



DIGITAL STRATEGIC PLAN

From Canada's Global Innovation Cluster: DIGITAL



MAY 31, 2023

(Final. Version 3)

SECTION A: CLUSTER OVERVIEW

A1. Cluster Overview

DIGITAL helps grow Canadian businesses through the development, adoption and deployment of digital technologies and by working with industry to develop a digitally skilled workforce to positively impact lives across our country.

We bring together businesses, academia, community and government agencies to solve some of industry and society’s biggest challenges – better and faster than any single organization can do on its own. Through a powerful model that combines cross-sector collaboration, Canadian IP creation and results-based co-investment, we unlock the potential of Canadian industry to lead and succeed in the digital world.

DIGITAL is a not-for-profit, member-based innovation enterprise with 1,100+ members from coast to coast and a digital innovation portfolio that has attracted over \$350M of project investment in digital health, natural resources, industrial transformation, workforce and talent development.

A2. Development Path and Progress

When formed in 2018, DIGITAL outlined a ten-year development path to grow our Cluster across three stages with Stages One and Two covering our first 5-year term, which ended March 31, 2023. It has subsequently been extended with a second five-year term we refer to as Phase II of the Global Innovation Cluster program. This second term covers Stage Three of our development path.

Illustration 1: Development Path



In these first five years, we established a new organization from the ground up and created a set of foundational achievements that provides a strong base for the evolution of our ecosystem into a Canadian Global Innovation Cluster focused on being amongst the best in the world in digital innovation and transformation.

Table 1: Five Year Performance

Performance Indicator	Foundational Achievement
Number of organizations joining the digital innovation ecosystem	1,100+
Number of collaborative projects in technology leadership and capacity building programs	100+
Dollar value of investment committed by Industry	\$165M+
Dollar value of total project portfolio	\$350M+
Number of new products or services developed	157 new products / services
IP assets created	493
Digital workforce reskilling and upskilling placements	7,000+
Scale-Up SMEs	25 scale-ups grown
New follow-on funding raised by Canadian companies participating in collaborative projects	\$828M

Some additional achievements worth noting include:

- During the COVID pandemic we were able to demonstrate the effectiveness of Clusters as agile program delivery capacity for the Government of Canada. In less than six weeks, our new COVID program received 450 submissions proposing over \$1.4 billion in potential for COVID-related investments. Within 100 days, we selected the top 33 projects in a \$93M program aimed at COVID response and recovery.
- We've had two companies win Governor General Innovation Awards which celebrate outstanding Canadian innovations. Swift Medical which focuses on digital wound care and Ideon Technologies, a world leader in muon geotomography for mineral exploration.
- DNAstack was recognized by the World Economic Forum as a 'Global Technology Pioneer', one of only two Canadian companies to receive this year's recognition: [DNAstack Awarded as Technology Pioneer by World Economic Forum](#)
- Through a strategic approach to talent development, we created the Digital Learning Lab: a national innovation platform for digital workforce and talent development. Our programming operates coast to coast with 7,000+ upskilling and reskilling placements in projects ranging from \$150K feasibility studies to \$15M+ multi-phase, pan-Canadian initiatives reaching thousands of learners and hundreds of employers.

In short, the first five years have met the goals of Stage One and Stage Two, namely to initiate a powerful collaborative model and accelerate the scope, scale and ambition of the digital innovations in our portfolio.

As we enter Stage 3, we are focused on enhancing our performance and finding a path for the long-term sustainability of our Cluster.

A3. Areas of focus

As the Canadian economy continues its transformation into a low-carbon, digital economy, DIGITAL will prioritize digital innovations related to the sustainability and well-being of Canadians in three areas of focus.

Area of Focus # 1 - Human Health

In early 2020 the World Health Organization identified 13 ‘urgent global health challenges.’ Among these are the need to, “make health care fairer, stopping the spread of infectious disease, investing in the people who defend our health and, harnessing new technologies”¹ At the same time, in Canada, access to health services, health outcomes, and the sustainability of our health systems were all in question. Between 2015 to 2109, health care spending in Canada grew at a rate of 4% per year - which is faster than the growth in GDP. This was followed by a 12.8% spike in 2020 due to the pandemic and in 2021, health care spending is expected to grow to a new high of \$308B or \$8,019 per Canadian².

While in some contexts, the global and domestic picture of health systems and population health are bleak, in DIGITAL we saw and continue to see the opportunity to develop and deliver digital solutions to some of the most pressing health issues and – together with our Members we have been doing just that with over 110 health products and services developed in the past four years, over 360 organizations involved in our health portfolio and over \$220 million in investment value.

Our results are being deployed on the ground and recognized globally. For example, DNA Stack was named by the World Economic Forum as a 2022 Global Technology Pioneer and this fall, the World Health Organization (WHO) has started working with Firstline to manage antimicrobial resistance (AMR), a top ten global health threat.

In Phase II we will continue to build on the dedication and success of Canadian organizations to address and improve human health through three specific lenses:

- **Better access to health care** and especially technologies that improve access for citizens who are marginalized, live in remote settings or because of health or other conditions have a difficult time accessing the care they need,

¹ [Urgent health challenges for the next decade \(who.int\)](#)

² [CIHI - Canadian National Health Expenditure Trends](#)

- **Improved health outcomes** from the services provided, including using digital technologies to deliver faster and more accurate results which allow citizens to advance through their health journey faster and more efficiently, reducing stress and burden on healthcare providers from frontline professionals in primary care to acute care providers and those in remote and rural settings, and
- **More sustainable healthcare systems** by leveraging digital solutions to reduce costs, system duplications (such as multiple diagnostic tests for the same condition and citizen), and inefficiencies. Platforms and deployment of data and privacy standards created with the interests of healthcare teams and citizens front and center will lead to more interoperable systems, protection of data and privacy, more integrated healthcare regardless of a citizen's geography, less pressure on stretched systems and reduced costs overall.

Area of Focus # 2 - Environmental Health

Environmental health is the foundation of a clean, prosperous economy. In Canada, our natural resources sectors (forestry, mining, and agriculture) are the primary suppliers of materials that support manufacturing, services and utilities. Combined, these sectors represent nearly 19% of GDP³, generate significant exports, are a source of major capital projects and a key economic driver for resource dependent communities across the country.

In addition to using data to drive productivity and sustainability, Digital is aiming at transformative solutions. In the Mining Microbiome Analytics Platform ([MMAP](#)) the goal is to replace some traditional mining extraction and site remediation technologies with breakthrough biomining solutions. [VergeAg](#) is leading the development of the world's first interactive planning platform for precision and autonomous agriculture.

