

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS:

Background:

BC DIGITAL TECHNOLOGY SUPERCLUSTER SHORTLISTED FOR NEXT ROUND OF FEDERAL GOVERNMENT FUNDING

Did you know? British Columbia (BC) is positioned to lead Canada as a global digital technology supercluster through collaboration, transformation of traditional industries and exponential growth. On May 24, 2017, the Government of Canada launched the [Innovation Superclusters Initiative](#), a new Canadian initiative. After submitting a 'Letter of Intent' in July 2017, the Canadian Digital Supercluster consortium led by technology leaders including [TELUS](#), [Microsoft Corp.](#), [D-Wave](#), [UrtheCast](#), [Finger Food Studios](#) and [PHEMI](#); leading industry players including [Teck](#), [TimberWest](#), [LifeLabs](#) and [Avcorp](#); and six post-secondary institutions including [BCIT](#), [Emily Carr](#), [SFU](#), [UBC](#), [UNBC](#) and [UVic](#) and supported by the [BC Tech Association](#), [Business Council of BC](#), [the Premier's Technology Council](#), [Wavefront](#), [LifeSciences BC](#) and the [Research University's Council of BC](#) has advanced to the second round of applications.

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THE CASE FOR THE DIGITAL SUPERCLUSTER

WHY BC?

BC is home to a vibrant, diverse and successful technology-enabled economy that has been building momentum since the 1960s.

- \$26 billion a year generated in revenue, making BC the fastest-growing technology sector in Canada
- 150,000 people employed in technology, making BC the fastest-growing tech workforce in Canada
- [Microsoft Corp.](#), [Amazon](#), [Cisco](#), [Disney](#), [GE](#), [Sony](#) and [Electronic Arts](#) are a few examples of global companies that are increasingly attracted to the province
- [Finning](#) and [SAP](#) have set up global analytics centres of excellence in BC; [Sierra Wireless](#) and [Wavefront](#) drive global leadership for the Internet of Things (IoT) and [D-Wave](#) and [1QBit](#) are the world game changers in quantum computing
- BC universities are producing world-class research and talent: They attract over \$800 million a year in research funding; since 2001, they have been awarded over \$1.2 billion in funding for research infrastructure and equipment and they have evolved their program mix to meet the needs of the technology sector by supporting a 57 per cent increase in engineering and computer science program spaces between 2006 and 2015
- The fact that three out of five Canadian “unicorns” (tech companies worth more than \$1 billion) call BC their home, 25 per cent of all US patents were derived from post-secondary research in BC and the visual effects for top-grossing films (Star Wars) and games (Nintendo) are being produced in BC is a testament to the province’s world-class, creative and digital media talent
- BC has a significant geographic advantage as the Canadian gateway to both Asia -- one of the fastest growing global economies -- and the Cascadia Innovation Corridor, with access to cross-border talent, research, capital and distribution. [See full news release here](#)

Looking ahead, BC can create a global supercluster and give Canada a globally

competitive advantage by applying its strengths in digital technology to industries and creating the digital jobs of the future. To learn more, [read the full report](#).

WHAT ARE THE TOP SECTORS IN BC?

BC has benefited from the economic diversity of its industries and for the past three years, has led the nation in GDP growth. BC has traditionally been strong in the areas of natural resources, transportation and infrastructure and has seen growth in sectors such as digital technology and health and life sciences over the past decade.

Harnessing the core capabilities of data collection, analytics and visualization, BC and Canada have the potential to solidify its competitive advantage and connect these capabilities across regions and industries in Canada.

HOW CAN BRITISH COLUMBIANS SHOW THEIR SUPPORT?

British Columbians can show their support by writing to their local MP or MLA, sharing information about the supercluster on their social media channels using the hashtag #DigitalSupercluster and visiting www.digitalsupercluster.ca.

HOW CAN CANADIANS SHOW THEIR SUPPORT?

