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New Alberta Innovates grants aimed at development of commercial applications of advanced biomaterial – cellulose nanocrystals (CNC)

EDMONTON, Canada – Two Alberta Innovates corporations have teamed up to provide funding for R&D projects that advance the knowledge and use of cellulose nanocrystals (CNC), an advanced biomaterial.

The new program, called **CNC Challenge 2.0**, is intended to support early-stage work to demonstrate technical feasibility of CNC in high-value applications with potential for commercialization.

Alberta Innovates Bio Solutions (AI Bio) and Alberta Innovates – Technology Futures (AITF) will support up to eight projects, and provide each successful applicant with the following:

- Up to \$25,000 in funding for their CNC project research.
- Up to one kilogram of CNC from AITF's pilot plant.
- Access to AITF's researchers, capacity and facilities.

Researchers and developers at Canadian institutions, companies or other organizations are invited to submit proposals via the [AI Bio website](#).

Successful projects have the potential for ongoing support toward commercialization.

CNC consists of nano-scale crystals made from cellulose (plant fibre), the most abundant organic polymer on earth. It is biodegradable, non-toxic, extremely strong and has other unique properties that offer exciting opportunities for a wide range of commercial applications.

Alberta has one of the few pilot plants in the world capable of producing high-quality CNC in kilogram volumes. [The plant](#) is located on AITF's premises in Edmonton. Current leading-edge research in the province includes the development of CNC applications in the fields of energy, health, industrial coatings, electronics and the environment.

"This is an excellent opportunity for small- and medium-sized enterprises to gain funding and material for their nanotech-related research," said Gordon Giles, director of forestry at AITF. "I'm particularly excited at the prospect of providing researchers and developers with high-quality cellulose nanocrystals made at our Edmonton pilot plant."

"The first CNC Challenge funding program (1.0) yielded several interesting projects," noted Christine Murray, director of agricultural technologies at AI Bio. "We look forward to seeing other creative uses for CNC come forward which take advantage of its unique properties and great potential."



Information Bulletin

About Alberta Innovates Bio Solutions

Alberta Innovates Bio Solutions is a research agency funded by the Government of Alberta. We invest in science and innovation to grow prosperity in Alberta's agriculture, food and forest sectors. We routinely work with R&D partners on research and innovation projects in the areas of sustainable production, bioindustrial innovation, food innovation, ecosystem services and prion diseases. Visit bio.albertainnovates.ca.

About Alberta Innovates – Technology Futures

Part of Alberta's research and innovation system, Alberta Innovates – Technology Futures (AITF) is helping build healthy, sustainable businesses in the province. Through a suite of programs and services for entrepreneurs, companies, researchers, post-secondary institutions and investors, AITF provides technical services and funding support to facilitate the commercialization of technologies, develop new knowledge-based industry clusters and encourage an entrepreneurial culture in Alberta.

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