In Phase II we will continue to build off the strength of Canada's natural resource sectors to catalyze the emergence of a low carbon economy through:

- **Resilient forestry** Using data and digital tools to manage and optimize forestry assets, supply chain operations and the ecological health of the forest, including its critical role in carbon sequestration.
- **Low impact critical minerals and mining** with innovations that accelerate the discovery of the critical minerals needed for the low carbon economy while reducing the ecological footprint of mining and energy projects.
- **Regenerative agriculture supply chains** with solutions that advance food security and optimize logistics while promoting plant vigor, biological diversity and soil as an asset for the natural sequestration of atmospheric carbon dioxide.

³ Data from [Sector Overview Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada](#) plus [Natural Resources Sector Fact Sheet \(NRCan\)](#)

Area of Focus # 3 - Talent

In Deloitte's recent "[Innovation at Scale](#)" report, talent was identified as the number one pillar for how to grow a stronger innovation ecosystem. This is particularly important in an era where it is estimated that roughly half of the global workforce will need to be reskilled or upskilled by 2025⁴.

Using Digital's rapid skilling systems framework, projects like the [Canadian Tech Talent Accelerator](#) take youth 18 to 29 who are not employed, not in education and not in training and place them on a career path in data science or cyber-security in 16 weeks. Projects like [Athena Pathways](#) accelerate workforce diversity with mentorships, scholarships and internships that support the career aspirations of women who want to enter the field of AI. Projects like [Canada's first Indigenous-led virtual production filmmaking program](#) build Indigenous digital talent.

In Phase II, with a national footprint for talent development already established, we will produce:

- **Innovative upskilling and reskilling** through pathways to digital jobs that provide well-paying careers for Canadian and help growing enterprises fill in-demand jobs. This includes designing pathways to reduce barriers underrepresented groups often experience when trying to access career opportunities.
- **Build leadership capacity** to drive innovation initiatives Canada and Canadian industry needs in the transformation to a clean, digital economy.
- **Grow the digital skilling ecosystem** to expand the service capacity in Canadian training delivery organizations and help promising Canadian digital edtech and workforce development platforms scale through access to training cohorts, users and employers who could become future customers.

A4. Ecosystem Strengths and Value Chain Opportunities

Our ecosystem strengths and opportunities are grounded in platform capabilities that harness the power of digital technology and data driven innovation. These capabilities defined in the table below are both evidence of where Canada has a competitive advantage in the digital ecosystem and validation of areas where Canadian industry is willing to invest.

⁴ [World Economic Forum Future of Jobs Report](#)

Table 2: Ecosystem Strengths

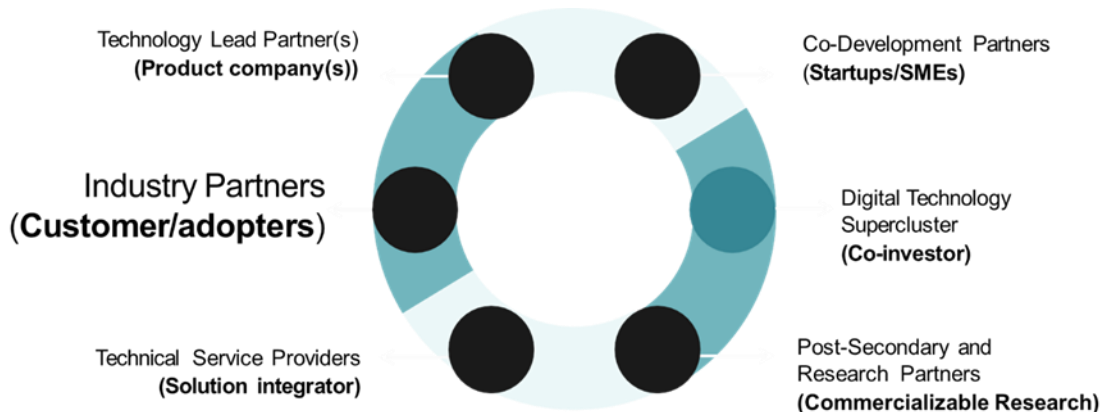
Ecosystem Strengths	Value Chain Opportunities
Platform Capabilities	
Sensors, Smart Devices, IoT Example: The system for critical mineral detection deep underground in our Ideon: EarthXray project.	Remote patient care, medical diagnostics, natural resources supply chains, autonomous devices, environmental monitoring
Geospatial & Hyperspectral Imaging Example: The use of satellite-based environmental analytics to monitor the effects of climate change in our EarthAnalytics project	Mining, Forestry, Agriculture Environmental Monitoring, Waste Management (Recycling)
Medical Imaging Example: Supporting virtual wound care for patients through our Swift Medical, Telewound care project.	Medical diagnostics and treatments, drug discovery, health equity, resource optimization
Bioinformatics & Computational Biology Example: The use of data for cancer detection with a blood test in our Imagia Canexia Health ACTT project .	Drug discovery, precision medicine, mining, environmental monitoring
Conversational AI & Digital Service Agents. Example: Delivering personalized wellness coaching through our Wsydom.ai Wellbeing.ai project.	Mental health & wellness, social services, education & training services

A5. Harnessing the Power of Collaborative, Cross-Sectoral Innovation

At the heart of our model and early successes is a Team Canada approach to innovation. It features collective problem solving, diverse experiences and backgrounds, discovering solutions with organizations of different sizes and perspectives, building meaningful relationships and learning to collaborate. This approach builds teams that move quickly, understand and embrace diversity of thought and experience, deliver exceptional results and are determined to drive Canada forward.

Our collaboration teams feature a mix of partners that include large companies, SMEs, post-secondary institutions and non-profits and also bring customers, developers, partners and other stakeholders together around a common goal. By leveraging each partner's strengths and insights, the team can accelerate progress and improve the quality of the digital innovation.

Illustration 2: Structure of a Collaboration Team



We design our programs to capitalize on industry demand (customers/adopters), attract private-sector investment, develop digital talent and skills and ultimately enhance our performance in business-led R&D. As a result, our programs are focused on demand-side innovation that sets us apart from other innovation programs that focus on providing grants and contributions to specific companies on the supply side.

We leverage our position as a co-investor and a convenor of new R&D collaborations. Our participation provides a path to buy down risk and enables collaborative teams to leverage shared IP and build a path to first-customer adoption. Our model strengthens the business case for private-sector investment, and through the joint investment model, amplifies the ambition, scale and scope of the opportunities – all of which serves to potentially shift the trajectory of entire industries.

By not focusing on a single industry or sector, we create a unique space in which organizations that may not normally engage with one another can discover common goals and shared strategic interests. By leveraging the diversity of a broad base of participants, we capitalize on the assets, perspectives and capabilities of many organizations. This leads to cross-sector, inter-disciplinary programs that are attractive and relevant across multiple sectors and international markets.

SECTION B: CLUSTER VISION AND ALIGNMENT TO PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

B1. Vision, Mission, Values.

Vision

Canada’s Digital Global Innovation Cluster (“DIGITAL”) is a pan-Canadian, member-based innovation ecosystem developing the next generation of digital innovation platforms, high-growth digital enterprises and digital workforce required to support the transformation to a low-carbon digital economy.

