diverse communities of innovators and entrepreneurs across all regions and sectors. Tech-Access Canada and the TACs are guided by the philosophy that anyone can innovate and innovation is for everyone.

"We are proud to occupy a unique position in the Canadian innovation ecosystem, and the TACs, as objective innovation intermediaries, stand ready to assist in the delivery of the numerous initiatives related to innovation, commercialization, and talent development announced in today's budget," says Ken Doyle, Executive Director of Tech-Access Canada.

A not-for-profit organization based in Ottawa, Tech-Access Canada, has been facilitating the sharing of best practices between member TACs; working to harmonize service models across regions; promoting college applied research to external audiences, and operating the Interactive Visits Program since 2016.

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Ken Doyle, Executive Director, Tech-Access Canada, Phone: 613.366.4252, Email: kdoyle@tech-access.ca, Twitter: [@TechAccessCDA](https://twitter.com/TechAccessCDA), 116 Albert St., Suite 300 | Ottawa, Ontario | K1P 5G3, www.MeetTheTACs.ca, www.tech-access.ca