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Breaking Buzz is BIO's newest blog series that reaches across the globe to bring an insider's preview into the hottest international and partnering trends coming to San Diego for the [BIO International Convention](#).

Keeping Up with the Canadians

Thriving commercialization is Canada's buzz phrase this year as the country prepares for another massive showing at the [BIO International Convention](#) where nearly 800 delegates - second only in size to the United States - will showcase their renewed and ever-expanding investment in biotechnology. Ministers and Members of Parliament from each of the provinces, alongside industry powerhouses, will share plans about how, and why, Canada is becoming one of the great destinations for investment capital in the world.

"One of the great competitive advantages Canada enjoys is its proximity to the United States, our largest market and trading partner" observed BIOTECanada President and CEO Andrew Casey, "there can be some challenges in this relationship but on the whole there is a huge benefit to having the biggest pool of investment capital right next door. Coupled with other commonalities including: a like-minded business culture; similar patient population; and, the benefit of speaking the same language, Canada's competitive position globally is clearly enhanced."

Despite the country's poignant likenesses and mutual affection however, Mr. Casey is quick to point out distinctions too. "We have a population of 36 million or so - about the population of California - spread across the country. Our major urban centers are Montreal, Toronto and Vancouver; after that you get into populations of under a million people per city, and yet, when you look across the country which spans nearly 3,500 miles, you see biotech clusters in pretty much each of the 10 provinces."

These organically populated clusters are centered among hospitals and universities that support one another across the vast region; so unlike Cambridge or San Francisco where clusters are densely compact, the Canadian clusters take on a virtual component rather than geographical. As a result, diverse, open innovation and collaboration is widespread.

"Our focus now," according to Mr. Casey, "is to commercialize the great ideas emerging from our universities and research hospitals, scale them up, and turn them into globally competitive Canadian-based companies. Once we get a company across the finish line - and we're very close - it will attract more interest and investors, and entrepreneurs".

And that's precisely why the [BIO International Convention](#) is so important to Canada. "We try, as a country, to attract new investors and companies, and likewise, we don't want our existing companies and investors to go to other jurisdictions." Mr. Casey readily admits that in this respect, Canada is no different from other countries, saying that's the impetus behind the hefty investment to attend the Convention. "BIO is where the world is. Being there is about relationship building, relationship maintenance; it's about checking in and showing milestones being reached. Our political representatives certainly understand the significance of this dynamic."

Recently, [BIOTECanada](#) congratulated the partnership between Versant Ventures and Bayer AG on their near historic investment, Blue Rock Therapeutics, Canada's newest stem-cell research company. "The creation of Blue Rock represents the new biotech commercialization model, one that requires a diverse and collaborative ecosystem, and includes investors and multinational partners. The corresponding financial commitment sends a very strong signal to the global investment community that the Canadian biotech ecosystem is thriving."

The inviting Canadian appeal has also caught the attention of [JLabs](#), an entirely unique early discovery model designed to help entrepreneurs take science and turn it into profits. With seven of their eight locations in the United States, it should come as no surprise that JLabs chose Canada for the eighth facility; their first outside of the United States.

To learn more visit the Canadian Pavilion at the upcoming [BIO International Convention](#), June 19-22, 2017 in San Diego where you will find:

June 20

10:30am: Pavilion opening

Government Officials & key industry leaders, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police and Canadian delegates are present for the official opening of the Canadian Pavilion.

Afternoon: Coast to Coast Competition

BIOTECanada and Wilson Sonsini Goodrich & Rosati present the Annual Coast to Coast Competition. This provides 6-8 emerging companies the opportunity to present to a panel of investors and key industry executives and receive feedback. The winner receives a presentation spot in the 2018 BIOTECanada Investor Summit.

Afternoon: The Next 150 Years of Canadian Innovation

As Canada celebrates its 150th birthday, the federal government has committed to a competitive innovation policy. Aimed at building on existing expertise in 21st century technologies with a skilled labor force, creating innovation hubs and incentivizing investment, all intended to compete in the global marketplace of discovery and commercialization. The panel will explore these new initiatives, while addressing gaps and opportunities.

June 21

New this year, BIOTECanada will host the ecosystem showcase which will highlight the PATH to innovation. This will consist of armchair discussions identifying industry strengths regarding Pipeline, Accelerator/ Incubator, Transferring knowledge, Health Partners.

To participate in any of these events contact [Julie Mair](#)



Athena Staton serves as executive editor for BIO Buzz, the Official Show Daily for the [BIO International Convention](#), and BIO's Breaking Buzz blog series.