



GenomeCanada

News Release

For Immediate Release

Government of Canada invests in new genomic applications projects

Six new projects will use genomics to solve problems facing Canada's forestry, health, agri-food and aquaculture sectors.

October 11, 2016, Vancouver, B.C. – Canadians feel the impact of global challenges like climate change, disease, and increasing competition to sell to export markets. Genomics delivers new knowledge, tools and innovations that can be used to address these challenges, fueling productivity, growth and medical breakthroughs benefitting Canadians.

The Parliamentary Secretary for Science, Terry Beech, on behalf of the Honourable Kirsty Duncan, Minister of Science, was at the University of British Columbia today to announce \$6 million in federal funding for six new genomic applications projects from across Canada. An additional \$13 million will be invested in these projects by partners including provinces, private and public sector organizations.

- Dr. Joerg Bohlmann of the University of British Columbia is working with the B.C. government to more rapidly breed western redcedar trees with high-value attributes that will protect this \$1-billion industry from threats posed by climate change and pathogens.
- Drs. Cynthia Hawkins and John Racher, from the Hospital for Sick Children in Toronto, are working with NanoString Technologies to develop diagnostic tests for pediatric cancer that will improve the survival times and quality of life for children with cancer.
- Dr. David Stewart, from the Ottawa Hospital and University of Ottawa, is working with the Eastern Ontario Regional Laboratory Association to improve precision medicine diagnosis for lung cancer patients, which could realize more than \$151 million in savings to the Canadian health care system by eliminating ineffective treatments.
- Dr. Pierre Thibault of the Université de Montréal is working with Thermo Fisher Scientific to deliver an instrument that can identify subtle mutations in patients' cancer cells, a breakthrough that could accelerate health research discoveries.

- Dr. Claude Robert of Université Laval is working with the Canadian Centre for Swine Improvement and two large swine packers (Olymel and Hylife) to enhance both production efficiency in the pig industry and the quality of pork.
- Dr. Matthew Rise of Memorial University of Newfoundland & Labrador is working with EWOS Innovation, in partnership with Mitacs, to develop therapeutic diets that decrease disease and mortality in farmed Atlantic salmon. Their work could provide \$57 million in economic benefits to Canada’s aquaculture industry.

These projects are being funded through Round 6 of Genome Canada’s Genomic Applications Partnership Program (GAPP). GAPP partners academic researchers with users in the private and public sectors to promote genomics-derived solutions to address challenges or opportunities facing users. The projects are expected to have considerable economic and social impacts in the near term, while also spurring innovation and commercialization.

Through a Genome Canada and Mitacs partnership, GAPP also supports training of the next generation of graduate students and post-doctoral fellows. Many GAPP projects involve research internships, which will prepare Canada’s next entrepreneurs through hands-on experience.

Quotes

“This important work will advance the use of genomics to enhance the health of Canadians. It will also strengthen the resilience of our environment to threats posed by climate change while supporting our industrial and agricultural sectors. Today’s announcement is further evidence of our government’s commitment to investing in applied research that is aimed at solving real-world problems and expanding Canada’s research horizons.”

– **Hon. Kirsty Duncan, Minister of Science**

“These projects illustrate the value of genomics to help bring solutions to sectors ranging from forestry to health to agri-food and aquaculture, among others. The applications of genomics are exploding, along with the vast potential for benefits that touch the lives of all Canadians.”

– **Mr. Marc LePage, President and CEO, Genome Canada**

“Our partnership with Professor Rise at Memorial University and EWOS Innovation exemplifies the shared commitment Mitacs and Genome Canada have in supporting Canada’s next generation of innovators. Their research in genomics plays an important role in addressing multi-sector challenges while having a positive impact on the economy.”

– **Dr. Alejandro Adem, CEO and Scientific Director, Mitacs**

Related Links

[GAPP Round 6 – Projects Backgrounder](#)
[Genomic Applications Partnership Program](#)

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[Genome Canada](#) is a not-for-profit organization that acts as a catalyst for developing and applying genomics and genomic-based technologies, to create economic and social benefits for Canadians. Genome Canada connects ideas and people across public and private sectors to find new uses for genomics, invests in large-scale science and technology to fuel innovation, and translates discoveries into applications and solutions across key sectors of national importance, including health, agriculture, forestry, fisheries & aquaculture, energy, mining, and the environment.

[Mitacs](#) is a national, not-for-profit organization that has designed and delivered research and training programs in Canada for 16 years. Working with 60 universities, thousands of companies, and both federal and provincial governments, we build partnerships that support industrial and social innovation in Canada.