

# The Manitoba Life Sciences Strategy: Powering our Bioscience Future



## Indigenous Land Acknowledgment

We recognize that Manitoba is on the Treaty Territories and ancestral lands of the Anishinaabeg, Anishinewuk, Dakota Oyate, Denesuline and Nehethowuk peoples.

We acknowledge Manitoba is located on the Homeland of the Red River Métis.

We acknowledge northern Manitoba includes lands that were and are the ancestral lands of the Inuit.

We respect the spirit and intent of Treaties and Treaty Making and remain committed to working in partnership with First Nations, Inuit and Métis people in the spirit of truth, reconciliation and collaboration.



### Statement from Minister Wharton

Manitoba’s economic growth is one of our government’s highest priorities and we continue to make strategic investments to grow our economy, create good sustainable jobs, and make Manitoba a top destination to work, live and invest.

Our bioscience sector offers one of our most exciting and promising opportunities for economic growth. The sector has witnessed unprecedented growth and will continue to benefit from Manitoba’s tightly integrated public-private ecosystem, a skilled and diverse young workforce, proven research and innovation excellence, and access to some of the most robust data resources in the country.

These clear advantages mean Manitoba is well-positioned to become a world biomanufacturing leader as global demand increases for innovations and technologies that protect our food, health and environment.

To accelerate and advance the success of the sector, we worked closely with Bioscience Association Manitoba and industry partners to develop our province’s first bioscience strategy: **The Manitoba Life Sciences Strategy: Powering our Bioscience Future.**

Our strategy offers a bold, industry-informed vision for the future of our biomanufacturing sector and coordinates the efforts of government and private industry to capitalize on Manitoba’s competitive advantages across the bioscience spectrum.

In the pages that follow, we share our future vision for the sector and the actions we will take to attract investment, deepen partnerships between government and industry, capitalize on our nation-leading data sources, support innovation, and build a strong workforce to ensure the continued growth and success of the bioeconomy.

Our government is proud to present this new and exciting strategy to the world with a clear message: Manitoba is open for business.

#### Honourable Jeff Wharton

Minister of Economic Development, Investment and Trade  
Government of Manitoba



### Statement from Bioscience Association Manitoba

**The Manitoba Life Sciences Strategy: Powering our Bioscience Future** is a comprehensive and forward-thinking plan aimed at leveraging Manitoba’s unique

strengths to fuel the advancement of its bioscience industry.

Bioscience Association Manitoba is thrilled to have played a role in the development of this strategy and commends the government for its leadership and recognition of the sector’s significance. Taking this important step toward positioning our province as a world leader in biosciences is truly commendable, and we are proud to be a part of this effort.

Through this strategy, Manitoba aims to build on its existing strengths in areas such as health biotech, ag biotech and clean biotech while also fostering collaboration between industry, government, and academic institutions to create a thriving bioeconomy. The strategy also includes investments in infrastructure, research and development, and talent development to ensure that the province continues to have the necessary resources and expertise to support the growth of this sector.

Overall, we believe that the strategy has the potential to be transformative for the province’s economy and position Manitoba as a leader in this vital and growing industry.

#### Kim Kline

President  
Bioscience Association Manitoba



# Manitoba's Bioscience Sector: Historic Growth

**Manitoba is a national and global leader in the biotech revolution that is transforming the way we protect our global health, food security and the environment.**

Manitoba's bioscience sector is thriving as a result of sustained growth, a highly skilled workforce, a diverse industry profile, and unprecedented economic performance:

- Over the past five years, Manitoba's bioscience sector has seen total capital raised increase by 40 per cent, research and development investment increase by 46 per cent, and exports are up an impressive 170 per cent.
- Over 14,000 employees work across the industry's three sub-sectors – ag biotech, health biotech, and clean biotech – and benefit from an average income 26 per cent higher than the provincial average.
- 2021 revenues exceeded \$9.9 billion and the sector directly contributed \$5.2 billion to provincial GDP, making it Manitoba's fourth largest industry sector.
- Pharmaceutical and medicine manufacturing is Manitoba's largest exporting industry (\$5.4 billion in 2022). Manitoba is the second-largest province for pharmaceutical and medicine manufacturing in Canada.



## What is Bioscience?

**Bioscience is any of the areas of scientific study that relate to living things.**

Bioscience is also referred to as life science, science of life, medicine, environmental science, biological science, and botany.

