Ontario Budget Supports Applied Research

The budget announced on March 26th by the Ontario government includes $10M, for three years, for the continuation of the Colleges Ontario Network for Industry Innovation (CONII). This represents a very favourable environment for industry-focused applied research and other avenues for accelerating innovation.

CONII is an applied research and development network comprising 10 of Ontario's leading postsecondary institutions, including GBC. The network focuses on helping small and medium enterprises (SMEs) solve technical problems, adapt new technologies for the marketplace, and develop new or improved products and processes. Funding for programs such as CONII are excellent vehicles for what we have termed P3RD - the Public Private Partnership R&D investment required for increasing productivity.

The $10M allocation is in addition to the tax cuts for businesses and infrastructure spending to match federal money from the 2009 budget. Other highlights of the new budget include infrastructure spending for colleges and universities, and funding for skills training.

George Brown College, with 30,000 full- and part-time students and more than 900 faculty in more than 150 programs, aims to be a top community college of choice for applied research investment by industry and other partners. Its applied research strengths include advanced engineering and microelectronics; nursing and the social sciences; health informatics; IT; and design and new media. George Brown is currently allied with nine other Ontario colleges in the Colleges Ontario Network for Industry Innovation, started with a $3.5m grant from the Ministry of Research and Innovation. CONII is building college capacity to bring research to the marketplace.

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