Mission

Accelerate the development of digital innovations in the pursuit of transformative economic opportunities as a catalyst to grow Canadian companies into global leaders.

Our Charter of Values

Our innovation community is guided by core values that are the cornerstone of how members and participants interact and work together. These values are:

- **DIVERSITY.** We embrace diversity and inclusion in everything we do.
- **TRANSPARENCY.** We are transparent and open, candid, respectful in our communications and actions, and we promote a trustful environment.
- **COLLABORATIVE.** We proactively collaborate, respecting and leveraging the value of different experiences and perspectives to drive agreement.
- **RESULTS FOCUSED.** We are outcomes and results focused, knowing that through collaboration we will deliver meaningful, strong and positive results.
- **GREATER GOOD.** We embrace the greater good and seek system-wide benefits.
- **BOLD.** We are dynamic and innovative, pushing technology for maximum business and societal impact.
- **RESPECT.** We keep our promises and, if there are conflicts, we declare them to maintain transparency and professional integrity.

B2. Goals

DIGITAL will continue to advance the development of a national digital innovation ecosystem that creates a global advantage for Canada. Specific objectives include:

1. ***Build a ‘world respected, globally connected innovation enterprise’*** where Canada and in particular Digital, is seen as a source of effective, leading edge, pragmatic digital innovations that solve major societal and industrial challenges.
2. ***Continue to grow a robust technology leadership portfolio*** that strengthens connections and collaborations between private, public and academic organizations to drive impactful commercialization outcomes and develop domestic capacity.
3. ***Continue to develop capacity in our ecosystem*** by accelerating the growth of a diverse, inclusive digital workforce with creative innovation leaders and world-class skilling systems.

4. **Accelerate the scale-up of globally competitive digital enterprises**, including SMEs, into globally competitive enterprises that export to the world by using our collaborative innovation model to support the development of digital products and services that provide commercial revenues streams and growth opportunities for Canadian companies.
5. **Strengthen Indigenous reconciliation** by continuing to expand the participation of Indigenous companies, people and communities in our project portfolio.
6. **Establish credible international relationships** with selected global enterprises, markets and / or programs. As a result of these relationships, DIGITAL will be able to act as a bridge into new market opportunities for DIGITAL's members.

B3. Consultation in Production of the Plan

This plan is based on a combination of program experience and consultations with members and stakeholders in the preparation of the Phase II Proposal for the Global Innovation Cluster program. Specific activities we undertook include:

- **Surveying existing members.** Through May and June 2022, we conducted our annual Member Success survey and set up one-on-one meetings with select Members. The results provided a baseline for identifying areas of interest which we used for the next stage of consultation.
- **Exploring through focus groups.** In June through August 2022, we completed multiple iterations on investment themes and focus areas, testing the concepts in one-on-one and small group sessions with existing members, stakeholders and new industry partner prospects.
- **Broadening outreach with National (virtual) townhall sessions.** In August 2022, we hosted a series of townhall and discovery sessions centred on our proposed areas of focus, outcomes and strategies. This also provided an opportunity to share information on the successes of Phase I projects that served to inspire new opportunities.
- **Complementing virtual outreach with local ecosystem meet-ups.** Through the summer of 2022, we hosted meet-ups in Edmonton (in partnership with Alberta Innovates and NGen), New Brunswick (in partnership with Venn) and Halifax (in partnership with Digital Nova Scotia and Oceans). We will be doing additional outreach missions to Montreal (in partnership with ScaleAI), Waterloo (in partnership with Communitech) and Toronto (in partnership with MaRS).

The Phase II proposal led to the award of a follow-on investment commitment of \$125M from the Global Innovation Cluster program that led to Board approval of a revised Contribution Agreement in March 2023.

Moving forward, we continue to review and update our strategic plan annually with the guidance of our Board of Directors, which are elected by our Members as well as

engaging members in targeted activities that support the development of our programming and projects.

B4. Alignment with Global Innovation Cluster Program Objectives

DIGITAL's core goals line up well with the expected results of the Global Innovation Cluster program which include a longer-term vision that drives economic growth and benefits Canadians, a robust technology leadership investment portfolio, growth and scale-up of SMEs, innovation ecosystem building, enhanced global presence and joint missions on cross-cutting priorities.

In the pursuit of these goals, DIGITAL manages two strategic portfolios, a technology leadership portfolio and a capacity building portfolio.

Our technology leadership portfolio is designed to support the creation of globally competitive innovations that lead to the commercial success of new Canadian digital platforms, products and services. The second is a capacity building portfolio focused on reducing the time and cost of closing skills gaps, scaling the digital skilling ecosystem as a global platform for attracting talent to Canada and promoting Canadian Edtech to a global audience. It also includes the development of the leadership capacity required to create the innovations needed to support the transformation to the low carbon, digital economy.

Together these two portfolios advance a pan-Canadian digital ecosystem that cultivates a global advantage for Canada in digital technologies focused on the sustainability and well-being of Canadians. This ecosystem strengthens connections and collaborations between private, public and academic organizations to drive impactful commercialization outcomes and develop domestic capacity. It also helps accelerate the scale-up of SMEs by fostering collaboration and integration into emerging value chains, in order to drive international opportunities, expand market share, and grow revenues.

B5. Setting the Stage for Phase II

April 2023 is the beginning of the second 5-year term for our Cluster. We have a strong set of foundation achievements we can use to grow an internationally respected, world-renowned innovation enterprise and Global Innovation Cluster that will be amongst the best in the world for digital innovation and transformation. We are excited about the future of our organization, the depth and importance of the opportunities within our grasp and the impact that we will have on our Members and Canada.

SECTION C: KEY TECHNOLOGY INVESTMENT PRIORITIES

C1. Technology Leadership Overview

DIGITAL will continue to grow an industry-led collaborative digital technology leadership portfolio in priority areas of investment:

- Human health solutions that will improve health outcomes and access to healthcare and increase the sustainability of the Canadian healthcare system; and
- Environmental health projects that increase the global competitiveness of Canada's natural resources companies (across forestry, mining and agriculture) while reducing their environmental impact and carbon footprint.

Within a market facing pipeline aimed at commercial opportunities, projects will focus on advancing the technology in digital platforms, developing new digital products and services, supporting customer adoption and help project teams implement commercialization plans based on strong market intelligence, competitive analysis, IP strategies, pricing and customer acquisition plans.

C2. Investment Focus

Human Health. Access, Outcomes and Sustainability.

