



Universities
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Global Affairs
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Connecting government, industry & academia: The value of Canada's universities

2026



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CANADA AT A GLANCE

Canada combines a diversified economy, world-class post-secondary institutions, advanced research capabilities and strong industry connections, creating a strong platform for international collaboration in R&D, innovation, technology and talent development.



Country Profile



US\$2.3T Economy

One of the world's largest advanced economies



41.7M People (2025)

Across 10 provinces and 3 territories



G7, G20, OECD, APEC

Connected to major global economic and policy networks



English & French

Canada's two official languages

Sources: World Bank; Statistics Canada (2025); Government of Canada.

Higher education & talent



#1

in the OECD Highly Educated Workforce

Canada has the highest share of adults with tertiary education.



5th

in the world higher education

Canada's global ranking for its research and post-secondary education system.



200+

Public post-secondary institutions

Universities, Colleges, Institutes, CEGEPs, Polytechnics.



2.34M+

students

Enrolled in post-secondary institutions in Canada in 2024.

Sources: Universities Canada; CEWIL Canada; CBIE; Statistics Canada



91%

of WIL students

Secure jobs related to their studies, compared with 71% of students without a placement.



14th

in the world global peace

Canada's ranking among the world's most peaceful countries.



83%

Canada as a first choice

Current international students who chose Canada as their preferred study destination.

Sources: Universities Canada; CBIE; Global Peace Index (2026).

*Work-integrated learning statistics are based on institutions participating in the CEWIL Canada Annual Data Report (2023) and do not represent all Canadian post-secondary institutions.

Research & innovation

Canada's research and innovation ecosystem combines public and private investment, globally recognized research institutions, specialized infrastructure, highly qualified talent and industry-led innovation networks.

CAD \$58.5B in R&D expenditures

across Canada in 2025.



#1 in the G7 for higher education and R&D



Canada invested \$19.4B in higher-education R&D—the highest R&D intensity in the G7.

33% R&D taking place within post-secondary sector

Share of R&D activity taking place within post-secondary institutions.



CAD \$2.11B+ industry & partner contribution

Co-investment in Canada's Global Innovation Clusters.

Sources: Statistics Canada; Global Innovation Clusters.



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Strategic areas for collaboration

Canada's research and industrial strengths align with sectors of strategic importance across Latin America and around the globe.



Clean Energy & Energy Transition



Critical Minerals & Sustainable Resource Development



Agriculture & Agri-food



AI, Digital & Emerging Technologies



Life Sciences & Health Innovation



Advanced Manufacturing



Oceans & Marine Technologies



Aerospace & Defence

Sources: Government of Canada (Budget 2024); Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada (ISED); Global Affairs Canada; Natural Resources Canada; Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada.

CONNECTING RESEARCH, INNOVATION & INDUSTRY

Canada's collaborative research and innovation ecosystem brings together post-secondary institutions, research organizations, industry, government and innovation partners to tackle real-world challenges and develop solutions. Together, they combine world-class expertise, infrastructure, talent, investment, funding, sector knowledge and pathways to market—accelerating R&D, technology development, applied innovation, commercialization and talent development.



Research & expertise
Post-secondary institutions and research centres
Provide: Expertise • Facilities • Technology • Talent • Technology development



Real-world needs
Companies and public-sector partners
Bring: Challenges • Sector & market knowledge • Investment • Commercialization pathways



Support & scale
Government and innovation organizations
Enable: Funding • Innovation Programs • Networks • Infrastructure