### What is health biotech?

This sub-sector consists of companies developing and commercializing innovations that allow for the early identification, prevention, and treatment of illness and disease.

The health biotech sector traditionally focuses on treatments, diagnostics and therapeutics. It now includes functional (healthier for you) foods and ingredients, and natural health products.

### What is clean biotech?

This sub-sector uses materials from or with living organisms to generate new value-added products, with the goal of reducing negative impacts on the environment.

Clean biotech companies may work in the areas of renewable fuels, industrial bioproducts, and bioremediation technologies.

### What is ag biotech?

This sub-sector focuses on developing and commercializing innovations and tools related to agricultural plants or animals for the purpose of increasing yields, production efficiencies, impacts, and improving nutritional profiles.

Ag biotech companies may work in the areas of plant genomics, precision agriculture, and health treatments for animals.

## Manitoba's Competitive Advantages

The success of our bioscience sector is possible because of Manitoba's proven competitive advantages, which have also made our province a preferred destination for new investment and innovation, including:

- competitive business costs with some of the most affordable industrial properties in Canada
- a highly collaborative and responsive life sciences sector that enables integrated public-private partnerships
- a world-class higher education and bioscience research community
- one of the richest and most diverse data collections in all of Canada, providing Manitoba-based biotech companies with a unique competitive edge
- a young, multicultural, and highly skilled labour force, and a government with a long-term and proven commitment to align workforce development with industry needs
- a robust export economy built around a true tri-modal North American transportation and logistics hub

**CentrePort Canada** is North America's largest tri-modal inland port and Foreign Trade Zone – situated in the heart of the continent, just one hour north of the United States.

With links to global trade markets – including a consumer population of 100 million people living within a 24-hour drive – the inland port's 20,000-acre footprint offers on-site access to world-class rail, truck and air cargo operations, ideal for companies engaged in global supply chain activities.

CentrePort Canada's ample available industrial land and flexible approach to development is ideal for a variety of industry sectors including manufacturing, agribusiness and food processing, bioscience, logistics, and environmental industries.

## The Future of Bioscience in Manitoba

Looking to the future, the Manitoba government wants to build an even more competitive economic environment that supports continued job growth in the sector, helps local companies secure investments, attracts new global companies, and commercializes local technologies and solutions for the benefit of Manitobans and the world. To realize this vision for our province's future bioeconomy, **The Manitoba Life Sciences Strategy** is a bold, new multi-faceted plan designed to capitalize on our competitive advantages and accelerate growth.

## The Manitoba Life Sciences Strategy: Powering our Bioscience Future

**The Manitoba Life Sciences Strategy** sets a clear vision for the province's bioscience sector: Manitoba will have a highly integrated and responsive ecosystem that grows the province's bioeconomy. Co-developed by the Manitoba government and Bioscience Association Manitoba, and informed through extensive consultation with the province's biotech community, the strategy is designed to capitalize on the proven strengths that have made Manitoba an established industry leader and exporter. The Manitoba Life Sciences Strategy establishes five strategic priorities (pillars) that are essential to ensuring Manitoba's bioscience sector reaches its full potential:

Strong Public-Private Partnerships

A Future-Ready Skills and Talent Infrastructure

Data and Analytics Excellence

World-Class Research and Innovation

Increasing Access to Capital

# Our Vision of Success

The **Manitoba Life Sciences Strategy** outlines how we will address barriers to growth and harness our bioscience potential to build a stronger and more prosperous economy.

Because what get measured gets done, Manitoba has identified five key measures that focus on what is most important: good jobs, economic growth, investment in research and development, international awareness, and transformational partnerships.

## Key Measures:

<p>Increase sector employment</p>	<p>Increase sector contribution to Manitoba's GDP</p>	<p>Increase private sector research and development spending</p>	<p>Increase international awareness of Manitoba's bioscience sector</p>	<p>Increase the quality of public-private partnerships</p>
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We are committed to monitoring these and other measures to track success and inform future enhancements to our strategy, including new actions and investments to improve our competitiveness, advance economic development opportunities, and create high paying jobs for Manitobans.



# Pillar 1: Strong Public-Private Partnerships

Manitoba has a tightly integrated ecosystem of partners that work in collaboration with government to help companies access the services, capital, and support they need to reach new stages of growth.

We are an innovation hub that brings innovators, entrepreneurs, researchers, and industry and workforce partners together in ways that maximize our global reach and create new opportunities for success.

