



Western Economic
Diversification Canada

Diversification de l'économie
de l'Ouest Canada

Fact Sheet

WESTLINK TECHNOLOGY COMMERCIALIZATION INTERNSHIP PROGRAM

TRAINING EARLY STAGE TECHNOLOGY MANAGERS IN THE WEST

In partnership with the WestLink Innovation Network and the four western provinces, WD is working to address the shortage of trained technology development managers.

The WestLink Technology Commercialization Internship Program provides science and technology graduates from across Western Canada with intensive real-life experience in university technology commercialization offices, venture capital firms and high-technology spin-off companies.

Developed by WestLink Innovation Network Ltd. and member universities, the two-year program enables interns to develop an understanding of issues that affect successful commercialization of new inventions.

Interns gain practical work experience through three eight-month work placements across Western Canada, giving them direct exposure to the technology commercialization community. The three host employers include: a university technology transfer office, a venture capital firm and a technology company.

To advance early-stage technology from university research to commercialization requires both scientific and technical knowledge. It also requires a broad understanding of business practices and communications. These skills are needed to bridge the gap between the business and academic environments. This internship program is an opportunity to develop these skills, working directly with experienced resource people in all three sectors.

Placement sites hosting the interns provide about half of the funding for the program. Contributing federal departments and agencies include Western Economic Diversification Canada, the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council and the Canadian Institutes of Health Research. The four western provinces and the Alberta Heritage Foundation for Medical Research (AHFMR) provide funding as well.

WestLink is an innovative not-for-profit organization formed to promote collaboration, training, technology bundling and commercialization through a range of programs and services. Its membership consists of 29 western Canadian universities, colleges and research institutes.

WD contributed \$1.875 million to establish and support WestLink, along with a total of \$1.4 million for four phases of the Technology Commercialization Internship Program. WD also contributed \$500,000 for a technology bundling project. The project enabled WestLink to hire a business development officer to link member organizations developing new medical devices with Canadian companies which can turn them into marketable products.

For more information about WestLink and the Internship program, visit www.westlink.ca.