EXPERTISE + NEED + SUPPORT = PARTNERSHIP

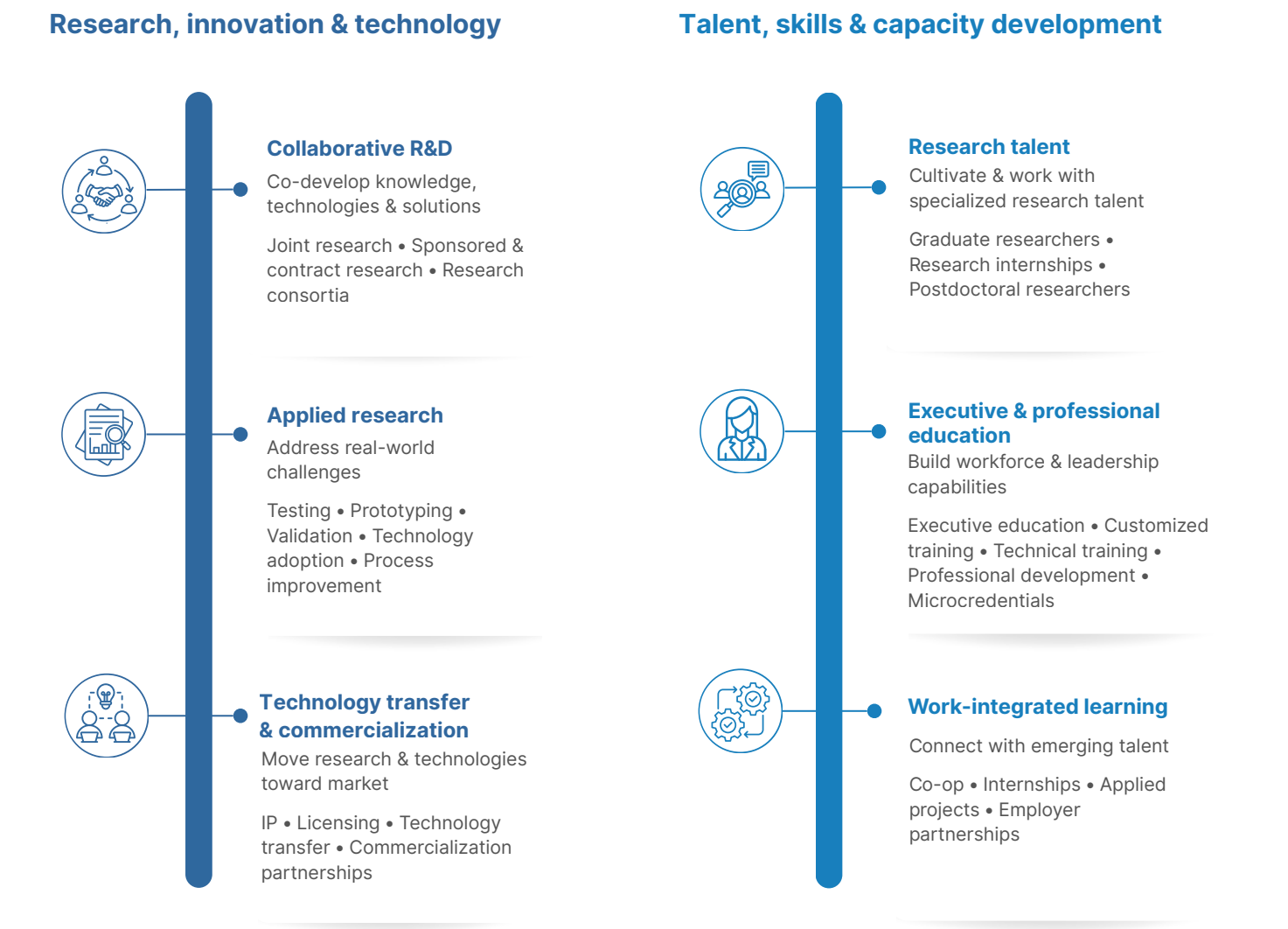
Together, partners can:

Address challenges • Develop technologies • Test & validate solutions • Bring innovation to market • Develop specialized talent