Due to our size, Manitoba can act quickly in response to change and is more flexible and nimble than larger jurisdictions. From large multi-national companies to emerging start-ups, our responsive business supports scale and adapt to the needs of industry.

We need to build on this momentum to make sure newly emerging and future Manitoba biotech companies have a trusted government partner that supports their growth and helps deliver high-paying and sustainable jobs for Manitobans.



## Key Actions Underway

### A focused and coordinated industry ecosystem

The Manitoba government and its industry partners operate with a common vision to help advance economic growth, compete globally to secure investment opportunities, and realize Manitoba's potential as a global trading force.

Using a **new information sharing framework**, Manitoba's economic development partners are working together to promote the Manitoba advantage across Canada and the world.

### Key Partners:

Communities Economic Development Fund

Economic Development Winnipeg

North Forge Technology Exchange

Rural Manitoba Economic Development Corporation

World Trade Centre Winnipeg

## Access business services with ease

Biotech companies at all stages often face confusing, burdensome and complex processes when trying to access government services, establish partnerships, and make informed decisions.

Recognizing that navigation and pathfinding services are critical for companies looking to grow and expand, Manitoba has established a **new Business Navigation Service** to provide wrap-around client-centred services for businesses of all sizes and sectors looking to start, expand, or invest in Manitoba.

Our Business Navigation Service meets businesses where they are in their life cycle and works with government departments, industry partners, and other levels of government to connect businesses with relevant programs, proactively pursue investment leads, and promote Manitoba's competitive advantages to global investors.

## Promote innovation and inspire the next generation

The Manitoba government is committed to promoting a culture of innovation and growth that inspires the next generation of entrepreneurs.

Our **new Industry Spotlight Series** forum is a unique platform for Manitoba founders, companies and organizations to celebrate their innovative accomplishments, share advice and insights, and generate new opportunities and partnerships with and for industry, government and Manitobans.



The inaugural Industry Spotlight Series event profiled innovative Manitoba biotech company **Cytophage Technologies**. They use molecular genetics and synthetic biology to create highly effective bacteriophage products to prevent and treat bacterial infections. This sustainable technology has commercial applications in human health, animal health, and food security.

## Next Steps

### Small and medium-sized enterprise support

The Manitoba government will ensure biotech companies can access and take advantage of international markets by providing **competitive trade opportunities and targeted promotion of innovative companies** to the world via trade conferences, expos and forums. This will include targeted programs and preparedness supports to enable Manitoba companies to effectively compete in the global marketplace.

This will create new networking opportunities, improve brand exposure, generate new sales opportunities, and provide businesses with the critical competitor analysis and market research they need to succeed.

### Dedicated resources within Manitoba Health to support industry partnerships

Biotech companies face challenges when interacting with government health departments on regulatory and data issues such as regulator requirements, intellectual property, clinical trials, data collection, and market access.

To improve access and collaboration, the Manitoba government will **establish dedicated resources within Manitoba Health** to support innovative industry partnerships that improve the health care of all Manitobans.

Invest   
Manitoba  
Open for Business

## Pillar 2: A Future-Ready Skills and Talent Infrastructure

A highly skilled workforce requires world-class educational institutions, work-integrated learning opportunities, and collaborative educational partnerships that respond to the talent needs of industry.

Manitoba's young, skilled, and diverse labour market is its competitive edge and through the **Skills, Talent and Knowledge Strategy** we are taking strategic action to advance the economy through closer alignment between post-secondary institutions, immigration, training programs, and the needs of business.



### Key Actions Underway

#### Attract, train, and retain skilled workers

Manitoba's **Sector Council Program** delivers specialized workforce development training to employees and business leaders in 11 key sectors of the provincial economy—including bioscience, environmental industries, agriculture, and manufacturing sectors, among others.

In response to global labour shortages, the Manitoba government is prioritizing local workforce development. This includes **investing an historic \$40.4 million** over four years from 2023 to 2027 – a 40 per cent increase in funding – to expand and enhance the Sector Council Program and support innovative strategies and partnerships targeting current and emerging labour market needs and drive sector-wide economic growth.



