Frequently Asked Questions

Contents

Background

Over the next ten years, Canada's Digital Technology Supercluster is poised to create impact across Canada and around the world.

Canada's Digital Technology Supercluster is a proud member of a national network of five Canadian, industry-led innovation superclusters that will foster stronger connections—between start-ups, small-medium enterprises (SMEs) and large companies, post-secondary institutions, and research and government partners—and open the door to new forms of industry partnership while energizing the economy.

The Innovation Supercluster Initiative of the Government of Canada represents a significant commitment to a new model for innovation in Canada and is a cross-industry initiative dedicated to developing BC and Canada's leadership in the digital economy.

Canada's Digital Technology Supercluster is proudly based out of British Columbia, with partners from across the nation. The Supercluster will advance projects guided by industry needs to advance solutions using digital technology including data analytics, cloud computing, virtual, mixed and augmented reality and quantum computing. To learn more, visit www.digitalsupercluster.ca.

1. About Canada's Digital Technology Supercluster

What is a supercluster?

A supercluster is an innovation hotbed that is home to strong industrial clusters, linked through their shared reliance on specialized inputs, including technologies, talent and infrastructure. Superclusters offer:

- strong and numerous linkages across sectors, and between firms, public and academic research assets;
- a strong brand and competitive advantage that translates into global recognition and impact, and the ability to attract talent and investment across highly innovative industries; and
- exceptional performance, including an outsize impact on job creation and GDP.

What is the Digital Technology Supercluster?

The Digital Technology Supercluster facilitates and funds ambitious, collaborative technology leadership projects that develop products and platforms. Through this, Canadian businesses grow and prosper, creating jobs, inspired work environments and economic growth for Canada. The world will see Canada as a global leader in the development of digital products and platforms.

Why BC?

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

- BC's technology sector generates $26 billion in annual revenue and employs 150,000 people, making it the fastest-growing technology sector and workforce in Canada.

- BC has a significant geographic advantage. As the Canadian gateway to both Asia – one of the world's fastest-growing economies – and the Cascadia Innovation Corridor, BC enjoys access to international talent, research, capital and distribution.

- Microsoft, Amazon, Boeing, Cisco, Disney, GE, Sony and Electronic Arts are just a few of the global brands that are increasingly attracted to the province; Boeing, Finning and SAP have set up global analytics centres of excellence in BC.

- Three out of five Canadian "unicorns" (tech companies worth more than $1 billion) call BC home. Top-grossing films (such as Star Wars) and games (like Nintendo) choose BC for their visual effects production – a testament to the province's world-class creative and digital media talent.

- BC universities produce world-class research and talent. Our province's post-secondary institutions attract over $800 million a year in research funding; since 2001, they have been awarded over $1.2 billion in funding for research infrastructure. BC has the potential to create a global supercluster, giving Canada a competitive advantage on the world stage 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 is an industry leader in the following sectors, all of which play a large role in Canada's economy as a whole:

- Mining
- Forestry
- Health and Life Sciences
- Digital Technology
- Transportation and Infrastructure

This diversity of industry sectors has contributed to the economic strength of the province, which for the past three years has led the nation in GDP growth. Across these industries, the common factor is the emergence of data as a resource to drive innovation, productivity and global competitiveness.

Initially, the Digital Technology Supercluster will focus on industries with the greatest potential to leverage digital technology. These industries will build strong technology platforms that can transform Canada's economy for the better - leading to greater sustainability, growing exports and competitive advantage.

How can startups get involved?

We connect a range of digital technology market participants, allowing startups and technology developers to connect with larger players and technology adopters in BC, Canada and globally. By

participating in supercluster projects, start-ups, small and medium-sized businesses gain pathways to customers, markets and partnerships that they could not otherwise access. The initial cohort of Members includes 14 SMEs, 13 large companies and six post-secondary institutions, representing a diverse mix of companies at different stages. We encourage Canadian-based startups to get involved by joining on our [website](#).

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Who is part of Canada's Digital Technology Supercluster?

The initial cohort of members includes a diverse set of organizations across sectors and size. The initial 29 members representing 33 organizations include 14 SMEs, 13 large companies and six post-secondary institutions. In addition, there are more than 500 Associates - organizations that include SMEs, colleges, research organizations and not-for-profits that have joined the Digital Technology Supercluster.

- Avcorp Industries Inc
- AMPD Holdings Inc.
- Boeing Vancouver
- Careteam Technologies Inc.
- Canfor Corp.
- Change Healthcare
- Convergent Manufacturing Technologies Inc.
- Deloitte Canada
- DNAstack
- D-Wave Systems Inc.
- Finger Food Studios Inc.
- GE Digital
- Genome British Columbia
- Hatch Ltd.
- Joule Inc.
- Llamazoo Interactive Inc.
- LifeLabs
- MDA Systems Ltd.
- Microsoft
- MetaOptima Technology Inc.
- Molecular You Corp.

- Providence Health Care Business Corp.
- Post-Secondary Education Network: BC Institute of Technology, Emily Carr University of Art + Design, Simon Fraser University, University of Northern BC, University of Victoria
- Teck Resources Ltd
- TELUS
- Terramera Inc.
- TimberWest Forest Corp.
- University of British Columbia
- UrtheCast

For a complete list of our Members and Associates, see our [List of Participants.](#)

What is the vision of the Supercluster?

Our vision is to position Canada as a global leader in digital technology through a supercluster that unlocks the potential of data in the era of the intelligent enterprise.

In a world rapidly moving towards a data-centric and digital economy, data is the new critical resource. For Canada to succeed in this economy, 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. Increasingly complex data requires increasingly sophisticated visualization tools, equipping us to better understand the data and use it to make smarter business decisions.