In Phase II, our project investments will align with the national strategies to strengthen health data foundations (The Pan-Canadian Health Data Strategy) and to drive commercialization and adoption of genomic technologies and innovations (The Pan-Canadian Genomics Strategy). These strategies support the need for Canadians to access healthcare services through a trustworthy, high-quality, responsive, cost-effective and dependable system that supports healthy living, is easy to access and delivers positive outcomes. In Phase II, our pipeline efforts will focus on:

- Improving equitable access to care especially for vulnerable 'at risk' populations, including seniors, Indigenous peoples, new Canadians, LGBTQ2+, those living at or below the poverty line, and Canadians in remote and rural areas.
- Providing integrated and coordinated care to improve the experiences of patients and their families: across home, community and primary care, acute care and long-term care settings.
- Eliminating wait-times for emergency services, surgery and routine screening through inter-operable systems founded on data stewardship and privacy.
- Improving outcomes through personalized diagnostics and treatments and by accelerating drug discovery.
- Addressing stress and burnout of physicians and nurses through AI-enabled clinical decision support tools and by easing administrative burden.
- Optimizing health resource utilization and value chains that can also alleviate alternate level of care bottlenecks.

This will result in a portfolio of high value digital health solutions from Canadian companies that have the potential to scale-up through successful commercialization and adoption of these solutions in and outside of Canada.

Environmental Health. Transformative investments in our natural resource sector.

Our areas of investment interest will align with Canada's Critical Minerals⁵ consultation and the 2030 Emissions Reduction Plan⁶. In support of this we will focus on developing, deploying and scaling digital innovations that accelerate the sustainable identification, extraction/ harvesting and supply chains so that they can sustainably provide the natural resources that the world needs. In Phase II, our pipeline efforts will focus on:

- Reducing ecological and carbon footprints for the exploration and extraction of critical minerals and mining.
- Advancing automation and robotic fulfillment in labour intensive supply chains.
- Improving safety and reducing costs for operations in remote locations by connecting highly skilled Canadian workers to sites anywhere in the world.
- Digitizing assets and infrastructure to shorten supply chains, balance restoration and production in mining, forestry and agriculture.
- Developing better emission measurement, tracking and reporting systems with predictive analytics and AI algorithms that recommend mitigation alternatives.

These project investments will lead to a portfolio of high value digital solutions for the natural resources sector around the globe.

C3. Leverage: Advancing to an industry matching ratio of 1 to 1.5

In Phase 1, DIGITAL met the industry matching funding target of 1.0 to 1.5. Thus, we will continue to use a demand-oriented project development pipeline to create projects aimed at attractive opportunities capable of generating industrial innovation investment. To help improve financial leverage in our projects, we will also:

- Scale projects. Large projects leverage a broader range of financial resources enabling us to target our investments towards specific activities within a broader scope of collaborative work. This includes staging projects to attract larger proportions of follow-on investments in later stages to improve financial leverage.
- Attract investment from target customers. Projects are designed to provide opportunities for target customers to invest and realize early impacts from digital innovations alongside the investments made by the technology development companies, thereby increasing total project investment and leverage.

⁵ [Critical Minerals in Canada Discussion Paper](#)

⁶ [2030 Emissions Reduction Plan](#)

C4. Enhancing Innovation Impact

We start by building relationships across a diverse mix of organizations including sector leaders, SMEs, post-secondary organizations, public sector and non-profit organizations. By engaging over 415 unique partners in phase I, we have been able to build a compelling and credible record of delivering results for Members and our stakeholders. This has led to the emergence of a pan-Canadian digital innovation ecosystem of over 1,100 organizations across the country.

Second, we use a market facing pipeline aimed at commercial opportunities to bolster our pipeline. While we build off Canadian research strengths and technologies like artificial intelligence, robotics and virtual/augmented reality, we also have a mandatory requirement for demand-side participation in projects. This adds users and customers from the health, mining, forestry and agriculture sectors onto project teams to inform product specifications and confirm market acceptance criteria.

Third, we will increase our support and investment beyond R&D to include project activities related to commercialization strategies, go-to-market readiness and early market adoption. In addition to a robust IP and data strategy, we will support teams to develop their commercial strategies, to protect and leverage their intangible assets appropriately to compete in new markets, to meet regulatory compliance requirements and to finalize their commercial partnerships and agreements.

C4. Clusters as Innovative Mission and Program Delivery Catalysts

The Cluster Program has demonstrated its ability to be used to support other related Government of Canada programs. For example, DIGITAL has earmarked program funding from both the Pan-Canadian AI Strategy and the National Quantum Strategy.

As well, there are two priority government missions that all Clusters are supported. DIGITAL's support across the two missions is defined below.

Mission # 1 – Greening the Economy

As evident earlier in this submission our project investments do and will contribute to a low carbon, digital future. This includes amplifying our natural resources projects such as (forest [connectivity](#) and a suite of [food security](#) projects) to help decarbonize supply chains. We'll make important contributions to the critical minerals strategy using geospatial data, sensors and smart devices to find new deposits while minimizing the carbon and ecological footprint of exploration activities.

For the Emissions Reduction Plan 2030, in support of the Skills and People Centred Transition, our upskilling and innovation leadership placements will train and upskill Canadians for green jobs including opportunities in clean energy, natural resource management and environmental stewardship.

Mission # 2 – Supply Chain Resilience

As we digitize assets in support of Mission # 1, we will simultaneously collect data that supports the restructuring of supply chains. This principle applies in both health and natural resources. This will include the expansion of autonomous vehicles in remote sites, teleoperations, managing remote work and resource optimization. We'll also explore the use of digital twins and predictive analytics for disaster response, be it another pandemic or a climate induced natural disaster.

Mission Development Capacity

In addition, DIGITAL recognizes the potential that the practice of mission driven innovation can make in helping accelerate the transformation to a low carbon, healthy, digital economy. Thus, the ability to build, lead and advance missions is an important element of ecosystem capacity building as well.

SECTION D: ECOSYSTEM INVESTMENTS AND ACTIVITIES

D1. Ecosystem Capacity Building Overview

Ecosystem capacity building is the purpose-driven alignment and scaling of strategic resources that enable performance across our Cluster. To that end, DIGITAL will continue to advance ecosystem development activities that drive innovation and contribute to inclusive economic growth by:

- Advancing pan-Canadian digital workforce and talent development through the use of rapid skilling systems to reduce the time and cost to make people job ready;
- Expanding the service capacity in Canadian training delivery organizations and help promising Canadian digital edtech and workforce development platforms scale through access to training cohorts, users and employers; and
- Building leadership capacity to drive innovation initiatives Canadian industry needs in the transformation to a clean, digital economy.

This will be accomplished within an ecosystem development pipeline addressing workforce development and innovation capacity gaps. Projects will utilize real-time labour market analytics, advance competency frameworks, deliver rapid reskilling and upskilling placements, grant microcredentials and develop place-based economic development initiatives with priority support for rural and remote communities.