SECTOR	SECTOR COUNCIL PARTNERS
Aerospace	Manitoba Aerospace Inc. University of Manitoba Engineers-in-Residence
Agriculture	Food & Beverage Manitoba Keystone Agricultural Producers of Manitoba
Bioscience	Bioscience Association Manitoba
Construction	Manitoba Construction Sector Council
Creative	Creative Manitoba Manitoba Music
Film	Film Training Manitoba On Screen Manitoba
ICT and Digital	New Media Manitoba Tech Manitoba
Natural Resources, Energy and Environment	Manitoba Environmental Industries Association
Tourism, Hospitality and Retail/Customer Service	Manitoba Tourism Education Council Manitoba Customer Contact Association
Traditional and Advanced Manufacturing	Canadian Manufacturers & Exporters Vehicle Technology Centre Manitoba Print Industry Association
Transportation and Distribution	Manitoba Trucking Association Manitoba Aviation Council

## Internships: Preparing the workers of tomorrow

We know that skills gained through on-the-job work experience and training close the gap between education and work readiness and provide businesses with a unique opportunity to identify, recruit, and train potential employees, ensuring a steady flow of talent into the job market.

The Manitoba government is prioritizing the use of internships to address labour and skills shortages through a number of initiatives:

- **Research Manitoba** and **Mitacs** have joined forces to help connect post-secondary students, post-doctoral fellows, and researchers to Manitoba businesses to help solve business challenges, with over 250 students participating each year.
- Manitoba’s **Graduate Internship Pathway** provides international Masters and PhD students in Manitoba with a fast track to permanent residency for participating in a Mitacs internship.
- Through the Manitoba **Industry-Academia Partnership** program, Manitoba is connecting employers with post-secondary institutions to help deliver the knowledge and skills that graduates need to drive Manitoba’s economy.

## Connect employers to global talent

In partnership with Economic Development Winnipeg, Manitoba has launched a new **Work in Manitoba job portal**, which provides online services that connect employers with domestic and international workers based on qualifications and labour market needs. The portal is being used widely, from global talent recruitment efforts to helping local citizens find the careers best aligned to their education and interests.

### Manitoba’s Labour Market Outlook

According to Manitoba’s Labour Market Outlook for 2022, 58 per cent of the +81,000 job openings projected over the next four years (2023–2026) will require post-secondary education. With sufficient workers to fill jobs, it will become critical for Manitoba to address skills mismatches through upskilling and work integrated learning in the most in-demand jobs.

## Next Steps

### Retain talent

Manitoba offers diverse and rewarding career opportunities for young people across the entire bioeconomy, and our government is committed to retaining more recent graduates and skilled workers to support our long-term economic prosperity and success.

Through a special public-private collaboration, the Manitoba government is partnering with the Canada West Foundation and its industry and economic partners to identify new strategies to **help businesses attract, recruit, and keep young talent in Manitoba**, including establishing clear linkages to rewarding careers in the biosciences.

### Responsive and flexible in-demand training

Micro-credentials make it easier for workers to build in-demand skills and can help businesses fill skills gaps in their workforce. The Manitoba government is developing a **micro-credentials framework** that includes:

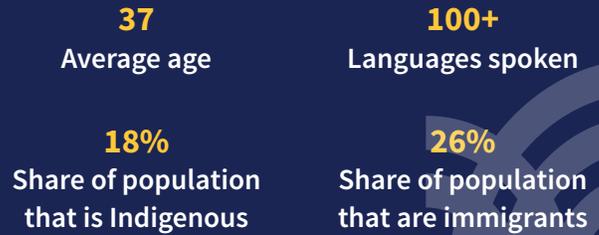
- industry and educational collaboration to identify skills needs and training programs that could be converted to micro-credentials
- a certification system to help employers understand and recognize the validity of micro-credentials and the role of post-secondary institutions in certifying and issuing micro-credentials
- development of an online directory of certified micro-credentials

### Build a diverse and inclusive biotech workforce

Workforce diversity improves industry competitiveness and profitability, helps businesses connect to a broader customer base, creates more welcoming and inclusive workspaces, and enhances innovation by leveraging unique perspectives and life experiences.

Manitoba's diverse multicultural population is a unique strength, and enhancing inclusion and representation in our workforce is an important part of our efforts to address skills and labour shortages. This means addressing systemic barriers that result in underrepresentation of women, persons with disabilities, Indigenous Manitobans, and individuals across rural and northern Manitoba.

### Manitoba Demographics at a Glance



Bioscience Association Manitoba is taking action through strategic outreach to northern, rural, and Indigenous communities, and delivers leadership courses for women. The Manitoba government will continue to work with industry to build a biotech workforce that reflects the diversity of Manitoba.