How will the Supercluster use the funding?

The Supercluster will leverage both private funding and funding from the Innovative Supercluster Initiative program to invest in projects and initiatives that will further Canada's technology capabilities and industry applications in digital. 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.

3. How does the Canada's Digital Technology Supercluster work?

Through ambitious, collaborative partnerships, we facilitate and fund projects that develop digital products and platforms to transform industries and propel the economic growth of Canada.
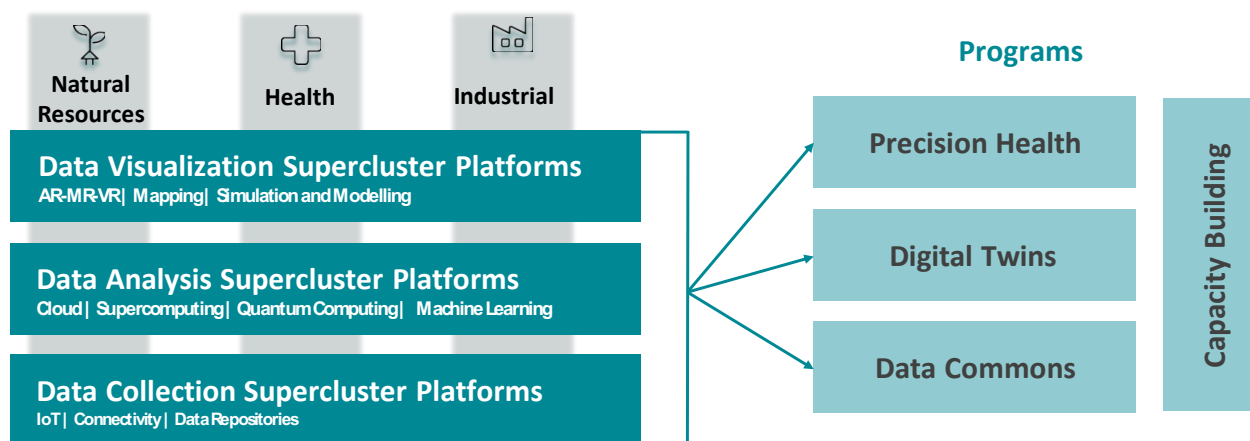
We will initially focus on the sectors of health, natural resources, and industrial as the starting point, recognizing the strength of these industry sectors in British Columbia. Over time, we will extend the

digital technology capabilities to an increasing number of industry sectors, applying key platform technologies, products, and processes to well-defined industrial challenges in each.

Our collaborations allow firms to propose ambitious projects in a shared investment model, accelerating the pace of innovation. Projects are selected through a competitive process, based on an evaluation process that assesses the potential of the technology development, the strength of the consortium and the expected impact to the innovation ecosystem.

What programs and activities are undertaken by the Digital Technology Supercluster?

The Supercluster has four initial program streams: three in technology leadership and one in ecosystem development and capacity building. The Technology Leadership Programs include program streams in: Precision Health, Data Commons and Digital Twins. The fourth program, Capacity Building Program is aimed at supporting the scale up of SMEs and broadening the region's base of digital talent.

Precision Health: Projects that enable the delivery of precision health services in clinics around the world, while empowering patients and putting them at the center of health and wellness systems.

Digital Twins: Projects that leverage digital technologies to create real-time, virtual production environments for operations management, simulation, modelling and training.

Data Commons: Projects that aggregate data from multiple stakeholders into shared platforms for exploration, decision making and innovative application development.

Capacity Building: Projects that will broaden the region's existing talent base and grow a deep and diverse digital technology talent pool, with a strong focus on promoting the increased participation of women and other underrepresented groups.

Will program streams remain the same over the 5 years?

We expect the program streams to evolve over time. As the Supercluster grows over the years, strategic decisions will be made to explore other program streams based on industry-driven needs and opportunities.

3. Benefits

What are the economic benefits of the Digital Technology Supercluster for Canadians?

Canada's Digital Technology Supercluster will have both nationwide and global impact. The goals outlined by the Supercluster 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 we'll need to successfully meet industry challenges in key sectors of our economy.

- **Investment.** The Supercluster will increase investment in BC and Canada, with a special focus on business expenditures on R&D ("BERD") – ultimately contributing to Canada's innovation competitiveness.

- **Commercialization.** As digital transformation opens over $200 billion worth of global opportunities, the Supercluster will have a strategic commercialization portfolio aimed at attractive market segments. The Supercluster will result in the establishment of new world-leading companies, and the commercialization of new products, processes and services that position firms to scale their operations, integrate into global value chains, and ultimately become global market leaders.

- **Collaboration.** Collaboration among technology solution providers will accelerate the creation of novel technologies that build competitive advantage. These synergies are initially focused around industry issues, but the solutions created will have broad applications across industries and markets. The Supercluster will foster a critical mass of ambitious, export-oriented firms, which will benefit from collaborations with other private, academic and public-sector organizations.

4. General

What is the Innovation Superclusters Initiative?

In February 2018, the Federal Government of Canada's Innovation Superclusters Initiative announced five Superclusters were awarded funding across Canada. The five superclusters are:

1. Digital Technology Supercluster
2. Protein Industries Supercluster
3. Advanced Manufacturing Supercluster (NGen)

4. [AI-Powered Supply Chains Supercluster (SCALE.AI)](#)

5. [Ocean Supercluster](#)

Who can I contact to learn more?

For more information, please email or call the Digital Technology Supercluster consortium.

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Sue Paish, CEO, and Bill Tam, Co-Founder and VP, Business Development and Partnerships, Canada's Digital Technology Supercluster, are available for interviews upon request.

Join in the conversation with #DigitalSupercluster.