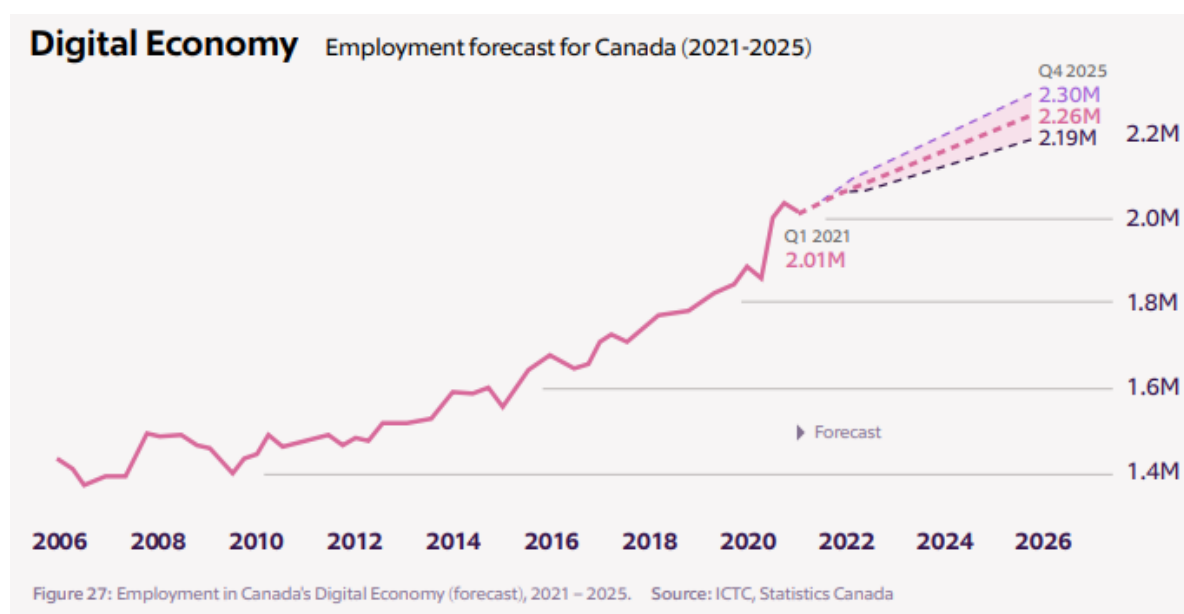
D2. Responding to Industry's Needs for Talent

In Deloitte's recent "[Innovation at Scale](#)" report, talent development was identified as the number one pillar for growing a stronger innovation ecosystem. In fact, 87% of

executives are experiencing or expect to experience a skills shortage, and less [than half](#) know how to deal with it. Talent is therefore, both a challenge and an opportunity in growing ecosystems.

Furthermore, according to Salesforce Canada's 2022 Digital Skills Index, **81 per cent** of Canadians say they don't have the resources to learn the digital skills required by businesses today, and **86 per cent** say they are not prepared to meet the digital skills requirements of the future⁷. Employers echo the skills gap. KPMG's Business Outlook Poll found that nearly **80 per cent** of the businesses surveyed say they need more workers with digital skills, however, **68 per cent** are having trouble finding and hiring needed talent. This inability to find or retain talent was identified as the number one threat to their growth prospects⁸.

In terms of employment demand, by 2025, ICTC forecasts employment in the Canadian digital economy to reach 2.26 million (or roughly 11% of all employment in Canada)—triggering a demand for an additional 250,000 jobs⁹. For clarity, the digital economy is defined as tech workers (in all sectors) and all workers in the tech sector (without double counting tech workers in the tech sector).



In response, we focus on reducing the time and cost to get Canadians job ready by advancing innovations in rapid skilling systems. This includes projects that focus on:

⁷ <https://www.theglobeandmail.com/business/careers/article-canada-struggles-to-prepare-its-workforce-for-changing-digital-economy/>

⁸ <https://www.newswire.ca/news-releases/nearly-70-per-cent-of-canadian-businesses-struggling-to-find-skilled-talent-893065566.html>

⁹ <https://www.ictc-ctic.ca/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/digital-talent-outlook-for-2025.pdf>

- Enabling Canadian workers, anywhere in Canada, to gain the digital skills and experience they need to build career paths in well-paying digital jobs
- Helping workers in transitioning industries reskill into high growth digital, green jobs in support of a “just transition” to a clean economy
- Developing creative leaders with the skills needed to lead green, digital transformation initiatives and develop world-leading innovations.
- Helping large enterprises, SMEs and fast-growing companies acquire the digital talent they need to meet their business goals
- Providing access to inclusive career pathways to equity seeking groups that reduces barriers to opportunities in the digital, green economy
- Creating new training content, learning technologies, competency frameworks and the use of real-time labour-market information to optimize workforce development

In short, our focus on innovative talent development helps our digital ecosystem secure the opportunities that come with the digital transformation of the economy.

D3. Leveraging AI as Infrastructure

We see the application of AI not only through the lens of potential products and services. We also see AI as a utility or emerging infrastructure and therefore, very much an area requiring a capacity building orientation.

Using earmarked funding from the PCAIS Commercialization Stream we are initiating the formation of a new program, Horizon AI, focused on seeding the start of an Applied AI ecosystem that unlocks the economic potential of AI. Our approach is anchored in developing a high potential commercialization pipeline, growing the AI talent pool and helping position Canadian companies to lead in emerging market opportunities shaped by the power and potential of Applied AI. In addition, we will be exploring business models, use-cases and IP with line of sight to what it takes to use AI in the commercial scale production of AI-enabled digital products and services.

D4. Missions

There is a fundamental economic and social transformation being driven by the transition to a low-carbon economy, adaptation associated with climate change impacts and the accelerated intelligent digitization of the world around us. This is a monumental challenge that is bigger than any one organization or group to deal with. It is clear that in this environment, capacity building needs to be about more than just scaling access to strategic resources. Capacity building also needs to be able to support the growth and development of transformative leadership. Thus, the capacity to act with agility, resilience and vision will be as important as any tangible ecosystem resource.

To that end, DIGITAL will, as appropriate, leverage our program architecture, collaborative network and experience to develop new programs or missions that advance the transformation to a low carbon, digital economy and respond to significant challenges faced by industry or government. We’ve already seen the value of this

through our response to the COVID pandemic. This agility will also be of service over the next 5 years to help achieve the programming goals of the Global Innovation Cluster program and other Government of Canada priorities.

D5. A Commitment to Diversity, Inclusion and Indigenous Reconciliation

Our Supercluster understands and embraces the benefits, strength and power of diversity and inclusion. In every element of our governance, operations, membership, management systems and in the development of our projects, we are committed to leveraging the benefits of diversity and inclusion. To that end, as part of Phase II, DIGITAL will also produce a new Cluster Diversity and Inclusion plan that helps foster fully inclusive opportunities in Canadian innovation for equity-seeking groups such as women, visible minorities, persons with disabilities, and Indigenous populations.

In addition, consistent with our Cluster objective # 5, we support the *Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada: Calls to Action* with deliberate efforts to include Indigenous participation in our projects. Project engagements align with actions in Business and Reconciliation, Health, Education, Language and Culture.