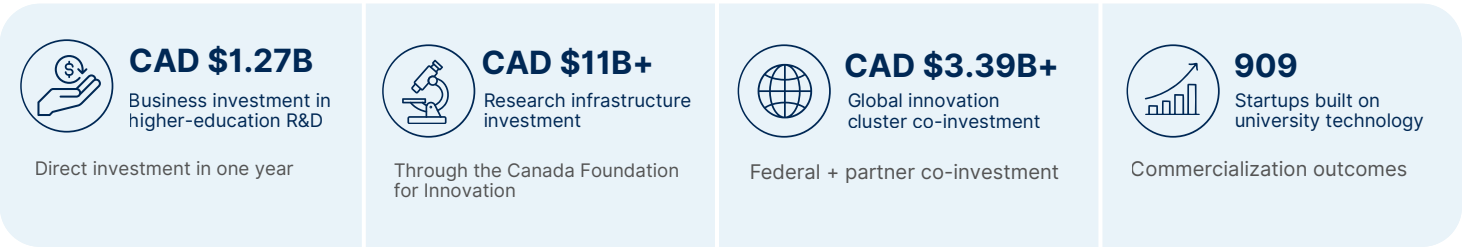
Sources: Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada (ISED); Universities Canada; Colleges and Institutes Canada (CICan); Polytechnics Canada.



Depending on your objective, collaboration with a Canadian institution can take different forms, from research and technology development to specialized talent and workforce development. Partnership models, intellectual-property terms and funding structures vary by project and institution.



Sources: Universities Canada; Colleges and Institutes Canada (CICan); Polytechnics Canada; CEWIL Canada.



Sources: Statistics Canada; Canada Foundation for Innovation (CFI); Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada (ISED); AUTM.

Canada’s strong research and innovation ecosystem brings together research expertise, industry connections, highly skilled talent, advanced infrastructure, funding and innovation support, creating pathways for international collaboration in R&D, technology development, commercialization, workforce development and long-term innovation partnerships.



Sources: OECD, Main Science and Technology Indicators database; Statistics Canada; Mitacs.

STRATEGIC SECTORS FOR COLLABORATION & CANADIAN EXPERTISE

Connecting Canadian sector expertise with international research, technology and talent needs

Explore where Canadian research expertise, industry capabilities, specialized infrastructure and talent can support your priorities and create opportunities for collaboration. Potential areas of collaboration may include industry partnerships and applied R&D, knowledge transfer, technology development and specialized training.

Canadian post-secondary institutions have globally recognized expertise in high-demand fields including quantum and biotech.



WHERE TO FIND THE EXPERTISE

Alberta

Calgary • Edmonton

Energy transition • Clean Energy • Hydrogen • AI • Health technologies

British Columbia

Vancouver

AI • Digital Technologies • Clean technology

Saskatchewan

Saskatoon

Agriculture • Agri-food innovation • Food security

Manitoba

Winnipeg

Aerospace • Advanced manufacturing

Ontario

Toronto • Waterloo • Ottawa

AI • Life sciences • Financial technologies • Quantum technologies • Advanced manufacturing • Entrepreneurship • ICT • Cybersecurity

Quebec

Montreal

AI • Aerospace • Advanced manufacturing

Atlantic Canada

Halifax & regional hubs

Ocean Sciences • Marine technologies • Clean energy

**Illustrative areas of strength; not an exhaustive representation of regional expertise.*

Sources: Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada (ISED); Government of Canada's Regional Development Agencies; provincial economic development and innovation sources.



1. CLEAN ENERGY & CLIMATE TECHNOLOGIES

Canadian expertise

Clean electricity • Hydrogen • CCUS • Nuclear energy • Energy systems • Environmental science • Clean technologies



83% Non-emitting electricity
Share of Canada's electricity generated from non-emitting sources, including hydro, nuclear, wind and solar.



\$93B+ in clean economy tax incentives
Federal investment tax credits expected by 2034 across clean technology, hydrogen, CCUS, clean manufacturing and clean electricity.

In practice | Knowledge transfer & capacity building

82.5% of Canada's electricity generation comes from non-emitting sources, supported by expertise in hydroelectricity, nuclear energy, hydrogen, Carbon capture, utilization and storage (CCUS), clean electricity, and emerging clean technologies.

The [IAEA-Canada Collaborating Centre](#) provides an example of how the post-secondary sector can support with training and capacity building in advanced nuclear technologies, including SMRs, nuclear hydrogen, desalination and district heating.

Sources: Natural Resources Canada (NRCan); Government of Canada; International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA).



