GenomeCanada

News Release
For Immediate Release

Canadian farmers, entrepreneurs and health care workers to benefit from new investment in research

More than $20 million for collaborations between researchers and businesses to save lives, help farmers and protect the environment

August 16, 2018, Lincoln, Ontario – Putting research in the hands of those who use it to create and innovate leads to increased competitiveness, economic growth and job creation. That's why the Government of Canada continues to support the country's researchers whose discoveries inspire entrepreneurs and innovators in the agriculture, health and commercial sectors.

Today, the Honourable Kirsty Duncan, Minister of Science and Sport, announced $6.7 million in federal funding for seven new projects under Genome Canada's Genomic Applications Partnership Program (GAPP) that will match researchers with companies to develop new gene-based technologies in health care, agriculture and environmental protection. An additional $14.3 million is being invested by provincial governments, businesses and other funding partners for a total of $21 million.

By studying genetic sequences, researchers develop technologies or processes that will improve crop growth, find a better treatment for babies born with a rare disease called cystinosis, and better protect wildlife, among other innovations. Genomics involves the study of genes, other DNA sequences and associated biological information that makes every organism different.

Minister Duncan made the announcement at Vineland Research and Innovation Centre, one of the seven research institutions receiving GAPP funding. This world-class centre for horticulture science and innovation will partner with a team of University of Toronto researchers to create new varieties of vegetables that will be more resistant to diseases. Resilient vegetables will help increase how much Canadian farmers can grow during a season, giving them a competitive advantage in the billion-dollar agricultural industry.

This is one example of how science leads to new opportunities and good quality jobs. Today's investment in these projects will help businesses grow while supporting a stronger middle class.

Quotes

"It all starts with science and our remarkable scientists. By investing in researchers, we are giving them the opportunity to work with each other and their counterparts in the business, health and agriculture sectors to find the ideas and innovations that power a stronger economy and a growing middle class. Congratulations to our successful recipients whose efforts will help us build a bolder, brighter future for all Canadians.
– Honourable Kirsty Duncan, Minister of Science and Sport

"These projects are a great illustration of how genomics impacts Canadians. From improving therapies for rare diseases in humans, to protecting caribou populations, to enhancing disease resistance in vegetables and crops, genomic tools and solutions are everywhere."
– Mr. Marc LePage, President and CEO, Genome Canada

"Today's announcement reflects the shared commitment Mitacs and Genome Canada have in supporting up-and-coming researchers whose groundbreaking work in genomics will have significant, multi-sector impacts on our country's economic well-being."
– Dr. Ridha Ben Mrad, Chief Research Officer, Mitacs

Quick facts

- The Genomic Applications Partnership Program connects researchers with industry and the public sector to develop solutions based on this genome technology that will lead to social, economic, and health benefits for Canadians across a range of sectors.
- Genome Canada launched GAPP in 2013. To date, approximately $127 million, including co-funding has been invested in 48 GAPP projects, fuelling innovations in health, agriculture & agri-food, fisheries and aquaculture, environment and natural resource sectors.
- A Genome Canada partnership with Mitacs provides placements and funding for graduate students and post-doctoral fellows to work on GAPP projects within industry partners' operations. The partnership prepares Canada's next generation of innovators to advance the field of genomics by allowing candidates to apply their knowledge and skills in a real-world setting. Companies, meanwhile, benefit from the high-quality research expertise.

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Related Links
GAPP Round 9 – Backgrounder list of projects funded

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Genome Canada is a not-for-profit organization that invests in genomic science and technology and its translation into applications across multiple sectors to produce social and economic benefits for Canadians.

Mitacs is a national, not-for-profit organization that has designed and delivered research and training programs in Canada for 19 years. Working with more than 60 universities, thousands of companies, and both federal and provincial governments, Mitacs builds partnerships that support industrial and social innovation in Canada.