### Cross-company/industry mentorships

Cross-company/industry mentorships with global industry leaders can help ensure the bioscience sector has access to specialized expertise, resources, and technologies needed to build a highly competitive workforce.

Through collaboration and knowledge sharing, Manitoba aims to create a more interconnected and dynamic ecosystem that fosters innovation, accelerates progress, and produces goods and services that improve our quality of life.



## Pillar 3: Data and Analytics Excellence

The bioscience sector has quickly become a leader in the use of data, analytics, machine learning, and artificial intelligence to optimize research and accelerate innovation.

Vast amounts of data gathered through patient care, research studies, and clinical trials can be leveraged to identify new opportunities for plant breeding, drug development, treatment options, diagnostic tools, and clean industrial products. Data analytics and machine learning can uncover previously unknown patterns and relationships. Public-private collaboration can facilitate the development of new treatments and therapies, leading to more efficient health care delivery and improved patient outcomes.

With one of the most robust data resources in Canada, Manitoba is pioneering new initiatives that will fundamentally change how government uses data to inspire biotech innovations. We are doing this in close partnership with industry and researchers to solve problems, achieve outcomes, attract investment, and grow the skilled workforce in Manitoba.



### Key Actions Underway

#### Use data science to unlock better services

The Manitoba government is using data science to ignite innovation, optimize resource allocation, and guide evidence-based decisions to deliver better services to the public.

The **Manitoba Population Research Data Repository** is one of the most comprehensive provincial collections of administrative, registry, survey, and other data in all of Canada. It identifies patterns of health care and profiles of health and illness, facilitating interdisciplinary research opportunities.

The Manitoba government's **Data Science Program** is a first-of-its-kind initiative to use data and analytics to inform government decision-making and was recently integrated into Manitoba Health to optimize the use of data in addressing pressing public health issues.

#### Realize Manitoba's data potential with innovative industry partnerships

The Manitoba government has used its data and analytical capacity to support decision-making for years, and is now looking at new ways for how government and industry can work together to unlock new insights in provincial data and achieve shared goals that benefit Manitobans. Through forward-thinking pilot partnerships, Manitoba is showcasing how industry and government can work together to support a culture of data-driven decision making, innovation, and Manitoba's centre of excellence in data science and analytics.

## Next Steps

### Establish a modern, responsive, and responsible data governance framework

Manitoba is committed to data governance that puts the interests and well-being of citizens first. Manitoba is establishing a policy framework and governance principles to allow third parties access to outputs derived from data held by the province. This modern, efficient, and secure framework facilitates access to Manitoba's vast data resources in ways that contribute to improved health outcomes, deliver social and economic benefits, and improve Manitoba communities.

### Promote Manitoba's data advantage

Manitoba has one of the most comprehensive collections of privacy-compliant, population-level, linked administrative records related to individual-level health, justice, social services, education, and pivotal events across the life course.

We are determined to promote our unique capabilities to national and global audiences by:

- **showcasing Manitoba's data advantage** at international fairs and exhibitions
- **streamlining access to data by industry partners** to support innovative products and processes that benefit all Manitobans
- **profiling successful data pilot projects** via the Industry Spotlight Series, a forum to celebrate innovative and inspiring Manitoba founders, companies, and organizations



## Pillar 4: World-Class Research and Innovation

Manitoba is a research and innovation powerhouse with 38 bioscience research and development centres, advanced manufacturing facilities, and a network of post-secondary institutions that fuel innovation and prepare the next generation of workers for biotech careers. Red River College Polytechnic is a Canadian college leader in applied research and innovation, and Manitoba universities are home to over 100 research chairs across multiple institutions and research fields.

Manitoba's research community is developing cutting edge technologies and discoveries that have helped advance global science and health care. This work is saving lives and is generating the kind of economic growth that restarts the innovation life cycle over again.

This is why the Manitoba government is committed to streamlining processes, working at all levels to promote a culture of innovation, and ensuring our investments help get new products and services to market quickly.



The **University of Manitoba's Smartpark** is a world-class research and technology park adjacent to the University of Manitoba, the most research-intensive university campus in the province. Smartpark's mission is to develop space for lease to research and technology companies and organizations involved

in areas that complement the university's academic and research mission, including biotechnology, agriculture and the natural sciences, engineering and advanced materials, and ICT. Its 500,000 square feet of research facilities is home to 22 commercial start-ups, employing 1,500 people.

