

Ontario's Regional Economic Development and Innovation Newsletter

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ANNOUNCEMENTS

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[Federal government spending on science and technology up 3%](#)

The federal government planned to spend \$7.7 billion on scientific and technological activities for the fiscal year 2002/03, up 3.0% from its spending forecast for 2001/02. Of the planned spending on science and technology activities for 2002/03, just over one-half (55%) will be performed by the federal government whereas for the planned R&D spending, it will perform 44%.

[University of Toronto researcher paves way for optical computer chip](#)

Ted Sargent's research group at the University of Toronto has developed a plastic material, embedded with quantum dots, capable of converting electrons into photons. The hybrid plastic can generate light at wavelengths used in optical networks, making it an important step towards an integrated optical communications chip.

EDITOR'S PICK

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[Strategies and Partnerships for Biotech Regions: The Regional Innovation and Partnership Project](#)

Anders Östhol and Johan Lembke, Swedish Institute for Growth Policy Studies (ITPS)

This report analyzes new developments around innovation systems and partnerships by focusing on strategies in biotech regions and in particular North Carolina. The study argues that strategies and regional partnership formation is becoming increasingly relevant for policymakers due to the complexity of the many relations crucial for promotion of innovations and their commercialization. This is based on several findings including the observation that because biotech economic development occurs in specific geographical areas, regions are aggressively competing among one another with their investment support. Also, the regional level and regional partnerships are gaining increasing legitimacy as true references for economic development and support for the biotech sector, partly as a result of the limited pools of available resources and capital. And there is a realization in the biotech sector of the need for concerted state and regional efforts and strong public commitment in biotech economic development.

INNOVATION & RELATED POLICY

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[Benchmarking Evaluation of Public Science and Technology Programs in the United](#)

[States, Canada, Israel, and Finland](#)

TEKES, Finland

This report presents the proceedings of a benchmarking workshop that compares public S&T evaluation programs across four countries. The workshop, which brought together both administrators and practitioners, looked at favored evaluation techniques, challenges as well as other issues that affect the evaluation process. Included are presentations of invited practitioners, which outline the approaches used and issues related the specific programs that were evaluated.

[Tax Incentives for Research and Development: Trends and Issues](#)

OECD

Here is a review of R&D tax incentives employed across OECD member countries. The review shows that national R&D spending is influenced by a broad range of factors and that the decision to support private R&D through direct financing and/or tax incentives are decisions to be taken by governments within the context of their political and economic systems. The design of R&D tax reliefs will also depend on the general configuration of the tax system and the particular policy goals being pursued. Also discussed are design aspects such as tax credit versus tax allowance, targeted incentives, and the definition of qualifying R&D.

REGIONAL INNOVATION & CLUSTERS

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[Federal-State Regional Commissions: Regional Approaches for Local Economic Development](#)

National Association of Development Organizations

This report shows how federal regional commissions in the US are a unique and successful component of the federal portfolio for fostering economic sustainability at the local level. Through a federal/stat/local partnership model, federal regional commissions help distressed regions build up the essentials of economic development such as infrastructure, job skills training, local leadership and civic capacity. Along with elaborating upon the workings of the model as it functioned in the case of the Appalachian Regional Commission, the report sets the stage for future federal regional commissions by identifying distressed regions and outlining their unique challenges and concerns.

[Seed Capital Analysis for BC: Identifying Sources and Evaluating Levels](#)

Science Council of British Columbia

Here is an analysis of the current state of seed capital in British Columbia's technology sector. In addition to identifying levels of seed capital activity for 2001/2002, the analysis evaluates its strength in supporting technology sectors. Since 1999 'Friends & Family' investments have increased substantially from 2000 levels, while angel investment saw a decline.

EVENTS

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[Regional Foresight Methods Training Workshop](#)

Varese (Italy) 26-28 May, 2003

Organized by the European Foresight Academy, this three-day training course will focus on the organization and management of regional (sub-national) foresight exercises, with emphasis on some of the methods that might be used. The course is targeted at prospective regional foresight practitioners and will be practical in orientation. Sessions will be run on how to elicit creative thinking and expert opinion, on how to discipline this thinking through the use of scenarios, and on how to practically translate foresight results into concrete regional policy actions.

[Innovation through Collaboration: Clusters, Networks, Alliances](#)

Manchester, 8-11 June, 2003

This conference aims to address the issues associated with collaboration in the context of recent research which suggests that as many as 50-70% of strategic alliances will fail within four years due to a vast array of cultural, political, technological and commercial factors. It will provide a forum for academics, business people and consultants to discuss these issues

in depth by presenting the latest academic papers, delivering company presentations on the subject and running interactive workshops. Selected proceedings will be published in a special edition of The Journal of Enterprising Culture. The conference is organized by the International Society for Professional Innovation Management.

