

Thriving in a Rapidly Changing Global Economy: new report on the future of Canadian TACs

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Mar 09, 2023, 08:50 ET

OTTAWA, ON, March 9, 2023 /CNW/ - Today, Tech-Access Canada released a new report entitled, "The Future of Canadian TACs: Thriving in a Rapidly Changing Global Economy". A Technology Access Centre (TAC) is a state-of-the-art applied research and innovation centre affiliated with a Canadian college or CEGEP, focusing their areas of innovation expertise to assist a particular industrial sector by providing applied research, technical services, and training/knowledge mobilization. There are currently 60 TACs operating across Canada supporting all of Canada's key industrial sectors.

The report offers a renewed vision and the means to ensure the growth and sustainability of Technology Access Centres. Based on core values of Innovation, Excellence, Collaboration, Entrepreneurship, Objectivity, and Equity, diversity and inclusion, the TAC model creates a network of objective innovation intermediaries working collaboratively with small Canadian companies to get their innovative new technologies to market in the timelines they need.

The report is available to read and download at: <https://tech-access.ca/resources/>

The report was authored by Nathalie Méthot, Director - Office of Research and Innovation, Collège La Cité, and Chair, Tech-Access Canada, David Berthiaume, CEO - Kemitek, Cégep de Thetford, and ex-officio Chair, Tech-Access Canada, and Ken Doyle, Executive Director, Tech-Access Canada.

"The Technology Access Centre model is a uniquely Canadian invention and a source of pride. Investing in a well-established network of TACs will position innovative Canadian companies to weather the anticipated global economic slowdown and thrive in the years ahead," said Nathalie Méthot - Collège La Cité and Chair of Tech-Access Canada

TACs are designed to be local, accessible, and affordable. TACs help Canadian businesses by:

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

Last year, almost 5,000 companies relied on TACs to accompany them on their commercialization journey. Through the report's modest policy prescriptions, a rationale is put forward for developing a strong network of 100 TACs over the next five years, all working under a shared vision and proven operating model, able to support at least 20,000 Canadian SMEs and organizations each year in solving their innovation challenges.

"The recommendations in the report come from practitioners and are designed to help policymakers appreciate what a successful TAC program for Canada should look like at scale: the model, its mission and values, its operations, its sources of funding and how to measure its impact," said David Berthiaume, CEO of Kemitek.

The 60 TACs operating today span a wide range of industries and sectors of the economy, and are located in diverse settings, both urban and rural. "A substantial number of other college research centres operate like a TAC but lack the official designation. A strong network of 100 geographically distributed—but interconnected—Technology Access Centres could help position Canada as an innovation leader, while scaling companies and creating wealth domestically," said Ken Doyle, Executive Director, Tech-Access Canada.

Established in 2015, Tech-Access Canada is a not-for-profit organization acting as the national network of Canada's TACs. Tech-Access Canada shares best practices among members and administers various initiatives using the TACs as a dedicated team of service providers, including the Interactive Visits Program, TAC360, and the Jump Ball Initiative.

Learn more about the TACs at www.tech-access.ca.

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