2. CRITICAL MINERALS & SUSTAINABLE RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT

Canadian expertise

Mining engineering • Geology • Mineral processing • Battery technologies • Sustainable mining • Clean technology



56 mines • 31 processing facilities • 171 advanced projects
Established critical minerals value chain spanning extraction, processing and projects moving toward development.



\$40B GDP • ~110,000 jobs
Significant economic and workforce footprint across Canada's critical minerals sector.

In practice | Canada-Latin America capacity building

Canada produced **60+ minerals and metals valued at \$64.3B in 2024**, alongside internationally recognized expertise in mining, processing, critical minerals and sustainable resource development.

A Canadian government-supported initiative provides specialized training to mining and critical minerals professionals connected to Latin America, focusing on financial and economic planning for sustainable critical mineral projects and ESG considerations.

Learn more about this collaboration: [Mining Industry Management Scholarship Program](#).

Sources: Natural Resources Canada (NRCan); University of Toronto.



3. AGRICULTURE & AGRI-FOOD

Canadian expertise

Crop & livestock science • Food security • Precision agriculture • Ag-tech • Genomics • Food science & processing • Sustainable production



\$150.8B GDP • 2.26M jobs
Major economic and employment footprint across Canada's agriculture and agri-food system.



39 projects • 40 partner-country institutions • 20 Canadian institutions
International applied-research network connecting Canadian expertise with institutions in partner countries.

In practice | International applied research

Canada's agriculture and agri-food system contributed **\$150.8B to GDP and supported 2.26M jobs in 2024**, alongside significant research and innovation capabilities.

A Canadian-French research collaboration brings together expertise in animal nutrition and modelling to develop precision-feeding systems for poultry and pigs, supporting more sustainable food-production systems.

Learn more about this collaboration: [Livestock Animal Nutrition and Modeling for Sustainable Food Systems \(LIA NUTRI-MOD\)](#).

Sources: Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (AAFC); INRAE; Université Laval; AgroParisTech.



4. AI, DIGITAL & EMERGING TECHNOLOGIES

Canadian expertise

Artificial intelligence • Advanced computing • Cybersecurity • Quantum technologies • Digital transformation • Industry-linked R&D • Commercialization



3 national AI institutes

Amii, Mila and the Vector Institute anchor Canada's national AI research and innovation ecosystem, backed by \$742M in federal investment through the Pan-Canadian AI Strategy.



150+ world-class AI researchers funded

The Canada CIFAR AI Chairs program has funded more than 150 researchers advancing AI research and technology in Canada.



Quantum ecosystems

Canada is home to quantum ecosystems across the country, engaging industry and academia to develop new advances in this emerging technology.

In practice | Industry–university quantum R&D

Canada is a place where companies can plug directly into quantum research and take advantage of world-class labs and researchers, either through sponsoring targeted research or funding local startups. Quantum research takes place across Canada but in Ontario's Waterloo region alone the regional development agency has helped international businesses invest **almost \$4 billion dollars locally since 2016**.

Learn more about this collaboration: [Waterloo's quantum ecosystem](#).



Sources: Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada (ISED); CIFAR; Waterloo EDC; IBM Research.

5. LIFE SCIENCES & HEALTH INNOVATION

Canadian expertise

Biomedical research • Biotechnology • Genomics • Clinical research • Biomanufacturing • Health technologies • Commercialization



\$2.5B+ • 43 projects

Federal investment supporting biomanufacturing, vaccine and therapeutics capacity across Canada.



5 national biomedical research hubs

Pan-Canadian hubs connecting research, specialized infrastructure, talent development and cross-sector collaboration.

In practice | International industrial R&D

Canada's life sciences ecosystem connects universities, research hospitals and industry, supported by **\$2.5B+ in federal investment across 43 biomanufacturing, vaccine and therapeutics projects**.

International partnerships, including the [Canada–UK Biomanufacturing Collaboration](#), further support joint R&D in areas such as drug discovery, vaccine production and gene therapy.



Sources: Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada (ISED); Canada Biomedical Research Fund; Biosciences Research Infrastructure Fund.

