

## Applied Research – The Engine of Change

### Vision

*The Olds College School of Innovation shall be the premier applied research community in Canada.*

### Olds College School of Innovation

In 1999, Olds College established the Olds College Centre for Innovation (OCCI) to formalize long-term applied research activities at the College to develop the agri-food sector in Alberta. In 2004, OCCI was renamed the Olds College School of Innovation (OCSI) and OCCI staff and activities were fully integrated into the College. This change was enabled by the passage of Bill 43 (Post-Secondary Learning Act), which allows the inclusion of applied research in the official mandate of Olds College.

Today, OCSI is a state of the art applied research facility providing small and medium businesses with an accessible facility with services that enables them to solve problems and provides them with access to information.

### Impacting Research

Industry Canada reports, *“Innovation is a key driving force in creating wealth, economic growth and social development for Canada”*. Both the private and public sectors realize that Canada must continuously enhance its innovation capacity to strengthen its economic and international competitiveness. We are a trading nation and entrepreneurs in land-based industries such as agriculture, horticulture, energy and environment, have significant domestic and international opportunities in the emerging consumer-driven global marketplace. Our ability to benefit from these opportunities depends on innovative, cost-effective practices, new technologies and the ability to address rapidly changing consumer and trade policy issues.

The future of OCSI is bright and it will focus on the discovery and advancement of stakeholder values.

### Partnered for Success

- Alberta Association of Colleges & Technical Institutes (AACTI)
- Alberta Agricultural Research Institute (AARI)
- Agriculture & Agri-Food Canada
- Agriculture Food Council
- Agriculture Funding Consortium Members
- Alberta Agriculture Food and Rural Development
- Alberta Energy
- Alberta Economic Development
- Alberta Environment
- Alberta Ingenuity Fund
- Alberta Research Council
- Alberta Science and Research Authority (ASRA)
- Alberta Sheep and Wool Commission
- Alberta Technology Commercialization Network (ATCN)
- AVAC Ltd.
- Biofuel Canada Ltd.
- Caterpillar
- Canada Foundation for Innovation (CFI)
- Chinook’s Edge School Division
- Custom Woolen Mills
- Edmonton Waste Management Centre and the City of Edmonton
- Finning Corp
- Industrial Research Assistance Program /National Research Council Canada
- Lakeland College
- Leduc Nisku Economic Development Agency
- Moutainview County
- Natural Fibre Centre
- Prairie Turfgrass Research Centre
- Red Deer College
- Red Deer County
- Texas A & M University
- Town of Olds
- University of Alberta
- University of Saskatchewan

## Unique Solutions

OCSI is an integral part of Olds College and its primary objective is to grow in a strategic market-driven manner while creating value for industry partners and learners. This growth will help OCSI address market opportunities, fully utilize its broad array of assets and achieve scientific and financial stability.

During the restructuring of OCSI, it became apparent that its operational focus could be enhanced through the creation of stand-alone enterprises within the organization. These enterprises have been developed based on operational experience and the increasing need to maximize all college assets and relationships:

- BioEnergy
- Composting and Waste Management
- Environmental Microbiology and Agronomy
- Natural Fibre
- New Products from Crops and Bioprocessing

The commercial and intellectual value is created through the implementation of three main activities:

- Contract Research. OCSI is the College focal point for research activities and research-related partnerships.
- Research Integration. OCSI is the College focal point to integrating applied research and academic programming, greatly enriches the academic experience at the College.
- Commercial Innovation and Value. OCSI is the College focal point for innovative thought leadership and the creation of commercial value for clients and partners.

The World Economic Forum says Canada's business competitiveness is declining. National, provincial and industrial competitiveness can only be addressed through investment and a cultural shift to focus on research that drives the engine of change and improves the quality of life. It is clear our current industry performance does not guarantee success in a rapidly changing, fast paced and internationally competitive global marketplace.

## Financial Impact

**Olds College School of Innovation** \$ 600,000

OCSI is a remarkably innovative concept that has evolved quickly. It has been designed to create both financial and intellectual value. During its first six years, OCSI revenues have exceeded \$6.3 million and net results were near the break-even level. During the next four years, government grants are expected to decline and OCSI is working hard to increase its fee-based research activities. However, an annual financial gap of \$150,000 to \$200,000 exists because of the pressing need to procure both innovative leadership and scientific equipment. Together, these assets will help OCSI expand its research value proposition and become increasingly financially sustainable.

**For more information about this 2009 Capital Vision Campaign Project, please contact:**

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