
News Release

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Governments of Canada and Manitoba Support UWin CREATE at the University of Winnipeg

Cisco Innovation Centre to foster increased research and collaboration

Winnipeg, Manitoba – A joint federal-provincial investment, combined with an endowment from networking technology leader Cisco, will enable the University of Winnipeg’s environmental science program to increase research on “green” technology and expand its collaboration with industry, leading to more business opportunities.

Under the Canada-Manitoba Western Economic Partnership Agreement (WEPA), the Governments of Canada and Manitoba are investing a total of \$7 million toward 34 leading-edge research and teaching labs as a core part of the new UWin CREATE (the University of Winnipeg Commercialization Research and Education Alliance for Science, Technology and the Environment).

“Our Government recognizes that excellence in research and innovation is essential to building a more innovative economy in Manitoba,” said the Honourable Vic Toews, President of the Treasury Board, and Member of Parliament for Provencher, on behalf of the Honourable Lynne Yelich, Minister of State for Western Economic Diversification. “Through investments in science and technology in partnership with industry, we are helping translate research into business success which strengthens our economy and helps us compete on the world stage.”

“This investment in leading-edge technology reinforces Manitoba’s commitment to developing centres of innovation, learning and research to continue to build on our successes in today’s knowledge-based economy,” said Peter Bjornson, Manitoba Minister of Entrepreneurship, Training and Trade.

This investment will enable the University to work more closely with industry in commercializing innovative environmental technologies through UWin CREATE’s demonstration and technology transfer capabilities. It will also ensure a highly skilled workforce for Manitoba’s environmental industry, leading to business and employment growth.

UWinnipeg will become a hub for a provincial network of Cisco TelePresence™ sites, as the Government of Manitoba funds TelePresence systems at Brandon University (Brandon) and University College of the North (The Pas). Efforts are underway to extend the TelePresence network to include a node in Ottawa.

UWin CREATE will be based in the University of Winnipeg's new Science Complex and Richardson College for the Environment, slated to open in spring 2011.

In a major boost to UWin CREATE's research and teaching capabilities, Cisco is providing a \$2 million endowment to the University of Winnipeg for the Cisco Chair for Collaborative Technologies. The Province of Manitoba, under the Manitoba Research Innovation Fund, is also contributing \$2 million in support of the Cisco Endowed Research Chair, totalling \$4 million.

Cisco is also donating a two-endpoint Cisco TelePresence virtual meeting system to UWinnipeg, making it the first university in Canada with this advanced technology. The TelePresence system, which promotes energy conservation by reducing travel and delivering measurable energy savings, will be used for distance education and for more effective collaboration with research sites in Manitoba and around the world.

One TelePresence endpoint will be based in the new Science Complex and Richardson College for the Environment. The second will be located inside UWinnipeg's Faculty of Business and Economics in a new building opening in fall 2010.

"Research, education and policy development are essentially collaborative endeavours, crucial to the success of future generations, communities and countries. The Cisco Innovation Centre for Collaboration Technologies will help academic leaders and government policy makers extend expertise, share resources and reduce environmental impact," said Nitin Kawale, president, Cisco Canada "We are delighted to partner with the University, the Province of Manitoba and the Government of Canada in establishing this centre of excellence at UWinnipeg."

"The creative public-private partnership announced today places UWinnipeg front and centre in Canada in developing sustainable, forward-thinking ways to nurture global connectedness," said Lloyd Axworthy, President and Vice-Chancellor, UWinnipeg. "With the TelePresence technology on campus, we will be well positioned within a cluster of leading institutions – namely, the International Institute for Sustainable Development, Lake Winnipeg Research Consortium, Manitoba Hydro and the Canadian Science Centre for Human and Animal Health – to be known internationally as a community for scientific and environmental excellence. There is also enormous potential to grow this collaborative technology into a viable commercial unit to benefit business, governments and others in our community."

The investment by the Governments of Canada and Manitoba is made through the Canada-Manitoba Western Economic Partnership Agreement (WEPA). Both Canada and Manitoba are contributing \$25 million each, over four years, to strengthen economic activity and improve quality of life in western Canadian communities.

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