

September 22, 2021

Life Sciences Stakeholders Launch Collaboration to Advance Inclusion, Diversity, Equity and Accessibility (IDEA)

CANADA – Today, seven founding member organizations from the private, public, and not-for-profit sectors announced the establishment of the Inclusive Life Sciences Collaboration (Collaboration). The Collaboration aims to create a community of like-minded individuals and organizations committed to creating inclusive organizational cultures across the life sciences sector. They are now inviting others from across Canada to join them in aligning efforts, sharing knowledge, and driving action toward a more inclusive life sciences future.

“The Inclusive Life Sciences Collaboration represents businesses, industries and institutions that extend from school to workforce and seek to draw on the talent of Canada's best and brightest,” said Dr. Imogen Coe, Professor and founding Dean, Faculty of Sciences, Ryerson University, IDEA expert and Steering Committee member. “Creating inclusive environments in the life sciences sector that attract, support, retain and promote the most diverse talent will lead to inclusive excellence for this sector and unleash untapped potential, innovation and creativity.”

Organizations are increasingly evaluating their cultures and practices concerning IDEA, becoming more intentional and committed to finding and implementing strategies to embed IDEA into their practices better. The Collaboration represents a group of organizations and individuals that have been at the forefront of this movement and have several initiatives already underway. Below are some examples of their work.

- **The City of Mississauga and Healthcare Businesswomen’s Association (Canada Region):** co-facilitate the [Equity & Diversity Collaborative](#) (EDC), a group of 17 healthcare and life sciences companies dedicated to advancing gender equity and diversity initiatives in their workplaces through a series of rapid adjustments to organizational policies and practices.

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- **Life Sciences Ontario and Shift Health:** launched an initiative called [Building an Inclusive Life Sciences Future](#), which includes a series of workshops beginning in October 2021 to develop a vision and action plan for IDEA within Ontario's life sciences ecosystem.
- **Innovative Medicines Canada:** is tapping into the expertise of their Executive network across Canada to establish a [DEI Principles Framework](#) that focuses on broadening and leveraging partnerships to enhance IDEA within four key areas: talent, health equity, education and training, and partnerships.

The life sciences sector in Canada is thriving, making it a critical time to act and focus on inclusive growth. "According to projections in BioTalent Canada's upcoming national Labour Market Information study, the bio-manufacturing sector alone will need an additional 5,160 workers by 2029," said Rob Henderson, President and CEO of BioTalent Canada and Steering Committee member. "This growth presents an opportunity and responsibility to improve workforce diversity in the life sciences through aggressive recruitment and retention of underrepresented groups like women, Indigenous people, Canadians with disabilities, LGBTQ2S+, and newcomers."

The Collaboration meets quarterly, serving as a forum for discussion to share learnings and insights across organizations, bolstering individual and collective impact and avoiding duplicative efforts. The group invites life sciences and related groups across Canada to join and:

- Unite in collective action to advance an inclusive sector;
- Facilitate and support awareness and understanding of IDEA within the health care and life sciences industries through cross-communication and promotion;
- Share practices learned through IDEA initiatives across the industry, driving continuous improvement.

For more information or to get involved, visit www.inclusivelsc.ca.

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Founding Member Organizations:

- BioTalent Canada
- City of Mississauga
- Healthcare Businesswomen's Association Canada
- Innovative Medicines Canada
- Life Sciences Ontario
- Sanofi
- Shift Health

The Steering Committee:

- Dr. Imogen Coe, Professor, Dept., Chemistry and Biology, founding Dean (Faculty of Sciences), Ryerson University
- Wilma Deen, Executive Director, Membership Value & Strategy Implementation, Innovative Medicines Canada
- Dr. Jason Field, President and CEO, Life Sciences Ontario
- Pamela Fralick, President, Innovative Medicines Canada
- Rob Henderson, President and CEO, BioTalent Canada
- Dr. Natasha Malik, Senior Consultant, Shift Health
- Dr. Anne Mullin, Principal, Shift Health
- Jackie O'Connor, Life Sciences Business Consultant, City of Mississauga, Economic Development Office
- Danielle Portnik, Canadian Regional Chair and Co-Founder, Healthcare Businesswomen's Association (HBA) Canada
- Cynthia Reyes, President, Healthcare Businesswomen's Association (HBA) Toronto Chapter
- Sabina Steinkellner, General Manager, Sanofi
- Dr. Ryan Wiley, President, Shift Health

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