

For Immediate Release

Ontario Centre of Innovation Launches Strategic MOU Network to Boost Life Sciences Growth and Support Early-Stage Companies

December 04 (Toronto, ON) – The Ontario Centre of Innovation (OCI) has formalized a landmark Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with a consortium of Ontario’s leading life sciences commercialization organizations to expand support for early-stage health innovators and strengthen co-investment pathways across the province.

Through this collaboration, Ontario’s Life Sciences Innovation Fund (LSIF) and participating ecosystem partners will work together to advance high-potential health startups, accelerate innovation adoption, and position Ontario as a global leader in health technology commercialization.

The MOU brings together key strategic partners in Ontario’s life sciences ecosystem, including adMare BioInnovations, Canadian Centre for Aging & Brain Health Innovation (CABHI), Capital Bioventures, Centre for Commercialization of Regenerative Medicine (CCRM), FACIT, MaRS Discovery District, Ontario Brain Institute (OBI), OBIO®, Ontario Genomics, and Toronto Innovation Acceleration Partners (TIAP).

“Ontario’s Life Sciences Innovation Fund is helping high-potential companies turn breakthrough ideas into real-world impact,” said Claudia Krywiak, President and CEO, Ontario Centre of Innovation (OCI). “This partnership unites the province’s most influential life sciences commercialization organizations behind a shared mission, supporting founders, catalyzing investment, and ensuring Ontario discoveries scale globally while creating economic and health benefits here at home.”

Together, these organizations will identify co-investment opportunities, enhance visibility of promising Ontario-based innovators, and collaborate on programs that strengthen Ontario’s talent, research, and commercialization capacity.

Through this coordinated agreement, partners will grow Ontario’s Life Sciences economy, while promoting emerging companies aligned with their mandates and identifying opportunities for co-investment in qualified life sciences ventures.

The MOU explores joint pilot initiatives, programs, and commercialization pathways, as it accelerates the growth of Ontario’s most promising early-stage health technologies.

“Ontario is a global leader in life-saving technology development, fueling world-class talent and driving economic growth,” said Raed Kadri, Vice President, Strategic Initiatives, Business Development and Head of the Ontario Vehicle Innovation Network (OVIN). “By uniting our leading life sciences institutions, we are accelerating the commercialization of homegrown technologies faster than ever before - driving innovation from research to global adoption.”

The collaboration supports Ontario's Life Sciences Strategy by fostering commercialization success and strengthening the province's competitive edge in biomedicine, biotechnology, health AI, genomics, aging and brain health, oncology innovation, regenerative medicine, medtech, and related fields.

The organizations in this partnership are supported by the Government of Ontario.

Partner Quotes

"At adMare, our focus is on building life-changing, globally competitive life science companies in Canada by backing early-stage ventures with critical capital, strategic guidance, turnkey lab facilities and the leadership talent they need to thrive," said Gordon C. McCauley, President & CEO, adMare BioInnovations. "We are excited to be part of this strategic MOU network, a powerful collaboration, creating stronger opportunities for Ontario innovators and entrepreneurs to scale companies anchored in Canada and built to lead on the world stage."

"We're proud to partner with OCI and other life science organizations to accelerate Ontario's agotech innovators from early development to global scale," said Dr. Allison Sekuler, President and Chief Scientist of the Centre for Aging + Brain Health Innovation (CABHI). "Together, we're keeping Ontario competitive by strengthening the economy, supporting entrepreneurs, and improving the health and wellbeing of older adults and their caregivers."

"The Life Sciences Innovation Fund is a critical component of Ontario's Life Sciences funding ecosystem," said Dr. Jeff Smirle, Co-Founder and Executive Director at Capital BioVentures. "Capital BioVentures is pleased to partner on this initiative by helping to de-risk Ontario's most promising ventures for investment."

"This partnership represents a coordinated commitment to turn Ontario's scientific excellence into economic growth and improved health outcomes," said Dr. Michael May, President and CEO, CCRM. "By working together through this MOU, we can help early-stage companies scale regenerative medicine and other transformative therapies from lab to market faster, strengthening Ontario's global leadership in health innovation."

"FACIT is proud to join this collaboration to strengthen Ontario's life sciences ecosystem," said Peter Goodhand, Acting President of FACIT. "With our commercialization venture expertise, partnership with the Ontario Institute for Cancer Research and continuum of risk capital, we're uniquely positioned to bridge the seed and early venture funding gap, scale oncology start-ups, and create lasting economic and health impact for Ontarians."

“MaRS, OBIO®, and TIAP recently launched Life Sciences Central to unlock Canada’s full innovation and economic potential by connecting the dots across our ecosystem — from lab space and capital to talent and commercialization support,” said Grace lee Reynolds (MaRS Discovery District), Dr. Maura Campbell (OBIO®) and Parimal Nathwani (TIAP), on behalf of the Life Sciences Central. “As a key partner to OCI, Life Sciences Central brings our collective experience supporting health innovators and scaling life sciences ventures. Together, we’ll maximize the impact of LSIF and ensure the next generation of Canadian health innovators thrives.”

“At OBI, we’ve seen how an integrated team science approach accelerates brain health innovation,” said Dr. Tom Mikkelsen, President and Scientific Director of the Ontario Brain Institute. “This partnership with OCI and Ontario’s leading life sciences organizations strengthens the collaborative infrastructure needed to turn discoveries into solutions that improve lives and further cement Ontario’s leadership in brain health research, commercialization, and care.”

“This is a key step to getting game-changing treatments and healthcare solutions out of the lab and into the real world to help more people,” said John Rafferty, Ontario Genomics President & CEO. “Ontario is a hotbed of homegrown innovation that needs support like this to become a part of our everyday lives.”

About the Ontario Centre of Innovation

The Ontario Centre of Innovation (OCI) brings industry, academic, and government partners together to invest in collaborative R&D, technology development, and commercialization opportunities that generate the highest return on innovation for Ontarians.

As an ecosystem connector, OCI initiates unparalleled partnership opportunities, develops and manages successful industry-academic collaborations, supports high-potential SMEs in commercializing ground-breaking research, and provides hands-on training and skills development opportunities for the next generation of highly-skilled talent.

OCI drives economic growth and job creation through investments in the development, commercialization, and adoption of advanced technologies. For more information:

<https://www.oc-innovation.ca>

MEDIA

Alicia Pereira, apereira@oc-innovation.ca