

PARTNER PERSPECTIVE

Sheridan Takes Research Partnerships to New Heights



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Sheridan has embraced a distinctive approach to furthering creativity and innovation, which involves the integration of creative engagement campus-wide, including a unique approach to Scholarship, Research and Creative Activities (SRCA). Integral to Sheridan's SRCA activities is the engagement of our students and professors, and the communities we serve.

Research partnerships at Sheridan are beginning to take a bold new form – one where projects go beyond contract research and become part of long-term public/private partnerships with industry and community. At our Centres of Expertise, the roles of our external partners are increasingly shifting from clients to collaborators and champions on major initiatives that bring benefits to both parties. These synergies have been bolstered by our ability to effectively match small and medium-sized businesses with the right research teams, and help them tackle the right problems – leading to our ranking by Research Infosource this year as the #1 college for number of research projects completed.

Our philosophy is to identify and nurture partnerships that not only help our industry and community partners solve a technical or business challenge, but also create the best possible learning opportunities for

the students who drive the project forward.

We work closely with our partners to strategically define the right problem to solve, and then use tools such as creative problem-solving methodology and multidisciplinary teams to tackle the challenge. At each stage, our partner provides feedback and input. The outcome is an enriched experiential learning opportunity for students and professors that adds value for our partners.

This approach has allowed us to grow dynamic, multifaceted partnerships with organizations of all sizes that feed back into the curriculum and enhance our students' professional education as our partners become more involved.

As an example of this synergy at work, Sheridan's Centre for Advanced Manufacturing and Design Technologies (CAMDT) has built a unique technology playground for its local manufacturers and engineering students, enriched

by the support of leading industry partners and an engineering team that truly understands how to make the most of collaboration. Long-term partnerships have been established with leaders in the manufacturing field who are invested in seeing the Centre succeed, and have enhanced CAMDT's preparation of the next generation of engineers and the local manufacturing community. Through rich partnerships with industry leaders like Cimetrix and ABB, who share a commitment to supporting the local manufacturing sector, CAMDT offers a suite of advanced additive manufacturing, robotics and integrated energy management technology that is accessible to its SME research partners as a way of furthering technology adoption. These partnerships often involve multiple research projects with CAMDT's engineering students, as well as skills training and technology adoption initiatives for local industry. CAMDT's unique facilities are a

testament to the commitment and active role of its industry partners in the Centre's success.

Sheridan recently reached new milestones in our partnerships with Siemens Canada and Hatch that will significantly enhance our ability to deliver a premiere undergraduate engineering education through applied research at CAMDT and the School of Mechanical and Electrical Engineering and Technology's curriculum. Earlier this year, we signed Memoranda of Understanding with both companies that will promote further collaborations to foster innovation through research and enhance our engineering students' learning experience.

Dynamic social innovation partnerships are flourishing at Sheridan, too. This year, our Centre for Elder Research was thrilled to see the launch of Spirit50, an initiative developed with partner Vintage Fitness over the course of multiple projects. Spirit50 allows older adults to work with a trainer virtually to

design customized workout plans and receive support for their health and fitness goals. The launch of Spirit50 represents the hard work of 15 Sheridan students from multiple disciplines, who helped Vintage Fitness bring it to life over a span of four years.

Through the dedicated participation, leadership and support of our industry and community partners, Sheridan is taking SRCA to a new level for our students, professors, and communities. As our industry partners take a seat at the planning table to help us move forward with our innovative approach to invigorating SRCA, their involvement is helping us mature as drivers of impactful change in our communities, and as providers of high-quality learning opportunities that inspire our students to become innovation catalysts themselves. We are excited and optimistic that this will help improve Canada's innovation performance, and bring economic benefit to the country.