Creating, Sharing And Transferring Knowledge: The role of Geography, Institutions, Organizations

Copenhagen, 12-14 June, 2002

The conference has four main objectives: to contribute to a more satisfactory understanding of the mechanisms underlying the way in which knowledge is created, shared and transferred; to examine the promoting or inhibiting effect of particular circumstances of organizational context, institutional setting or geographical configuration, such as cities and agglomerations or clusters; to investigate arrangements particularly capable of enhancing, capturing and utilizing end consumer knowledge; and to consider the implications for managerial strategy and public policy. Both senior and junior scholars are invited to participate and contribute with a paper to the conference.

5th Berlecon Workshop on the Economics of IT

Berlin 13-14, June, 2003

This conference is focused on improving the understanding of the economic aspects of information technology and its role in our economy. The program not only covers IT in the strict sense, but it includes communication technologies that converge with traditional IT. Each year the workshop focuses on a single topic, which is analyzed in its different facets. This year's workshop topic is "e-business: economic impact and policy implications".

Clusters, Industrial Districts and Firms: The Challenge of Globalization

Modena, 12-13 September, 2003

Organized in memory of Professor Sebastiano Brusco, this conference focuses on the international competitiveness of industrial districts and clusters, and the effects that globalization has on SME's and their interactions with markets and institutions. Questions to be raised relate to how clusters' internal networks, productive patterns and specializations are changing; how the cluster firms themselves are changing; what factors determine the competitive advantage of industrial districts; and finally, how their international competitiveness can be enhanced. Invited speakers include Charles Sabel, AnnaLee Saxenian and Frank Wilkinson.

Business Innovation and Growth from the Exploitation of Academic Research (BIGEAR) Open Conference

Vienna, 18-19 September 2003

This conference will be an open meeting to present and discuss good practice and issues on Business Innovation and Growth from Exploitation of Academic Research. Supported by the European Commission's Directorate-General for Enterprise as part of the Innovation and SMEs program, BIGEAR aims to understand and disseminate best practice in the effective exploitation of academic research to stimulate business growth in Europe.

Communities and Technologies (C&T 2003)

Amsterdam or Bonn, 19-21 September, 2003

This international conference is a forum for stimulating and disseminating research into all facets of communities and information technology. Attendees represent multidisciplinary research efforts from applied computer science and social science. The 2003 conference will focus on presentations and discussion of empirical and conceptual research on a wide range of topics including (Virtual) Community formation and development; Virtual communities vs. location-based communities; Digital cities, and Design methods for communityware.

Information Technology in Regional Areas Conference (Itira)

Caloundra (Australia) 5-7 November, 2003

This conference will focus on strategies that link ICT-enhanced economic, social and cultural development efforts and opportunities in such areas as electronic commerce, community and civic networks, tele-centres, electronic democracy, on-line participation, self-help and virtual health communities, advocacy, and cultural enhancement. This event, geared to practitioners, and policy makers in developed and developing countries, will provide a platform for sharing ideas across practice, research and policy. A call for papers has been issued with a deadline of May 10, 2003 for proposals.

What Do We Know About Innovation? A Conference in Honour of Keith Pavitt

Brighton, 13-15 November, 2003

This conference is in recognition of the lifetime contribution of Professor Keith Pavitt to the study of innovation. Keith's work was based on a deep empirical understanding of innovation and firm behaviour, and he placed particular emphasis on the development of new data, methods, and taxonomies. His contributions spanned economics, management and science and technology policy. The conference is organized around the major themes of his work, including the structure, dynamics and management of innovation processes, the relationship between basic research and technical change, knowledge and the theory of the firm, the globalization of R&D, and science and technology policy.

New Directions in Technology Management: Changing Collaboration Between Government, Industry and University ^{NEW!}

Washington D.C. 3-7 April 3-7, 2004

This Conference of the International Association for Management of Technology will discuss new directions in technology management and their influence on innovation and the creation of economic growth and prosperity. Special attention will be given to the necessary mechanisms of knowledge generation, science and technology policy, and the collaboration required to accomplish national and organizational objectives. Best practices in technology development and utilization will be presented. The academic institution's role in preparing the needed human resources for the technological environment of the 21st century will also be addressed. *Submission of Abstract:* October 15, 2003

WILL YOU BE ONE OF OUR REGIONAL REPORTERS?

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Yes, you! In an effort to improve our coverage of Ontario's regional economies in this newsletter, we are looking for a few people who are 'plugged in' to the latest local economic development and innovation happenings in their regions. All we ask is that you send us a short message once a month highlighting recent news and research initiatives from your region - please forward items that you would like to share with newsletter recipients, as well as other items of interest, to: onris.progris@utoronto.ca.

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This newsletter is prepared by [Tijs Creutzberg](#).
Project manager is [David A. Wolfe](#).