



**TO:** Senate

**FROM:** Jérémie Drouillard, Management Senator

**SUBJECT:** **Question Regarding Innovation on Campus**

**MEETING DATE:** May 19, 2010

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**PREAMBLE:** This past February 16<sup>th</sup>, Desautels Faculty of Management's Peter Brojde Leadership Lecture featured Sir Richard Branson. Over 900 people packed Centre Mont-Royal, many more in the Bronfman building, followed by hundreds of McGill alumni watching via live webcast. The lecture's purpose was to provide a public forum that challenges students, faculty and the general public to understand how businesses can be a force for confronting and overcoming societal and economic problems of global scope. Keynote takeaways were avenues of innovation and an invitation to entrepreneurialism.

Moreover, data provided by the World Economic Forum's Global Competitiveness Report in 2008 also suggests that Canada's score on its Collaboration correlation with Innovation is very much behind other OECD countries such as US, Finland & Japan in terms of University-Industry research collaboration.

To this end, many universities across the UK have created and implemented models to fund university start ups. For example, the university-industry liaison goes much further at the Imperial College of London who has spun-out its tech transfer operations into a public company on the London Stock Exchange, now called Imperial Innovations. Imperial Innovations combines the activities of tech transfer, incubation and early-stage venture capital funding.

In March of 2009, the UCLA on-campus Technology Incubation Program at California NanoSystems Institute opened to provide resources to further the mission of accelerating the growth of entrepreneurial start-up companies and early stage technology research projects that originate at UCLA. This interfaculty and interdisciplinary effort brings together schools of engineering, physical and life sciences, management, and medicine to foster innovation.

Lastly, we are all well-informed of the multiple federal grants and opportunities made available through the Canadian Foundation for Innovation for research on Campus. However, a model such as the MaRS

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Discovery District in Toronto, created in 2005, has much appeal even though it is still in maturing towards producing tangible results.

The lists of examples in various part of the world are numerous and there are merits and setbacks to each model. However, innovation and business “incubation” on campus needs attention, resources and processes if interdisciplinary creativity, energy and entrepreneurialism are going to be harnessed towards profitable ends.

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**QUESTION:**

Q: Does McGill plan to implement institutional change towards closer university-industry collaborations to create environments which intensify commercialization of university research?

Q: What steps is McGill taking to achieve unparalleled summits in terms of innovation and more specifically, to foster business incubation? Are there any new models under consideration?

Q: Can Senate be informed of cost-effective solutions and innovation enablers that have been identified in order to implement the cultural encouragement of innovation on Campus?

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