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[**Celebrity Chefs: What ingredients make an effective supercluster?**](https://cspc2017.sched.com/event/BF9m/celebrity-chefs-what-ingredients-make-an-effective-supercluster-chefs-etoiles-quels-ingredients-sont-a-la-base-de-supergrappes-efficaces?iframe=yes&w=100%25&sidebar=yes&bg=no)

Organizer: Global Advantage Consulting Inc.

Speakers: [Vivek Goel](https://cspc2017.sched.com/speaker/dr.vivekgoel?iframe=yes&w=100%25&sidebar=yes&bg=no) Vice President, Research and Innovation, University of Toronto; [John Knubley](https://cspc2017.sched.com/speaker/johnknubley?iframe=yes&w=100%25&sidebar=yes&bg=no), Deputy Minister, Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada (ISED); [Marc LePage](https://cspc2017.sched.com/speaker/marclepage?iframe=yes&w=100%25&sidebar=yes&bg=no), President and CEO, Genome Canada; [Avvey Peters](https://cspc2017.sched.com/speaker/avveypeters2?iframe=yes&w=100%25&sidebar=yes&bg=no), Vice President, Partnerships, Communitech; [Joy Romero](https://cspc2017.sched.com/speaker/ginnyflood?iframe=yes&w=100%25&sidebar=yes&bg=no), Vice President, Technology & Innovation, Canadian Natural Resources Ltd; [Iain Stewart](https://cspc2017.sched.com/speaker/iainklugman2?iframe=yes&w=100%25&sidebar=yes&bg=no), President, National Research Council (NRC)

Moderator: [Dave Watters](https://cspc2017.sched.com/moderator/davewatters?iframe=yes&w=100%25&sidebar=yes&bg=no), President/CEO, Global Advantage Consulting Group Inc.

**Takeaways and recommendations**

**Process and objectives**

* The Innovation Supercluster Initiative is the largest program launched under the new Innovation and Skills Plan. ISI has attracted more than 50 proposals; three-to-five will be funded in early 2018.
* The competition is seeing unique partnerships emerging as participants explore new ways of working and collaborating.
* ISI is being described as an open invitation to the economy. It is intended to increase Canada’s business expenditures on research and development (BERD), by launching large-scale projects involving multiple partners, establishing supply chains between large anchor firms and small- and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and applying leadership and networks to disruptive technologies fields where Canada can compete globally.
* Criteria for evaluating ISI proposals include: technology leadership; partnerships to achieve scale; a diverse and skilled talent pool; and global advantage.
* The funding for ISI ($950 million) is sufficient to capture the attention of companies that do not usually conduct R&D or work with academia.
* ISI contenders are being asked to include women, Indigenous businesses and entrepreneurship in their proposals as well as long-terms plans for sustainability beyond four years of ISI funding.

**Refining the shortlisted proposals**

* Finalists are encouraged to partner or merge with relevant unsuccessful proposals.
* ISED, drawing on expertise across government, will evaluate the proposals
* External panels with be used to assess issues related to commercialization.
* ISI is asking businesses—both large and small—to think differently when exploring potential supply chains and collaborators.

**Collaboration partners**

* The NRC is positioning itself as a resource to ISI contenders. It is involved in 17 ISI proposals in varying degrees as bidding groups confront the challenge of organizing themselves to spend $400-500 million in public and private funding.
* The University of Toronto is also offering its support to all ISI proposals, and stressing inclusive innovation as a way to distinguish ISI from technology clusters in Silicon Valley.
* An unsuccessful bid for an oil and gas supercluster is committed to self-organizing as the Clean Resource Innovation Network (CRIN) to reduce the footprint of hydrocarbons and de-link their use with their release into the atmosphere.
* CRIN has developed a supercluster roadmap and is working out details on legal agreements and intellectual property sharing. Resulting technologies will be “100% transferrable globally”.
* The Canadian Digital Media Network is available to work with ISI proponents to help bridge the gap between what companies are comfortable doing and what is expected of them as a supercluster. An ongoing challenge is the translation of vocabularies utilized by the different supercluster partners. This is particularly valuable for proposals that are being merged as the ISI competition moves into its final phase.
* Genome Canada is working with seven of the nine remaining ISI contenders, including the MOST21 (Mobility Systems and Technologies for the 21st Century) aerospace supercluster which is focusing on biofuels.
* Genome Canada sees alignment of the bioeconomy and the commercialization of disruptive technologies as key by-products of the ISI program.
* Given the size of Canada, subject-matter clusters work better in the bioeconomy than physical clusters.