

Innovating with funding support from Mitacs

Elliot Schiller

Did drupa give you some exciting innovation ideas? Are you looking for funding to help move your business further into the era of multichannel selling, 3D printing and/or green printing? Perhaps now is the time to look to Mitacs for innovation funding support.

Mitacs is a national, not-for-profit organization that has designed and delivered research and training programs in Canada for 15 years. Working with 60 universities, thousands of companies, and both federal and provincial governments, Mitacs builds partnerships that support industrial innovation in Canada.

For those of us with long memories, “Mitacs was founded in 1999, and was referred to as a Canadian Network of Centres of Excellence, dedicated to supporting applied and industrial research. Fully independent since 2011, Mitacs remains committed to its core vision of supporting research-based innovation and continues to work closely with its partners in industry, academia, and government.”

If your innovation idea seems too grandiose for your company to handle without external funding and resources, Mitacs Accelerate might be able to help. As explained by Josette-Renée Landry, Vice-President, Business Development, at Mitacs, “our business development directors can help introduce a company to an appropriate academic partner, or a company can find their own partner and approach Mitacs together for a project.” With over 35% of all Mitacs funding going to engineering projects, your well thought out proposal stands an excellent chance of funding.

Being a not-for-profit company, Mitacs appreciates that intellectual property (IP) is an important consideration for you and will work with you to accommodate business considerations.

To qualify for funding, your project must be at least four months in duration. Unlike many other government funding initiatives, there is no time of year considerations for applying for funding, and applications are peer reviewed within a six-to-eight week time frame. Your company is expected to be responsible for 50% of the cost of the project, with matching funds coming from Mitacs, and in the case of larger, longer term projects, Mitacs’ contributions can be higher.

There are many benefits to forming a relationship with Mitacs. As Landry explains, “Businesses get cost-effective access to university researchers and resources and a collaborative research project plan.” With the 50% funds matching, Mitacs can dramatically augment your R&D budget. Furthermore, Mitacs does not preclude your ability to reduce your out-of-pocket expenses by obtaining even more funding through other programs, specifically the



SR&ED program, Canada’s largest governmental funding support for industrial R&D with over \$3 billion provided annually. In the past few years, we have written about SR&ED many times. The most comprehensive columns being February, 2014, and more recently, August, 2015.

By utilizing the domain knowledge of the university community, Mitacs enables you to leverage that expertise at a minimal cost. Further, Mitacs can enable you to more quickly identify new markets, commercialize results and access potential employees.

With Mitacs support, you can turn your “aha moment” into an industry-leading opportunity. To apply for Mitacs funding, your academic partner and you will need to prepare and submit a professional proposal to Mitacs indicating the work to be done, the personnel required to complete the project, the project timeline and the methodologies that will be utilized in the implementation of your objectives, acknowledging any potential difficulties that you foresee and how you might address them. Mitacs is also interested in and wants you to document the motivation for the project.

Unlike SR&ED project write-ups where technical language is encouraged, with Mitacs, you are encouraged to present your proposal in plain language. As Mitacs explains in its proposal guide, present your proposal “as if you were explaining your project to a high school student” or, as Denzel Washington in *Philadelphia* (the film), would have said, “now, explain it to me like I’m a four year-old”.

Remember, you only get one chance to make a good first impression, so, make sure that your proposal is well presented, accurately reflects your objectives, and gives Mitacs the assurance that supporting your project will result in an advancement of the knowledge base in your industry sector, and of course, from your perspective, will enhance your ability to provide new or improved solutions to your existing customers or open up new customer markets.



Elliot Schiller is a Director at Toronto’s Teeger Schiller Inc., a firm specializing in government funding and systems selection/implementation. His clients receive over \$5 M annually to support ongoing business innovation. E-mail eschiller@teegerschiller.com, visit www.FundingHelp.ca or phone 1-888-816-0222 Ext. 102

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David Teeger

Director

David Teeger C.A., C.A. (S.A.) graduated as a Chartered Accountant in South Africa, and upon arrival in Canada he obtained his Canadian C.A. designation and joined Richter & Associates, a management consulting firm, where he concentrated his practice on various business sectors including household goods, fashion, automotive parts, public associations, and retail chains. He performed many roles in his 15 years at Richter, including managing the professional services organization in North America and all business operations throughout Europe.

David's professional capabilities include computer audits, feasibility studies, system analyses and assistance in the selection, negotiation and implementation of computerized solutions.

As a founding partner of Teeger Schiller Inc., he has focused his practice on consulting to management. His team of professionals has helped businesses select and successfully install a variety of ERP business solutions and add-on systems including business intelligence solutions to give new life to existing computer systems. David's clients not only rely on him to successfully manage the implementation of their new systems, but to manage the change that occurs in their organizations as a result of the use of these new tools.



Elliot Schiller

Director

Elliot Schiller, Ph.D., C.M.C. began his career as a Chemical Engineer working for Grumman Aircraft, in Long Island, New York. He obtained his Ph.D. at the University of Pittsburgh with funding from the U.S. Atomic Energy Commission, and, after being awarded a Presidential Fellowship, he went on to perform research and development activities at Brookhaven National Laboratory.

Since coming to Canada, he has primarily assisted consumer products and retail organizations in a variety of strategic management initiatives, traveling around the globe on behalf of his clients. In 1987, Elliot joined Richter & Associates, and it is here that he first met David Teeger.

As a founding partner of Teeger Schiller Inc., he has focused the SR&ED / Grant Division on obtaining grants and tax incentives for over 100 companies in the small to medium sized business sector. His team has provided services to the discrete / processing manufacturing, material development, textiles, apparel, automotive and computer sciences sectors. Annually, Teeger Schiller Inc. secures more than \$5 million in government funding to assist its clients in having their business initiatives supported by government funding.



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