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BC-led Digital Technology Supercluster awarded federal funding to transform Canada's fastest-growing tech sector

Initiative estimated to create 50,000 jobs and inject \$15 billion in GDP into BC's economy over 10 years

Vancouver, British Columbia, February 15, 2018 – The British Columbia-led [Digital Technology Supercluster](#) is one of the funding recipients for the Government of Canada's [Innovation Supercluster Initiative, Minister Navdeep Bains announced](#) today.

“It is an exciting and historic time for innovation in Canada. The Digital Technology Supercluster is a generational opportunity – one that holds significant promise for companies in BC and across Canada,” says Bill Tam, Co-Chair of Canada's Digital Technology Supercluster consortium. “Now the important work begins. As a collective, we'll apply data and use technology in new ways, such as mixed reality, which can digitally transform companies, solve industry problems and advance economic opportunities throughout BC, Canada and the world.”

In May 2017, Minister Bains announced a nationwide initiative to create up to five superclusters that will supercharge Canada's regional innovation ecosystems and “build Canada as a global centre for innovation.” Superclusters are innovation hotbeds, designed to energize the economy and become engines of growth. Canada's Digital Technology Supercluster was created as a collaborative effort of over 200 organisations, including some of Canada's biggest names in healthcare, telecommunications, natural resources, computing and transportation.

The following examples demonstrate how the Digital Technology Supercluster will contribute to life-changing advancements in precision health, natural resources and manufacturing:

- A secure, anonymous **Health and Genomic Platform** will build the systems required to allow medical specialists to create custom, leading-edge cancer treatments that are personalized to the unique genetic makeup of each patient, building on Canada's current leadership in this area.
- An **Earth Data Store** will facilitate and improve data collection, sharing and visualization in the resource sector – enhancing how information about resource projects is shared between project proponents, Indigenous Peoples, governments and communities.
- A **Digital Learning Factory** will help facilitate the development of virtual environments that enable design, rapid experimentation and testing of cost-saving approaches to address the most significant challenges in modern manufacturing.

These initiatives are among the estimated 100 projects that will be made possible by this infusion of federal funding.

Using data to drive sustainable long-term solutions across industries and sectors, the Digital Technology Supercluster will generate jobs, create new opportunities for Indigenous communities and support large-scale economic growth. It will allow startups and small and medium-sized businesses the opportunity to shine globally, while expanding the productivity and competitiveness of Canada's larger international firms.

"Leveraging the capability of Canada's world-leading broadband telecommunications networks, our BC-led Supercluster will use advanced data collection, analytics and visualization to produce innovations that have tremendous local and global impact, including enabling advanced healthcare treatments and cures via precision health analytics," says Josh Blair, Chief Corporate Officer, TELUS and Executive Vice President, TELUS Health. "As a founding member, TELUS looks forward to contributing to the breakthroughs our Supercluster will deliver for the benefit of Canadians from coast to coast to coast."

"The Canadian Digital Technology Supercluster is a powerful example of what we can achieve together as we build a globally-recognized technology hub along the Cascadia Innovation Corridor. The economic growth to be generated by the British Columbia-born consortium is a testament to how emerging technology will create new industries and jobs. Bravo to the Canadian Federal Government for making this bold investment in the future of Canada's fastest-growing tech sector," says Brad Smith, President, Microsoft.

"As a BC-born startup, we've experienced rapid growth through BC's tech ecosystem. We're proud to have been part of Canada's Digital Technology Consortium. It is a pivotal time for BC as we develop and implement a convergence of technologies in IOT, Artificial Intelligence, Robotics and Mixed Reality. This innovation will solve some of the biggest productivity challenges facing businesses today," says Ryan Peterson, CEO, Finger Food Studios.

"This announcement represents an incredible opportunity to unleash the potential of Indigenous innovation across BC, transforming the technology sector and communities across the province," says Denise Williams, Executive Director, First Nations Technology Council. "It is our hope that this Supercluster initiative achieves transformation of Canada's digital landscape, empowering Indigenous innovators across all its focus areas while deepening the sector's commitment to the meaningful advancement of reconciliation in a digital and connected age."

"This investment will have a lasting impact on our economy, our graduates and our ability to create innovative solutions," says Jamie Cassels, President of the University of Victoria and Chair of the Research Universities' Council of British Columbia.

"BC resource and technology companies are working together to use data and analytics to enhance environmental performance, productivity and safety. This funding will allow for further collaboration between the resource and tech sectors to unleash new innovation and address sustainability and productivity opportunities and challenges here in Canada and around the world," says Greg Brouwer, General Manager of Technology and Innovation at Teck.

The Digital Technology Supercluster Consortium extends their thanks to founding members AMPD, Aeroinfo, Augurex, Avcorp, BC Business Council, BC Tech Association, Change Healthcare, D-Wave, Life Sciences BC, Microsoft, Providence Health Care (supported by St. Paul's Foundation), Premiers' Technology Council of BC, Research Universities' Council of BC, Teck, Telus, Terramera, Timberwest, Urthecast and Wavefront.

The collaborative effort of this Supercluster set it apart throughout the application process. When short-listed as one of nine finalists in October 2017, new members from across Canada joined. We would like to thank Shoppers Drugs Mart, Canfor, GE Digital, Illumina, the Princess Margaret Cancer Centre at University Health Network (supported by the Princess Margaret Cancer Foundation), SickKids and the Terry Fox Research Institute for coming on board. The commitment, talent, diversity and collaborative approach of this Supercluster is unique. As a result, Canadians will benefit from new skilled jobs, new products and new platforms. These developments will enable Canadian companies to scale-up, making Canada more attractive for startups, international talent and investment. It is a pivotal moment for Canada's digital economy. As the Federal Government has demonstrated with this funding, the time has come for our country to invest in becoming a leading centre for innovation.

Media Inquiries:

For more information, please contact Kathleen Reid at kreid@switchboardpr.com or 604-724-1242. For media assets, please [click here](#). Interview opportunities with Bill Tam, Co-Chair, Canada's Digital Technology Supercluster Consortium, are available upon request.

About Canada's Digital Technology Supercluster Consortium:

Canada's Digital Technology Supercluster Consortium is a cross-industry initiative dedicated to ensuring BC and Canada are leaders in the digital economy. It is proudly based out of British Columbia, with partners from (and benefits that will be felt across) the nation. The consortium includes founding members Aeroinfo, AMPD, Augurex, Avcorp, BC Business Council, BC Tech Association, Change Healthcare, D-Wave, Lifesciences BC, Microsoft, Providence Health Care (supported by St. Paul's Foundation), Premiers' Technology Council of BC, Research Universities' Council members (UBC, SFU, UVic, UNBC with Emily Carr and BCIT), Teck, Telus, Terramera, Timberwest, Urthecast and Wavefront. We also had new members join in late 2017 after we were shortlisted as one of nine applications in the running. New members include: Shoppers Drug Mart, Canfor, GE Digital, Illumina, the Princess Margaret Cancer Centre at University Health Network (supported by the Princess Margaret Cancer Foundation), SickKids, the Terry Fox Research Institute and more than 200 other organizations and post-secondary institutions collaborating to solve the biggest challenges facing the world today.



The Supercluster will advance projects guided by defined industry needs to advance solutions using virtual mixed/augmented reality, data analytics and quantum computing. To learn more, visit www.digitalsupercluster.ca.