

January 11, 2021

Supporting a streamlined approach to industry engagement and research commercialization

When it comes to commercializing research, Dalhousie has long been a leader in Atlantic Canada. By building productive partnerships between the university's research community and industry, the Industry Liaison and Innovation (ILI) office has helped to address real-world problems, deliver critical innovations to the public, drive economic growth, and train the next generation of innovators, problem-solvers, and entrepreneurs.

However, ILI's business model that has evolved significantly over that past few years, and it became time to undergo a strategic review of its operations - with a view to finding more efficient ways for its stakeholders to engage with the office, and provide greater transparency around processes, procedures and timelines. Staff members looked at best practices across North America and beyond; mapping out and refining work processes to increase efficiency and effectiveness.

The result is a renewed emphasis on communication, including a new website that is a substantial expansion to the information readily available online. Team members captured some of their most in-demand knowledge and experience in the form of overviews and FAQs. Processes, procedures and timelines have been clearly documented, which will help new and returning stakeholders know what to expect. Finally, the resources most in-demand (including funding sources, commercialization support, related resources, and agreement templates) are easier to find. Making this essential information more available helps stakeholders, and also allows team members to focus on what they do best: providing personalized service to guide researchers to commercial opportunities, and connect companies to research talent.

A name change was also required to better describe the office's evolving role in connecting the university to industry. As of **January 4, 2021**, ILI will now be known as the **Office of Commercialization and Industry Engagement (OCIE)**.

"It was important to revisit our process and procedures to make them more efficient to support our research community," says Stephen Hartlen, Assistant Vice President, Industry Relations. Our new name is more reflective of our office's mandate, and our new online resources will help streamline industry engagement."

OCIE will continue to serve as Dalhousie's gateway for:

- Collaboration between industry and Dal's talented research teams
- Support for the business and economic development community
- Access to the university's innovations, such as its intellectual property
- Early assistance in the creation of startups based on Dal research.

On the refreshed website, you'll find stories that demonstrate the interest and opportunity for the research community and the private sector, and how OCIE provides an essential bridging service. The site supports this effort, by providing improved information and increasing transparency.

For researchers:

Industry partnerships are increasingly more complex. The OCIE team specializes in building partnerships with industry and supporting those in the Dalhousie research community who wish to commercialize their innovations.

The team can help researchers by:

- Answering questions about processes and funding opportunities.
- Providing information about license agreements, non-disclosure agreements, research collaboration agreements and more.
- Offering details about funding programs.

For companies:

OCIE is the central gateway for industry engagement and access to the university's brain power. The team works to make transactions with our private sector partners as transparent and frictionless as possible.

OCIE can help companies by:

- Giving an overview of Dalhousie's research strengths and what to expect working with OCIE.
- Sharing information about the agreements that support Dalhousie-industry partnerships.
- Providing descriptions of the processes and timelines involved in the creation of partnership agreements.

For startups:

OCIE offers advising support to Dal researchers with the drive, commitment and time necessary to start a company. They'll need to learn about the critical components of early-stage progress and investment – and will definitely want to tap into Dal Innovates programming to gain the knowledge, skills and contacts that will help them succeed.

The OCIE team can help startups by:

- Providing an overview of what to expect when launching a company, and the Dal supports available.
- Sharing details about funding programs.
- Making policies and tools available to researchers, in an easily accessible format.

Learn more about OCIE by visiting dal.ca/ocie

Research Support Fund

Established in 2003, the Research Support Fund (formerly the Indirect Costs Program) helps Canadian universities and colleges, along with their affiliated health research institutes and research hospitals, with the indirect costs associated with federally funded research.

At Dalhousie, the Research Support Fund, which includes both the RSF Grant and Incremental Project Grant (IPG), is helping to support the streamlining of workflow processes for researchers. For the Office of Commercialization and Industry Engagement (OCIE), RSF/IPG funds helped support the refreshed OCIE website which now features more accessible and essential information and resources, downloadable forms, and process workflow maps on how the office works.

In 2020-21, the RSF/IPG is providing \$9,161,250 to support the indirect costs of research at Dalhousie and affiliate hospitals.