

8

YORKBIOTECH FUTURE DIRECTIONS

The Planning and Economic Development Committee recommends the adoption of the recommendation contained in the following report dated May 7, 2009, from the Commissioner of Planning and Development Services.

1. RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that:

1. This report be received for information.

2. PURPOSE

This report summarizes YORKbiotech's accomplishments in 2008 and the 2009 Operating Plan.

3. BACKGROUND

YORKbiotech was formed under the leadership of four founding partners: The Regional Municipality of York, the Town of Markham, the National Research Council, and York University. Established in response to the provincial Biotechnology Cluster Innovation Program, YORKbiotech entered its fifth year of operation in April, 2009.

Governance of YORKbiotech is through the Board of Directors currently comprised of 11 members, including representation from each of the founding members, except the National Research Council.

YORKbiotech was initially provided with three years of funding through the Ministry of Research and Innovation. This funding support ended on March 31, 2009. York Region has provided \$20,000 in funding in each of these three years of operation.

Funding has been secured for one additional year from the Ontario Ministry of Research and Innovation and other sources for a forecast total of \$312,500. This ensures continued operations to March 31, 2010.

4. ANALYSIS AND OPTIONS

The strategic objectives of YORKbiotech include several initiatives under the direction of the Board and Mary Anne Viani, the Chief Administrative Officer. They are to:

- Engage in consultative strategy sessions with the Board of Directors to frame the priorities for growth, engagement, and sustainability.
- Align efforts and resources of regional industry, government, hospitals and academia in healthcare innovation and provide innovators and external constituents with seamless access to these stakeholders.
- Help entrepreneurs and small and medium sized enterprises navigate the complexity of provincial (and federal) commercialization support programs and access resources for healthcare innovation.
- Provide commercialization services with a focus on entrepreneurs and small and medium sized enterprises engaged in innovative healthcare products or services by assisting with partnerships and investment.
- Secure collaborative agreements or contracts with other organizations to contribute to financial sustainability.
- Align with other organizations to leverage resources, expertise and build capacity.

YORKbiotech is a gateway to innovation

The outcomes of the innovation drivers of ideas, change, passion and trends lead to another cycle of renewal, change, reinvention, and prospective industry convergence. As a gateway to innovation, examples of some of YORKbiotech's accomplishments are:

- In January 2008, the National Centre for Medical Device Development (NCMDD) received \$150,000 from the Ontario Ministry of Research and Innovation towards the development of its business plan. YORKbiotech played an active role in planning and commercialization services with the consortium. Members of the NCMDD Planning Group include York University, the Town of Markham, IBM Canada and Sanofi Pasteur Limited.
- YORKbiotech collaborated with the Western GTA Convergence Centre (WGTACC), in the 2008 breakfast seminar series.
- Based on the success of the September 2007 "Science in Action" bus tour, an April 30, 2009 tour was completed in conjunction with The Regional Municipality of York, the Town of Markham, the York Region District School Board, and YORKbiotech. The event involved 60 students and three teachers, in three coaches, to nine life science sites: AMD, Apotex, Dalton Pharma Services, Estee Lauder, IBM Canada, Markham-Stouffville Hospital, sanofi pasteur, Seneca College, and York Central Hospital.