## Key Actions Underway

### Support Manitoba's research ecosystem

Through **Research Manitoba**, the Manitoba government supports and coordinates research programs and partnerships with the research community, post-secondary institutions, and industry to grow Manitoba's research ecosystem, talent development, and global competitiveness.

In 2022-23, Research Manitoba supported 443 students and researchers, awarded 83 research grants and awards, and formed five new strategic partnerships including with an early-stage biotech firm.

The **St. Boniface Hospital Albrechtsen Research Centre** is home to:

- **The Institute of Cardiovascular Sciences** – widely regarded as one of the preeminent cardiovascular research programs in the world
- **Division of Neurodegenerative Disorders** – studying mechanisms underlying and identifying potential treatments for diseases including Alzheimer’s Disease, ischemic stroke, and traumatic brain injury
- **Canadian Centre for Agri-Food Research in Health and Medicine** – dedicated to researching the health benefits of agri-foods and bioactive compounds, and their mechanisms of action, using cell culture and animal models, and human clinical trials

Manitoba Agriculture’s **Food Development Centre** is a research and development facility that provides technical assistance to agri-food businesses, with a focus on innovation and commercialization of sustainable plant and animal protein products.

## Implement Research Improvements through Harmonization in Manitoba (RITHIM)

As part of a provincial initiative unique across Canada, Manitoba is streamlining and harmonizing the application and review processes for health research ethics, privacy, and institutional impact in Manitoba to reduce the time it takes to get research up and running. It is making Manitoba’s research ecosystem more competitive to attract and retain researchers and provide investment opportunities for industry. **RITHIM** is led by Research Manitoba in partnership with key government, health care, university, researcher, and industry stakeholders.

## Accelerate R&D and innovation commercialization

The Manitoba government understands the importance of supporting R&D and helping entrepreneurs commercialize their innovations. We deliver a range of incentives along a continuum including:

- the **Manitoba Research and Development Tax Credit** that supports research and experimental development with a tax credit equal to 15 per cent of eligible expenditures, and is fully refundable for R&D under an eligible contract with a qualifying research institute
- Research Manitoba’s **Innovation Proof-of-Concept Grant** that provides up to \$150,000 to Manitoba-based research innovation and development projects by providing funds for innovation and commercialization research
- the **Innovation Growth Program** that is a cost-sharing program providing small and medium-sized enterprises with up to \$100,000 in funding for the commercialization of innovative products and processes

The **Manitoba Protein Research Strategy** is a comprehensive strategy that forms a blueprint for the province’s success in the global protein market. It highlights 46 strategic research projects under four themes including climate resilience of sustainable protein food systems, novel sustainable protein product development and processing, digital agriculture to enable sustainable food systems, and waste, water, by-product, and co-product utilization. Manitoba is investing \$1.5 million to support the hiring of a new Strategic Research Chair in Sustainable Protein at the University of Manitoba.



## Next Steps

### **Increase global visibility of Manitoba's research community**

Manitoba has a thriving network of applied research universities, colleges, and organizations in fields such as agriculture, medicine, and environmental science. Manitoba is committed to working with its research network to increase their visibility on the global stage as part of a comprehensive life sciences strategy.

### **Support product commercialization for international markets**

Working alongside economic development partners, Manitoba is committed to helping local companies take advantage of growing global market demand for biotechnology applications and products. We will work closely with our province's cutting-edge innovators on market diversification efforts designed to seize on global opportunities.

### **Leverage social innovation opportunities**

Across Canada, social entrepreneurs are finding new solutions to complex social, health, and environmental inequities. The Manitoba government is committed to working with its industry partners to be a catalyst for innovative solutions as we address complex challenges in our communities.



## Pillar 5: Increasing Access to Capital

Biotech companies face unique challenges when it comes to raising capital due to high costs, the regulatory environment, lengthy timelines, and other risks associated with developing new drugs, medical devices, and therapies. This is especially challenging to start-ups and emerging companies that have difficulty attracting investors with the necessary background to understand their innovations.

Without access to capital, Manitoba biotech companies may look elsewhere to grow and expand. That is why the Manitoba government is committed to developing a range of financial options to address financing needs in current capital markets and ensure businesses can develop, invest, and stay in Manitoba. This consists of a range of options including access to growth and venture capital, government support, and partnerships with other companies and levels of government. This also includes educating potential investors on the value and potential of their technology.