6. ADVANCED MANUFACTURING

Canadian expertise

Industry 4.0 • Robotics & automation • Additive & digital manufacturing • Advanced materials • AI & digital technologies • Technology adoption



\$208B GDP • 1.85M workers

Significant economic and workforce scale across Canada's manufacturing sector.



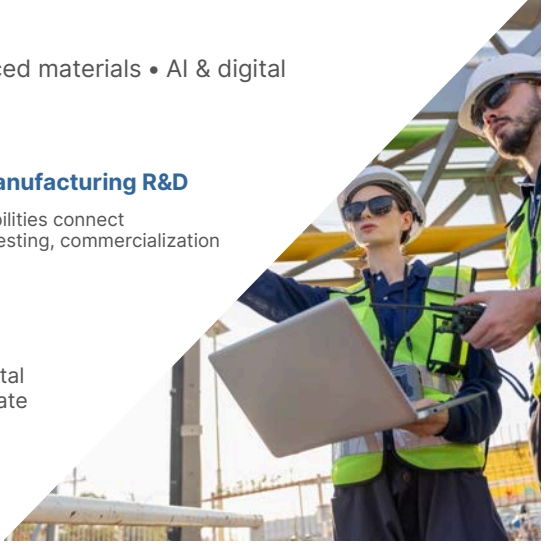
Advanced & digital manufacturing R&D

Specialized research capabilities connect technology development, testing, commercialization and advanced talent.

In practice | Collaborative R&D & technology development

A Canadian university and federal research organization operate a joint advanced and digital manufacturing centre that co-develops technologies and applications with public and private partners, while supporting commercialization and graduate research training.

Learn more about this collaboration: [Canadian Centre for Advanced and Digital Manufacturing](#).



Sources: Government of Canada; National Research Council Canada (NRC).

7. OCEANS & MARINE TECHNOLOGIES

Canadian expertise

Ocean science • Fisheries & aquaculture • Marine technologies • Coastal resilience • Autonomous systems • Ocean monitoring • Sustainable ocean development



60+ collaborative projects

Active technology-development portfolio connecting industry, academia and not-for-profit partners.



\$94M federal research investment

Federal investment supporting a major multi-university ocean research initiative with international research partnerships.

In practice | International ocean R&D

Canada's marine economy generated approximately **\$51.9B in GDP and supported 420,000+ jobs in 2024**, alongside significant ocean science and technology capabilities.

Canada's federal Ocean Program enables international universities, research organizations and companies to collaborate on technology development addressing ocean health and blue-economy challenges, including coastal resilience, intelligent marine systems, pollution remediation and marine bio-resources.

Learn more about this collaboration: [NRC Ocean Program](#).

Sources: National Research Council Canada (NRC); Marine Institute International, Memorial University of Newfoundland and Labrador.



8. AEROSPACE & DEFENCE

Canadian expertise

Aerospace engineering • Advanced materials • Autonomous systems • Simulation & testing • Cybersecurity • AI • Advanced manufacturing



\$34.2B aerospace GDP • 225,000 jobs

Significant economic and workforce footprint across Canada's aerospace industry.



\$180B defence procurement • \$290B defence capital investment

Major defence procurement and capital investment opportunities expected over the next 10 years.

In practice | International aerospace R&D

In 2024, Canada invested **\$1.2B in R&D to expand globally competitive capabilities** across aerospace manufacturing and services. Canada's federal aerospace research centre maintains 200+ active partnerships with industry, universities, government and international research and technology organizations, supporting collaborative R&D, testing and technology development through specialized expertise and facilities.

Learn more about this collaboration: [NRC Aerospace Research Centre](#).

Sources: Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada (ISED); Government of Canada; National Research Council Canada (NRC).



TALENT & WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Canadian universities, colleges and institutes can work with your organization to build specialized skills, leadership and research capacity. Programs can be customized around specific workforce and institutional needs and delivered in Canada, in the partner country, online or through hybrid models.



Industry & professional training

Build specialized technical and professional skills.

Learn about the international marine training and capacity-building portfolio.