- The Converging Medical Technologies Conference was held on November 6, 2008. At the 2008 conference, three finalists of the 2nd annual sanofi pasteur Healthcare and Biotechnology Venture Challenge presented their projects. The conference featured two keynote speakers from Johnson & Johnson on the importance of integrating health care products and services and IBM on the role of information technology in personalized medicine. The conference drew over 168 life science industry leaders.
- YORKbiotech assisted the following organizations in promoting their events and news: BIOTECCanada, Foreign Affairs and International Trade Canada, Manning Innovation Awards, MEDEC, Ontario Genomics Institute, Ontario Ministry of Economic Development and Trade, Ontario Product Development Management Association, Seneca College, University of Toronto Clinical Engineering Program, and the Western GTA Convergence Centre.
- YORKbiotech meets with entrepreneurs, inventors, and companies throughout the year and provides referrals to resources and expertise. The company MS Relief was provided with access to funding through the MaRS-IRAP program to conduct a clinical strategies study.
- Business development support through introductions to investment groups was provided to the companies Convergent Bioscience, Iseehear and Xceed Imaging.
- Consultation, visibility, and partnership support was given to Dalton Pharm Services for a potential acquisition opportunity, Elcan Optical Technologies for a diabetes researcher contact, Myrex Pharmaceuticals with referrals to two potential directors, and dozens of other companies.
- The Biotech Teacher Training and Toolbox program was designed to enable students to conduct experiments. The toolkit is distributed to schools on a weekly basis and is maintained by students in Seneca College's three-year biotechnology program. Fischer Scientific and YORKbiotech sponsored the \$20,000 Toolkit.
- A clinical validation program for clinical trials for innovative products in the field of Medical and Assistive Technologies (MAT), with a priority to assist small and medium sized enterprises and relevant technology developers has been established in a collaborative venture between YORKbiotech and The Health Technology Exchange (HTX). Letters of intent were submitted to the program on March 26, 2009.

Partnership with the National Centre for Medical Device Development is a key focus of YORKbiotech in 2009

The key enhancement for the future direction of YORKbiotech is a partnership with the National Centre for Medical Device Development (NCMDD). The National Centre for Medical Device Development's focus is life sciences while YORKbiotech's is medical devices.

With a complimentary focus, the goal is to incorporate the planning activities for the National Centre for Medical Device Development into YORKbiotech's business plan and work plan.

A joint Board of Directors is envisioned and will include the founding members of YORKbiotech: Town of Markham (John Livey), York Region (Bryan Tuckey), and York University (Stan Shapson). A joint board of directors will streamline administrative responsibilities. There are no changes planned to the YORKbiotech by-laws.

An update on future directions for the National Centre for Medical Device Development will be provided by a staff report and a presentation from YORKbiotech to the Planning Committee in the fall of 2009.

Operating Plan for 2009 focuses on five supporting core initiatives:

Networking events and collaborations

- breakfast meetings
- Annual General Meeting
- Conference for small and medium sized enterprises

Communications

- Stakeholder meetings
- Distribution of relevant educational, training, business and networking opportunities

Building industry receptor capacity through partnership facilitation

- Develop and update materials to promote YORKbiotech and Regional resources in the cluster
- Meet with potential clients
- Bundle and market business and licensing opportunities to industry

Building industry receptor capacity through entrepreneur development

- Provide internship opportunities for MBA students in the Schulich School of Business
- Provide co-op placements for Seneca College students
- Continue the Healthcare and Biotechnology Venture Challenge
- Participate in the annual high school "Science in Action" bus tour

Database infrastructure

- Website content updates
- Database development of company profiles, technical experts, consultants, mentors, intellectual property, funding opportunities, research and development activities and services.

The Ministry of Research and Innovation will be examining future funding models post April 2010.

Relationship to Vision 2026

YORKbiotech supports the two Vision 2026 goals – a Vibrant Economy and Responding to the Needs of our Residents – by supporting innovation, business incubation, continual learning, wellness, and building relationships with public and private partnerships.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

York Region provided \$20,000 in support to YORKbiotech in each of 2006, 2007, 2008 and 2009 from the approved Planning Department budget.

Additional funding extensions will be combined with provincial funding initiatives for the Regional Innovation Networks, of which YORKbiotech is involved.

6. LOCAL MUNICIPAL IMPACT

YORKbiotech, a not-for-profit community development corporation, is a Regional Innovation Network at the centre of the Greater Toronto Area. The mission of YORKbiotech is to act as a catalyst and harness the wealth of intellectual and technical resources. The outcome is to promote economic success and growth of the biotechnology and related industries as a key component of regional economic development. YORKbiotech serves as a research innovation hub for health technology companies in all nine York Region municipalities.

7. CONCLUSION

This report provides an outline of the progress of YORKbiotech and the partnership opportunities with the National Centre for Medical Device Development (NCMDD).

For more information on this report, please contact Sharon Végh, Program Manager, Economic Strategy at (905) 830 4444 Ext. 1509 or Patrick Draper, Director, Economic Strategy and Tourism at Ext. 1503.

The Senior Management Group has reviewed this report.