### Key Actions Underway

#### Improve access to venture and growth capital for Manitoba businesses

The Manitoba government recently invested \$100 million in seed capital into the **Manitoba First Fund**, a new independent fund-of-funds that will be instrumental in helping Manitoba-focused businesses grow and thrive.

The fund is partnering with independently managed downstream funds to lever private investment capital to substantially expand the breadth of financing options available in Manitoba, including for innovation and biotech companies. Over \$100 million in private sector interest was generated within the first year of announcement.

Manitoba has also made the **Small Business Venture Capital Tax Credit** permanent, providing a non-refundable tax credit of up to 45 per cent to individuals and corporations that acquire equity capital in Manitoba businesses.

**Westcap Mgt. Ltd.**, a private equity manager with assets under management of approximately \$1 billion, is the first fund to receive capital through the Manitoba First Fund. Westcap has invested in more than 200 growth companies in agriculture, health care and innovation sectors. The new Connect Manitoba Growth Fund will focus on supporting growth of Manitoba companies with access to patient and strategic capital.

## Attract and incent new investment in the protein industry to make Manitoba a world leader

Manitoba is home to the world’s largest pea processing facility, the world’s largest hemp processing company, and Canada’s largest bacon processing facility. It is also home to innovative food processing, swine genetics and world-class research infrastructure in agri-food. Through the **Manitoba Protein Advantage Strategy**, Manitoba is committed to attracting \$1.5 billion in new investment, creating 1,550 new jobs as Manitoba becomes a global protein supplier of choice. The strategy is the first of its kind in North America, advancing sustainable animal and plant proteins to meet growing global demand.

## Invest in economic development and growth opportunities in biomanufacturing

The Manitoba government understands the importance of supporting the competitiveness of the bioscience sector and has developed incentives to support biotech businesses, including:

- the **Industry Expansion Program** that supports companies establishing new operations in Manitoba or expanding existing operations by investing in skills training for employees.
- the **Manitoba Works Capital Incentive** that provides companies with a rebate of incremental education-related property taxes generated as a result of capital investments on the property
- the **Manitoba Manufacturing Investment Tax Credit** that provides an eight per cent tax credit on purchases of new or used buildings and equipment for first-time use in manufacturing or processing in Manitoba
- the **Canada-Manitoba Job Grant** that provides companies with up to \$100,000 to support training of new and existing employees
- the **Workforce Development Program** that assists companies in assessing HR needs and implementing workforce training and development plans

## Next Steps

### Partner with the Government of Canada to leverage federal funds and advocate on behalf of Manitoba’s bioscience sector

Manitoba’s efforts to grow our biomanufacturing sector benefit all Canadians.

The Government of Canada implemented its Biomanufacturing and Life Sciences Strategy to help build a strong, resilient, and competitive sector and committed \$2.2 billion towards its implementation.

Manitoba will work collaboratively with the federal government to ensure our province’s contributions to the sector are recognized and to identify opportunities that leverage federal funding to support private and provincial investments in Manitoba’s biomanufacturing companies.

We will also work with and advocate on behalf of our industry to the federal government to streamline federal processes and approvals to advance biotechnology and biomanufacturing innovation in Canada.

### Collaborate with the Government of Canada on foreign direct investment and attraction strategy

Supporting economic development and growth through foreign direct investment opportunities further expands Manitoba’s bioscience ecosystem.

In collaboration with the Government of Canada, Manitoba will enhance its foreign direct investment attraction through targeted engagements showcasing the Manitoba Advantage to the world while facilitating local investment and expansion opportunities. This includes continuing to promote Manitoba as an ideal destination from which to export products and services to the global marketplace.



G.W. Seier founded Vita Health Products in Winnipeg, Manitoba in 1936. Since then, the company has

grown from a small mail-order operation selling herbs and patented medicines into one of Canada’s foremost suppliers of over-the-counter pharmaceutical products and natural health products. Based in Winnipeg – the geographic centre of Canada – Vita Health has over 260,000 square feet of manufacturing, packaging, and distribution facilities. IVC Vita Health is part of the IVC Nutrition Corporation group of companies.



# Invest Manitoba Open for Business

## Contact

To learn more about Manitoba's competitive advantages and business supports, please contact us at:

**Business Navigation Unit**  
Investment and Trade Division  
204-945-1055  
[EONU@gov.mb.ca](mailto:EONU@gov.mb.ca)  
[InvestManitoba.ca](http://InvestManitoba.ca)

For a digital copy of this strategy, please scan the following QR code:

