



**The Honourable Donald Scott**  
Minister of Innovation and  
Advanced Education

# Innovation and Entrepreneurship Go Together in Alberta

believe in the power of ideas. This is reiterated in the strategic importance of innovation recognized by Premier Jim Prentice, in his mandates to government ministries, including Alberta Innovation and Advanced Education, for a more innovative Alberta.

To gain the most benefit from innovation, it makes sense to focus government's investments in world-class research talent and infrastructure on priority areas where we have established leadership and strong industries. In Alberta, our rich natural environment offers tremendous opportunities in the key areas of energy, environment, fibre and food. Health innovation is also a priority, building on our successes in life-saving medical devices, diabetes, and multiple sclerosis.

Albertans expect their government to get the best value from our investments in research and innovation. We've found that being collaborative and supporting an innovation system, which we call Alberta Innovates, is paying off. In 2010, we took 10 research and innovation organizations and created the four Alberta Innovates corporations for

health, energy and environment, commercialization, and biotechnology.

Alberta is open to new areas of innovation and is now on the leading edge of disciplines like nanotechnology, metabolomics, virology, robotics and sustainable resource development.

Alberta is a province that relies on trading relationships throughout the world and we compete in the Global economy. We are not just competing in commodity markets; we are competing for research and innovation talent, the attraction of capital, and in building a vibrant environment where researchers and entrepreneurs can thrive.

We know we must offer a compelling case to encourage innovators to stake their claim in the marketplace from here in Alberta. That's where our collaborative and entrepreneurial approach helps build a fertile innovation environment. For example, our Research Capacity Program puts world-class research tools in the labs of our post-secondary institutions, and our Regional Innovation Networks provide business and technical

services in every corner of Alberta. Any Albertan with a new product idea can call and speak to a team of professionals for advice and access to experienced innovators, who are just as excited as they are about game-changing ideas.

Our commitment to innovation has led global technology giants like Siemens and GE, and other jurisdictions including China, Germany, Finland and Mexico to sign formal agreements with Alberta. These include memoranda-of-understanding, product and technology development programs, twinning agreements, exchange programs and more. Together, we're creating greater pathways to commercialization opportunities and access to global markets.

These programs, our system-approach and our direct investments in public research and innovation organizations, make Alberta an attractive partner and launching-pad for innovation. Our goal is to turn the discoveries of today, and tomorrow, into opportunities for all Albertans and our partners across Canada and around the world.

Albertans have always been innovators and are known across the country for our entrepreneurial and innovative spirit. So perhaps it's no surprise that our innovative spirit led to the Alberta Research Council, founded in 1921, as Canada's first and largest provincial research council. Much of the early research focused on agriculture, helping to build the backbone of the Alberta economy. Another field of research saw Dr. Karl Clark develop a method for extracting oil from oil sands in 1929, which would impact not only Alberta but all of Canada in profound ways.

Being innovative goes hand-in-hand with Albertans' entrepreneurial spirit. Simply put, we