SECTION E: PARTNERSHIPS AND COLLABORATIONS

E1. Member / Stakeholder Engagement

In Phase II, we're going to consolidate our engagement around a variety of engagement tools that were effective in the first five years of our organization as well as introduce some new strategic engagement offerings related to mission mapping. Our portfolio of engagement activities will be some mix of:

- **Editorial Program.** The regular production of useful content that builds community, celebrates success, mobilizes knowledge and stimulates opportunity creation.
- **Event Program.** Breakfast seminars, workshops, conferences and other opportunities to connect and build the community.
- **Member Focus Groups.** Bringing members together to explore elements of the membership experience, Cluster operations and potential services that could be of value to the ecosystem.
- **Ideation Sessions.** Generate collaborative project ideas and opportunities for members to engage with organizations they normally don't connect with in the normal course of their sector or industry associations.
- **Mission Mapping.** Explore strategic program opportunities aimed at solving wicked problems or pursuing high impact, billion-dollar opportunities that would benefit from the mobilization around a mission driven innovation initiative.

E2. Ambitious Scale-Up: Growing Flagship Digital Enterprises (Including SMEs)

Within our ecosystem, programs and project pipeline, we will identify flagship digital enterprises with the potential to build a global competitive advantage in high growth product-markets capable of driving growth to \$100M in annual revenue and then onwards to \$1B. While this includes SMEs, it is available to any company with high growth potential. It's worth noting the Apple was a mature low growth computer company generating just under \$20B in annual revenue in 2006. It was the launch of the iPhone as a disruptive new product category that created the market momentum to grow Apple's revenues to \$215.6B in only ten years. For DIGITAL, scaling is about growing companies of any size.

In terms of small and medium sized enterprises, DIGITAL will continue to support the addition of SMEs as members of collaborative project teams. This provides SMEs the access to opportunities, partners and customers they need to drive international growth, expand market share, and increase revenues. It also helps SMEs optimize product-market fit for international value chains and learn from others at the development table.

We have evidence from our first five years where we engaged more than 200+ SMEs in our portfolio of 80+ technology leadership projects, invested more than 70% of our funds into SMEs and saw SME members leverage their position in projects and their affiliation with our Cluster to collectively raise over \$800M in the past several years. This inclusion into collaborative teams does have a measurable impact.

In addition, DIGITAL will help build capacity within SMEs in three additional areas:

- IP Awareness and Education. We develop good practices for managing IP and data in our projects and advance techniques that we share through educational webinars and coaching to help SMEs learn how to use IP and data to their advantage.
- Cybersecurity. This is a new theme that emerged near the end of Phase I. We began working with Canadian Security Intelligence Service to help SMEs develop an understanding of the needs and importance of sophisticated cybersecurity systems and knowledge including cyber insurance. We'll continue this work, including leveraging the expertise of organizations such as the [Canadian Centre for Cybersecurity](#), [Digital Identification and Authentication Council of Canada](#), and the [Canadian Institute for Cybersecurity](#).
- Product Development Champions. Within our talent programming, we will help build the leadership capacity required for SMEs to grow new product revenues by supporting the training and development of innovation leaders who understand how to implement stage-gate development processes and how to mobilize resources to support and grow R&D budgets as part of annual plans. This is an essential competency if we are to start making an impact in improving BERD.

E3. Collaboration with Other Clusters

In addition to continuing to advance collaborative innovation projects within the national digital innovation ecosystem, DIGITAL will also develop opportunities to expand collaboration with the other Global Innovation Clusters. This may include allocations from Phase II funding and/or collaborations with funding associated with new initiatives. We will explore opportunities in quantum, AI, agriculture, critical minerals, oceans and talent.

E4. Global Presence Through International Partnerships and Presence

DIGITAL will develop a formal International Partnership Strategy that builds relationships with complementary innovation enterprises and initiatives that align with our missions or programming. These relationships can act as bridges that facilitate the movement and exchange of digital innovations between countries and regions. Where appropriate we may even co-locate personnel or complete staff secondments for terms in open innovation labs around the world.

Within the technology leadership portfolio, DIGITAL will encourage international participation and investment from target customers and distribution partners that create global value chains for Canadian companies (e.g. RioTinto, BHP, Microsoft, Medtronic, GE Healthcare, Konica Minolta, AstraZeneca, Bayer and Roche). DIGITAL will also support international adoption and commercialization activities for new technology platforms, products and services developed in projects. This includes referring project participants to access Government of Canada programs such as the Trade Commissioner Service, EDC and international programs such as Eureka and the Global Partnership on AI managed by ISED.

Within the ecosystem capacity building portfolio, DIGITAL will support global talent attraction in two areas. The first is to continue to use skilling placements in the pathways to digital jobs initiative for immigrants, refugees and student pipelines aimed at filling in-demand digital and IT jobs. The second is to work with appropriate regulatory agencies to explore new ways of engaging talent through collaborative design projects. Examples of potential novel approaches include Estonia's [e-Residency](#) program for entrepreneurs or Spain's [Digital Nomad](#) visa for remote workers.

Geographically, we will leverage the strong relationships within the Cascadia Innovation Corridor and the global strength of the Pacific Northwest, continue our work in India and the UK. There are also interesting opportunities with a small number of 'focus countries' in ASEAN and more recent opportunities to engage with the Israel Innovation Authority.

SECTION F: OVERVIEW OF FINANCIAL PROJECTIONS

F1. Approved Phase II Funding

Over the five-year period 2023-24 to 2027-28, DIGITAL has been awarded up to \$125M from the Global Innovation Cluster program (GIC). These funds are allocated across technology leadership, capacity building and O&A expenses.

F2. Diversifying Funding Streams

DIGITAL's COVID program demonstrated the value of the Cluster program as a delivery vehicle for policy and program goals in addition to the Global Innovation Cluster. As such, in this five-year period, DIGITAL will diversify funding through the development of a New Program pipeline.

This is a program development strategy that has been incubated in the first five-year period. It has resulted in DIGITAL securing commitments associated with the following initiatives:

- Pan-Canadian AI Strategy – Commercialization Stream
- National Quantum Strategy
- Skills for Success (ESDC - Employment and Social Development Canada)
- Sector Workforce Solutions Program (ESDC)
- BC Digital Housing Construction Initiative

This pipeline already accounts for over \$63M in investment and reflects 30% of the total co-investments into projects over the five-year term. This number is expected to grow as DIGITAL continues to develop its capacity to develop new programming.

F3. Financial Projection

The financial projections in Table 3 (below) reflect the projected annual operating budgets across the next 5-yr term. Operating budgets are based on approved project claims under program delivery expenses and corporate programs and management expenses.

The first year of the new term, 2023-24, is a transition year where DIGITAL is completing claims to close out Phase I projects and contracting new Phase II projects. Contracting new Phase II projects involves setting up and running competitive proposal calls aligned with the outcomes of Phase II and includes review, selection and confirmation of contract commitments in master project agreements before payments begin to show up in operating budgets.