Short courses • Professional certificates • Microcredentials • Technical training • Sector-specific upskilling



Executive & leadership education

Strengthen leadership and organizational capacity.

Explore the international leadership and management training program.

Executive education • Strategic leadership • Management development • Innovation & organizational transformation



Language & professional communication

Build communication skills for professional and academic environments.

Discover what the Canada-Colombia faculty development initiative offers.

English & French • Workplace communication • Technical & business language • Academic communication



Innovation, entrepreneurship & research skills

Develop the capabilities to turn knowledge into solutions.

Learn about the IPN-Canada short-term training experience.

Entrepreneurship • Innovation management • Commercialization • Applied research • Research internships • Joint supervision

Sources: Memorial University Marine Institute; York University; University of Ottawa; University of Waterloo.



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Built around your priorities

Programs can be designed around the capabilities your organization, institution or sector needs to develop, with flexibility in length, delivery and format.



Program length

Days or weeks • Several weeks or months • Longer-term pathways



Program delivery

In Canada • In partner country • Online • Hybrid



Program design

Organization-specific • Customized cohort • Sector-focused • Open enrolment



Program includes

Technical instruction • Applied projects • Industry exposure • Research experiences • Language development • Professional training

88,000+ master's & doctoral graduates

Approximately 79,300 master's + 8,800 doctoral graduates in 2023, demonstrating the scale of Canada's advanced education and research talent pipeline.

Source: Statistics Canada.

Canadian institutions offer high-quality education, diverse learning environments, opportunities to participate in research and gain practical experience with employers.

For students



- Academic & research quality
- Diverse communities
- Co-op & internships
- Applied projects
- Professional network

Explore study opportunities in Canada at [EduCanada.ca](https://www.educanada.ca)

**Programs, available experiences, and eligibility criteria vary by institution, field, and location.*

Ready to explore a partnership? Start the conversation

Universities Canada (UC) can help you navigate the Canadian university landscape

Universities Canada represents **97 post-secondary institutions** across the country. The organization has **more than 60 years of experience** designing and administering scholarship and mobility programs in partnership with the private and public sectors. It currently manages **150+ programs, supporting 7,700+ students annually and disbursing over \$24 million in awards.**

Universities Canada can help international partners navigate the Canadian university landscape, identify relevant areas of expertise and connect with institutions to explore potential collaboration.



International@univcan.ca



www.univcan.ca

Specific partnership models, funding opportunities and eligibility depend on the institutions, organizations and programs involved.



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Key acronyms & organizations

Acronyms	Full name Meaning
<u>AAFC</u>	Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada
<u>Amii</u>	Alberta Machine Intelligence Institute
<u>APEC</u>	Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation
<u>AUTM</u>	Association of University Technology Managers
<u>CAD</u>	Canadian dollar
<u>CBIE</u>	Canadian Bureau for International Education
<u>CCUS</u>	Carbon Capture, Utilization and Storage
<u>CEGEP</u>	Collège d'enseignement général et professionnel
<u>CEWIL Canada</u>	Co-operative Education and Work-Integrated Learning Canada
<u>CFI</u>	Canada Foundation for Innovation
<u>CICan</u>	Colleges and Institutes Canada
<u>CIFAR</u>	Canadian Institute for Advanced Research
<u>Co-op</u>	Co-operative Education
<u>COVE</u>	Centre for Ocean Ventures and Entrepreneurship
<u>ESG</u>	Environmental, Social and Governance
<u>GDP</u>	Gross Domestic Product
<u>IAEA</u>	International Atomic Energy Agency
<u>IDRC</u>	International Development Research Centre
<u>IP</u>	Intellectual Property
<u>IPN</u>	Instituto Politécnico Nacional
<u>ISED</u>	Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada
<u>NRC</u>	National Research Council Canada
<u>NRCan</u>	Natural Resources Canada
<u>OECD</u>	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
<u>R&D</u>	Research and Development
<u>SMR / SMRs</u>	Small Modular Reactor(s)
<u>WIL</u>	Work-Integrated Learning

