

Ontario Commercialization Network Review - Expert Panel

Terms of Reference

Ontario Commercialization Network Overview:

- The Ontario Commercialization Network (OCN) is a network of commercialization stakeholders across the province with a common mission of actively managing company acceleration.
- MRI works in collaboration with OCN members to bring the appropriate resources available to companies in a timely manner.

Purpose of OCN Review:

- Establish a clear vision for a commercialization “ecosystem” in Ontario which will:
 - Improve the transfer of knowledge and intellectual property (IP) from research institutions to the private sector;
 - Transform industry-led research into innovative products and services for a global marketplace;
 - Accelerate the development of high growth potential start-ups, and small- and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs).
 - Align with Ontario’s Innovation Agenda.
- Develop a program implementation model that will provide a:
 - core set of commercialization programs and services from the OCN hub;
 - clear access point to programs and services, primarily at the regional level;
 - common approach to diagnose client needs and deploy appropriate resources.
 - method by which frontline organizations are empowered to achieve timely service delivery.
- Achieve full government accountability and transparency in the OCN programs/delivery model with a focus on performance standards and results that will ensure OCN resources meet the needs of both government and clients.

Scope of Review:

- The review will include all existing OCN partners including the Ontario Centres of Excellence (OCE), the MaRS Discovery District (MaRS), the Sector Innovation Networks (SINs), and the Regional Innovation Networks (RINs).

Expected Outcomes:

- The results of the review will be used to make recommendations to the Minister about the future direction of the OCN.
- In particular, the review is expected to produce:
 - Global best practice model(s) to deliver the government’s commercialization programs;
 - OCN programs that are aligned with government priorities and maximize the government’s return on investment in R&D and commercialization;
 - Clear organizational mandates for all OCN member organizations;
 - OCN member organizations that are client-focused and responsive to the needs of clients as well as government;

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- Fewer OCN programs;
- A more centralized delivery process at a regional level;
- A single or unified hub to provide a provincial anchor for the OCN programs;
- OCN brand recognition.

Roles and Responsibilities:

- The Expert Panel will be called upon to validate or suggest changes to the proposed OCN model(s) recommended by the consulting firm retained by MRI in conjunction with input from the Steering Committee and MRI staff.
- The Expert Panel will also provide MRI with a global leadership/best practices strategy based on the expertise of its members.
- A one-day meeting of the Panel will be held on November 18, 2008.

Confidentiality and Conflict of Interest:

- Upon joining the Expert Panel, the members will sign and be bound by a Confidentiality Declaration.

Confidentiality

- Confidential information is any that is not known to the general public and may include business research, marketing plans, strategic objectives, unpublished financial information, customer, supplier and personnel lists, and certain intellectual property such as trade secrets, software programs, patent applications, and business processes.
- Members shall use the highest standards of ethics in handling all information disclosed to them throughout the advisory process.
- It is possible that members will receive confidential information with respect to OCN member organizations or MRI in the course of their duties. Where this is personal information, it will be subject to applicable privacy laws.
- Discussions and advice provided by the members to MRI are considered confidential information.

Freedom of Information

- The Ministry of Research and Innovation is subject to the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act.
- The Act provides every person with a right of access to information in the custody or under the control of the Ministry, subject to a limited set of exemptions.
- Section 17 of the Act provides a limited exemption for third party information that reveals a trade secret or scientific, commercial, technical, financial or labour relations information supplied in confidence where disclosure of the information could reasonably be expected to result in certain harms.
- Any trade secret or any scientific, technical, commercial, financial or labour relations information submitted to the Ministry in confidence should be clearly marked and, before granting access to a record that might contain information referred to in Section 17, the Ministry will notify a third party so that they may make representations to the Ministry concerning disclosure.

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Expenses/Remuneration:

- Remuneration commensurate with expert panel responsibilities. Reimbursement of travel, accommodation and meal expenses must be in accordance with the OPS Travel, Meal, and Hospitality and Travel Directive.