Performance is reviewed annually with operating budget commitments confirmed each year through the development and approval of an annual corporate plan and operating budget.

Table 3: DIGITAL Financial Projections 2023.24 to 2027.28 (C\$ millions)

CATEGORY	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	TOTAL
Tech Leadership	0.00	9.20	30.50	30.40	11.40	81.50
Ecosystem Capacity Building	0.00	7.00	11.00	8.00	3.44	29.44
Sub-Total ISI+GIC	0.00	16.20	41.50	38.40	14.84	110.94
ISI Phase 1 Extensions	31.50	6.50	--	--	--	38.00
Horizon AI / PCAIS	1.25	11.15	15.35	--	--	27.75
National Quantum Strategy	0.00	1.30	3.50	1.20	0.21	6.21
Specialty Programs	22.35	4.00	3.00	0.00	0.00	29.35
Program Delivery Expenses	55.10	39.15	63.35	39.60	15.05	212.25
Corporate Programs and Management	8.29	7.49	9.37	9.27	9.67	44.09
TOTAL CLUSTER	63.39	46.64	72.72	48.87	24.72	256.34

F4. Anticipated Innovation Portfolio Value

The target industry match is based on growing industry matching leverage from 1.00 dollar of industry matching for every dollar of co-investment to 1.50 dollars of industry matching for every dollar of co-investment by 2027.28. This means the \$212.25M invested into program projects will attract between \$225M to \$300M in leveraged investment. This will result in a total digital innovation project portfolio of approximately \$500M in this five-year term.

F5. Financial management Framework

DIGITAL has a strong financial management framework that ensures a robust accountability structure exists that clearly articulates policy disciplines, governance structures and process and controls that contribute to the effectiveness and efficiency of CDIC operations. This includes budgeting, forecasting and reporting, project commitment and spending, and operational policies and procedures.

SECTION G: PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK

G1. Performance Management Framework

DIGITAL will support the development of a new Performance Management Framework Approach that captures the full reach of the program and demonstrates our eco-system impact. This will start with a Ministry-led Performance Measurement Framework for the Global Innovation Clusters program, which will define core, evergreen metrics reflected in the program objectives. Then, DIGITAL will co-create a tailored Impact Measurement Framework with the Ministry to reflect the characteristics and objectives of our national innovation ecosystem.

G2. Target Ten Year Results

Building off the foundational achievements of the first five years, here are the cumulative ten-year targets.

Table 4: Cumulative Ten-Year Performance Targets

Performance Indicator	Base (March 31, 2023)	Target (March 31, 2028)
Number of organizations joining the digital innovation ecosystem	1,100+	1,250
Number of collaborative projects in technology leadership and capacity building programs	100+	150
Dollar value of investment committed by Industry	\$165M+	\$350M
Dollar value of total project portfolio	\$350M+	\$700M
Number of new products or services developed	157 new products / services	300 new products / services
IP assets created	493	1,000
Digital workforce reskilling and upskilling placements	7,000+	15,000+
Scale-Up SMEs	25 scale-ups grown	50 scale-ups grown
New follow-on funding raised by Canadian companies participating in collaborative projects	\$828M	\$2,000M

The membership base is expected to be relatively stable now between 1,000 and 1,500 members depending on programming. Larger scale projects are expected to result in the addition of fewer but larger collaborative projects in the next 5-year period when compared to the first 5-year period.

SECTION H: INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY STRATEGY

H1. IP Strategy – Key Success Factors

Projects supported through our programs will demonstrate a pathway to commercialization which will include considerations for intellectual property. The Supercluster has an Intellectual Property (IP) Strategy that ensures that IP policies and procedures adhere to the following key success factors:

- Protect the Value of Background IP. Ensure that becoming a Member of the Supercluster creates no encumbrances on Background IP and that within a collaborative development project, every Member has the right to define appropriate permission and restrictions on their own Background IP.
- Prepare for competition in a global landscape. Ensure selected projects are backed by high performance project teams with the right mix of resources and expertise required to achieve global market leadership with the proposed innovation.
- Maximize the value from Foreground IP. Take an opportunity management approach that ensures focused leadership for the primary investment opportunity, support for associated supply chain, application and ecosystem development opportunities and the cultivation of investment opportunities around secondary, non-competitive applications.
- Demonstrate value to Canadians. Show how innovation affects all citizens. Share stories around CDTs supported products and technology pursuing big ideas to improve people's lives. Ensure that these stories connect high performance innovation as the path to deliver these new products and technology.
- Augment the capacity of SMEs. Ensure that IP outcomes will benefit SMEs including strategic IP management, generation and retention, which will enable them to grow and be competitive on the global stage.

The Supercluster manages approved collaborative development projects through binding Master Project Agreements (MPA) that outline the roles, responsibilities, and obligations of each. This includes completed negotiations around the details of IP management and the production of an IP rationale. Finally, as a signatory to all Master Project Agreements, the Supercluster is able to facilitate discussions and approvals to help ensure that final terms and conditions are indeed fair and reasonable.

We have plenty of examples that this approach works. For example, Terramera, an SME and leader in sustainable agriculture technologies, has generated 6 patents filed within 4 PCT (patent cooperation treaty) applications and patent filings in Canada and the US. In another example, Invixium has protected algorithms and techniques through a combination of 8 software copyright and trade secrets and 2 method trade secrets enabling their Canadian biometric technology to be distributed across 4 continents.

H2. Advancing IP Strategy

DIGITAL will continue to deliver IP management services to project teams across all programming, focused on:

- Strong Understanding of IP. Working with project participants to ensure a clear understanding of the IP that is brought into the projects and that will be generated, ownership, licensing requirements and the impact of third-party IP.
- Facilitate productive collaborations around IP. Ensuring all project participants identify their IP and data contributions and ownership along with anticipated commercial terms as part of the project development process to avoid future conflicts and maximize the shared opportunity.
- Provide access to IP expertise and resources. Working in partnership with other organizations in the Canadian IP ecosystem (e.g., IAC, FORPIQ, IPIC, Elevate IP, IP Ontario and ventureLAB), we will continue to provide opportunities to engage with sophisticated IP professionals who provide impartial guidance to help our Members develop and implement their IP strategies.
- Cross-leverage IP. We support Canadian companies to explore opportunities for leveraging IP and data assets across different sectors, markets and ecosystems, often in unrelated fields for novel applications.

With the transition from Phase I into Phase 2, DIGITAL will conduct a review of its IP Policy and Registry in FY2023.24. This will ensure our policies reflect current best practices in IP management as well as explore ways to collaborate and generate more value for Canadian enterprises.

SECTION I: GOVERNANCE AND OPERATIONS

I1. Board Composition

In March 2023, the membership model for DIGITAL was simplified from multi-level membership to one class of regular membership. The multi-level model was created to help industry partners making significant financial commitments to a new organization, the Digital Technology Supercluster, be confident in the growth and development of the organization through assigned Board positions. After five of years of performance and a proven model for collaboration, this structure was no longer required. Members unanimously agreed to the new membership and governance model.