This Federal Government funding initiative is important for all Canadians. Tech is a key sector in BC and a critical enabler for all industries in Canada. BC's geographic advantage as a gateway to the Asia Pacific and the Cascadia Corridor will forge global market opportunities for companies across Canada.

Anchored by BC's depth of capabilities, the supercluster harnesses decades of investment in data collection, analytics and visualization technologies across a multitude of industries, including natural resources, healthcare, agriculture, infrastructure, mining, transportation and entertainment. This foundational capability will propel Canada as a world leading technology supercluster.

HOW CAN STARTUPS GET INVOLVED?

The consortium includes a number of startups. We encourage BC-based startups to get involved in the conversation.

Startups can connect with BC Tech to get involved, spread the word on social media with the hashtag #DigitalSupercluster and visit www.digitalsupercluster.ca.

SUPERCLUSTER FUNDING

HOW WILL IT WORK?

The launch on May 24, 2017, signaled the beginning of a two-phase application process that invites industry-driven consortia to lead and invest in bold and ambitious proposals that will supercharge their regional innovation ecosystems. The application process will consist of two phases: 1) Letter of Intent and 2) Full Application (invitation only). Letters of Intent will be reviewed against [assessment criteria](#) and the most promising proposals will be selected to participate in the invitation-only Full Application phase. For more information, [click here](#).

HOW ARE FUNDING DECISIONS MADE?

Funding decisions will consider the application's ultimate benefit to the cluster and to Canada, including how the proposal will generate real economic impact, commercial results and position Canada for global leadership. For more information, [click here](#).

WHAT RESOURCES ARE AVAILABLE TO LEARN MORE?

There are a number of resources available in addition to the FAQs. Please explore the following:

- Deloitte Report: [BC-led Canadian Digital Technology Supercluster](#)
- October 2017 News Release: [BC'S DIGITAL TECHNOLOGY SUPERCLUSTER SHORTLISTED FOR NEXT ROUND OF GOVERNMENT FUNDING](#)
- October 2017 Media Backgrounder: [BC-led Canadian Digital Technology Supercluster Advances To Second Round of the Application Process for Federal Funding](#)
- [Federal government announcement](#) of their cross-country tour to announce the shortlisted applicants
- June 2017 News Release: [British Columbia will Accelerate Canada's Economic Growth as a Global Supercluster in Digital Technology](#)

WHAT ARE THE NEXT STEPS FOR PHASE TWO?

Over the next several weeks, the BC-led consortium will be further refining its supercluster application; building linkages to more companies, hubs and organizations; developing the collaboration programs and initiatives; and building the necessary structure and governance models for long term success.

DOES THE PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT SUPPORT THIS INITIATIVE?

Yes, the Province of British Columbia is supportive of the BC-led supercluster and issued the following statement.

“I support the Canadian Digital Technology Supercluster consortium in its effort to position B.C. and Canada as a global leader in digital technology that will translate into new growth opportunities for B.C. companies and new jobs for British Columbians,” says Bruce Ralston, Minister of Jobs, Trade and Technology. “The Province will continue to work to create a climate that supports B.C.’s world-renowned technologies to drive innovation and growth across all of our province’s economic sectors.”

The consortium continues to work with all levels of government to demonstrate the competitive advantages BC has to offer.

APPLICATION PROCESS

WHEN WILL THE NEXT DECISION BE ANNOUNCED?

We anticipate that the next decision will be made in early 2018. We are proud of the submission we put forward and look forward to connecting with anyone who has questions.

THE CONSORTIUM

WHO WAS PART OF THE BC-led SUPERCLUSTER CONSORTIUM?

The BC-led Supercluster consists of institutions, academic organizations, Canadian companies, startups and industry leaders. For a full list of supporters, click [here](#).

Canada's Digital Technology Supercluster Support & Participation

Private-Sector Enterprises



WHY ARE THERE COMPANIES OUTSIDE OF THE "TECH" SECTOR IN THE CONSORTIUM?