The result is a smaller Board consisting of a maximum of 12 members plus one observer from the Government of Canada. The Board is committed to gender parity with at least 50% of positions filled by women. Current members of the Board can be found on our website: [DIGITAL Board](#).

The Board has established four Committees:

- Finance and Audit Committee. Focused on financial management.
- Program Investment. Focused on program strategies and performance.
- Governance Committee. Focused on membership, governance and general policies and procedures.
- Executive Committee. Focused on human resources and other business not covered by the other three committees.

Organizations can still be affiliated with DIGITAL as associates. This continues as a no-cost exploratory category of affiliation enabling DIGITAL to be open and accessible to a wide variety of organizations across the country.

12. Organizational Structure

The organization is led by a CEO and four other executives who lead organization groups in marketing & public affairs, technology leadership, foresight & talent development and finance. Responsibilities for general operations are distributed across the leadership team. A summary of the groups and key service functions are summarized in Table 6.

Table 6: Summary of Service Functions by Organizational Group

GROUP	KEY SERVICE FUNCTIONS
CEO's Office	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Governance and performance management • Strategy & investment attraction • External relations and representations • International Strategy
Marketing & Public Affairs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public sector relationship management • Corporate brand management, digital marketing and media • General member services
Technology Leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manage core ISI/GIC technology leadership portfolio • Manage specialty program technology leadership streams • IP management services • Program member engagement & partnerships
Foresight & Talent Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manage core ISI/GIC capacity building portfolio. • Develop specialty programs • Scouting services • Program member engagement & partnerships
Finance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financial management & administration

GROUP	KEY SERVICE FUNCTIONS
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Payment & receivables management • Payroll services & benefits administration
Operations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IT workstation management • IT program and corporate management software systems • HR support services • Office leases and equipment

13. Organization Development

DIGITAL’s culture is founded on core values established with our founding members during Phase I that built an enthusiastic, committed, caring ecosystem where we can trust each other in the pursuit of global leadership.

This ecosystem and culture is supported by an organization of 25 to 30 staff and contractors depending on the workload at any point in time. The team has evolved over Phase I in response to the needs our Members, the GIC program and each other. This evolution will continue throughout Phase II as well.

Our top organizational development priorities over the next five years:

1. **Advance technology-enabled services.** Digital will continue to develop digital tools and services that help deliver effective, efficient programming and member services. This includes branded digital assets that support knowledge mobilization and ecosystem development.
2. **Build expert networks to support our areas of focus.** We will augment our organization with expert networks in our areas of focus including subjects such as healthcare, forestry, mining, skilling, data as an asset, deep technologies, applied AI and emerging market opportunities.
3. **Succession planning and staff career development.** We have a diverse team with well-experienced executive leaders and staff that have tremendous growth potential. Some are already on their way to becoming strong innovation program leaders. With the Phase II of the Global Innovation Cluster program, we will update succession plans for all our executive positions as well as continue working with Cluster staff to enhance their career development.

In the end, we have a responsive, committed team that is excited for the next phase of DIGITAL.

For the final word in our strategic plan, we have added quotations from our members to illustrate how our work impacts the growth and development of the Members of DIGITAL.

“Thanks to the help of the Digital Supercluster, we gathered diverse world-class collaborators and built a product that gained international adoption in less than a year. Without the Digital Supercluster’s guidance and endorsement, there would be no contractual relationship between Firstline and the WHO.”

Jason Buck, CTO, [Firstline](#)

“In the first two years of working with the Digital Supercluster, Terramera nearly doubled its workforce. Our collaboration has been instrumental in helping us identify and form new partnerships, which in turn has allowed us to expand the scope of our work. Through the Digital Supercluster, we have access to top talent, great ideas and world-class facilities.”

Karn Manhas, Founder and CEO of [Terramera](#)

We have global ambitions, and the Digital Supercluster positions us as a strong Canadian partner. It boosts the credibility of smaller companies and allows us to be a leader in the global market a lot faster.”

Dr. Alex Greenhill, Founder, CEO and Chief Medical Officer of [Careteam](#)

“Working with the Digital Technology Supercluster has greatly accelerated the pace of innovation at Swift Medical, deepening our IP strategy and assets. This has sharpened our competitive edge against global competitors, raised our profile in health technology, and allowed us to provide much more value to our healthcare customers – and ultimately their patients – with the technology we’ve developed and commercialized through the project.”

Justin Allport, Co-Founder and Chief Engineer, [Swift Medical](#)

“The Supercluster has been an important catalyst in driving our accelerated growth, connecting us with new customers and markets and fueling the investments that we need to create new innovations that can succeed globally.”

Adrian Schauer, CEO of [AlayaCare](#)

“The speed and efficiency of the XrAI deployment was a direct result of the collaboration empowered by the Digital Supercluster. Deploying the tool in Canada shows that we can replicate it across different global markets. This is opening opportunities we might not have had without support from the Supercluster.”

Deepak Kaura, Chief Medical Officer, [Synthesis Health](#)

“I believe this consortium-based innovation is the way of the future, especially in rapidly growing emerging areas such as AI and ML. By building teams with other “A-list”

players we can provide interesting, meaningful projects to work on. That means we can create Canadian IP and new jobs. The Digital Supercluster played a key role as an 'honest broker' in bringing together the partners at a speed not otherwise possible around these ambitious AI/ML projects.”

Nicole Janssen, AltaML Founder and Co-CEO, [AltaML](#)

“Mosaic joined as a founding member of the Digital Supercluster because we saw an opportunity to collaborate on innovation in a space we would not naturally attack ourselves. For a mid-sized Canadian company, grassroots research and development can be challenging. This is the ideal investment framework to de-risk our spend while accelerating our pursuit of new technologies that increase productivity and support more sustainable practices.”

Jeff Zweig, Former CEO of [Mosaic](#)

“It was astonishing to see how many partners throughout Canada stepped up and rallied in support of this common vision. Our country has so much talent – in AI, genomic medicine and policy. What’s so special about the Supercluster is that it enables us to build world-class consortiums and scale quickly in a way that hasn’t been done before.”

Marc Fiume, Co-Founder & CEO, [DNAstack](#)

“I can't think of a better way to achieve progress than to create equal opportunities for women to get exposure to real-world experiences in the AI and tech industry while completing their academic training.”

Maryam Sadeghi, Co-Founder & CEO, [MetaOptima](#)

This partnership with Canada's Digital Technology Supercluster and Microsoft builds on our momentum, as we continue to expand our curriculum across Canada, ensuring that underrepresented youth have opportunities to gain digital skills. We see a huge opportunity through this accelerator program to deploy rapid skilling solutions that will enable youth to enter meaningful and sustainable career.

Julia Blackburn, CEO, [NPower Canada](#)