With the relatively short timeframes for preparing the Letter of Intent, the initial consortium represents only the starting point for the supercluster initiative. We expect many more companies and organizations to be part of the full application and if successful, hundreds of companies will be involved in supercluster projects and programs.

WHAT IS THE VISION OF THE CONSORTIUM?

Data is the new resource. The world is rapidly moving to a data-centric and digital economy. For Canada to succeed, we must be faster, smarter and more collaborative in inventing, developing and applying digital technologies. The volume and complexity of data is growing exponentially, providing opportunities for Canadian companies of all sizes to create additional value through their data and business processes.

Canada's Digital Technology Supercluster will focus on data collection, analysis and visualization to scale Canadian innovation companies and drive the competitiveness of firms through the use of data. As the data is increasingly complex, the analysis will need new visualization tools so that we can understand it and make better, informed business decisions. Starting with a focus on the west coast, the Supercluster will engage companies, innovators, and hubs to make the digital future a competitive advantage for Canada.

The Supercluster is anchored by more than fifty companies including major tech players; fast-growing SMEs; major industry players in natural resources, healthcare and transportation/industrial; all backed by a collaboration of six post-secondary institutions – UBC, SFU, UVic, UNBC, BCIT and Emily Carr.

HOW WOULD THE CONSORTIUM USE THE FUNDING?

The Digital Supercluster will leverage private and public funding from the ISI program to invest in projects and initiatives that will further Canada's digital technology capabilities and industry applications. By bringing together consortium players, these initiatives will spur collaboration, connect to customer applications, accelerate projects and ultimately drive export success for Canadian technology companies.

BENEFITS

WHAT IS THE ECONOMIC BENEFITS OF THE SUPERCLUSTER FOR CANADIANS?

Digital technology represents a new way to advance Canada's growth agenda at home and abroad. These goals align with the ISI program objectives:

- **Excellence.** The Supercluster will attract cutting edge research, investment and talent. This portfolio of future focused digital technologies will attract the leadership talent, intellectual property and financial capital to successfully meet industry challenges in key sectors of our economy;
- **Investment.** This Supercluster will increase investment into BC, with a special focus on business expenditures on R&D ("BERD"). As progress is made in improving BC's BERD from 0.70% to 1.00% of GDP, key learnings

will be shared with other provinces as part of the Supercluster's contribution to improving Canada's innovation competitiveness;

- **Commercialization.** The Supercluster will have a commercialization portfolio aimed at attractive market segments as digital transformation opens over \$200 billion worth of global opportunities. The Supercluster will generate new world-leading companies, and commercialize new products, processes and services that position firms to scale, integrate into global value chains, and transition to high-value activities and become global market leaders. This includes follow-up demonstration, commercialization and market access activities that boost productivity, performance and competitiveness; and
- **Collaboration.** Collaborations among technology solution providers will accelerate the creation of novel new technologies that build competitive advantage. These synergies are initially focused around industry issues but the solutions will have a broad application that will cross industries and markets. The Supercluster will foster a critical mass of ambitious, export oriented firms, benefiting from collaborations with other private, academic and public sector organizations. We will have a client base of at least 500 members and associates working through the not-profit entity in BC.

GENERAL

WHAT IS THE INNOVATION SUPERCLUSTERS INITIATIVE?

The Innovation Superclusters Initiative will allocate a small number of high-value, strategic investments in the form of non-repayable contributions to industry-led consortia through a two-phase application process. Contributions will normally be between \$125–\$250 million, for a total of up to \$950 million, by March 31, 2022, and will be matched with private sector investment for maximum impact. The specific number and value of contributions will depend on the applications received. For more information, [click here](#).

WHO CAN I CONTACT IF I WANT TO LEARN MORE?

For more information, please email or call the BC Tech team at:

General Information;

info@digitalsupercluster.ca

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www.digitalsupercluster.ca

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Join in the conversation with #DigitalSupercluster