



Life Sciences

A global hub for life sciences and biomanufacturing

An aerial photograph of Vancouver, British Columbia, showing the dense city skyline, the harbor with numerous boats and yachts, and a small island with a golf course and buildings in the foreground.

British Columbia, *Naturally.*

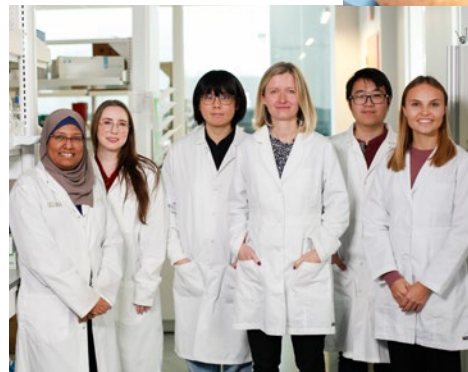
BritishColumbia.ca

A leading research and development hub **at the forefront of innovation**

British Columbia (B.C.), Canada is a leading centre for scientific innovation and has a thriving life sciences industry. The province is the home to the fastest growing life sciences sector in Canada.

British Columbia offers a highly skilled workforce, a prime location and a high quality of life — key factors that have propelled its life sciences sector onto the global stage. During the COVID-19 pandemic, B.C. companies led in developing therapeutics, drawing international investment. The B.C. Life Sciences and Biomanufacturing Strategy has supported major projects and expansions, and fostered startup and scale up companies, creating an ideal environment for investment and partnership opportunities. The close collaboration between academia, industry and government further enhances B.C.'s position as a global leader in life sciences innovation.

British Columbia's internationally recognized research hospitals and universities partner with world class research centers creating a dynamic and collaborative network for researchers. B.C. has world-class scientists supported by one of the best health care systems in the world and international partners such as Glaxo Smith-Kline, Novartis, Novo Nordisk and Pfizer.



British Columbia's Competitive Advantages

B.C.'s prime location, outstanding talent and strong, stable business climate create an excellent environment for life sciences companies.



Exceptional Talent

British Columbia's large, educated workforce of more than 260,000 across the broader tech ecosystem is well represented by diverse and energetic talent. This includes globally recognized scientists like Pieter Cullis, pioneer of lipid nanoparticle (LNP) technology, and stem cell expert Peter Zandstra. Vancouver leads North America in tech talent growth, supported by a strong pipeline of STEM graduates from top institutions such as University of British Columbia (UBC), Simon Fraser University, University of Victoria and the British Columbia Institute of Technology (BCIT). BCIT's new Biomanufacturing Training Facility, in partnership with the Canadian Alliance for Skills and Training in Life Sciences, further strengthens B.C.'s talent development in life sciences.

A Prime Location

As Canada's gateway to the Pacific, British Columbia is ideally located for easy and cost-effective international business. Its business day conveniently overlaps with afternoon working hours in Europe, morning work schedules in Asia, and is synchronized for the full day with California and Washington State.



British Columbia's life sciences sector by numbers:

- Over 2,000 life sciences companies and almost 20,000 life sciences employees
- Life sciences sector was responsible for \$650 million in goods and services exports in 2021
- Between 2018 and 2021, the life sciences sector grew faster than the overall B.C. economy in terms of number of businesses, employment levels and weekly earnings
- In 2021, B.C.'s life sciences sector recorded \$6.7 billion in revenue and generated \$2.6 billion in GDP — a 30% GDP growth between 2018 and 2021 (current dollars)



Industry Profile

British Columbia's diverse life sciences ecosystem is a global leader in developing new therapies and technologies, with internationally recognized strengths in precision medicine, mRNA vaccine technology, lipid nanoparticles, antibodies and medical devices. The province played a pivotal role during the COVID-19 pandemic, contributing breakthroughs that propelled companies like AbCellera, Acuitas Therapeutics and StarFish Medical to global prominence. Innovation continues with firms such as Aspect Biosystems advancing 3D-printed tissue therapeutics.

Research, Testing and Medical Laboratories

British Columbia's life sciences sector excels in research and development, with 68% of the industry made up of research, testing, and medical laboratories — the fastest-growing segment in Canada from 2018 to 2021, expanding by 26.5%. This group also accounts for over half of the sector's employment and contributed \$1.1 billion to B.C.'s GDP in 2021. Supporting this momentum, adMare BioInnovations is expanding in Vancouver with \$10 million in provincial funding to grow over 20 ventures, while an additional \$2.5 million is establishing new wetlab and biomanufacturing space in Victoria.

Medical Devices and Equipment

British Columbia's medical devices sector is delivering cutting-edge innovations that improve patient care and attract global investment. Companies like Clarius Mobile Health and ResponseBio are enhancing diagnostic access with portable ultrasound and rapid testing technologies. StarFish Medical, based in Saanich, is Canada's largest full-service medical device developer. Redlen, acquired by Canon in 2021, provides advanced radiation detection for CT scanners, while Kardium is advancing a groundbreaking atrial fibrillation treatment system toward FDA approval.

Digital Health and Data

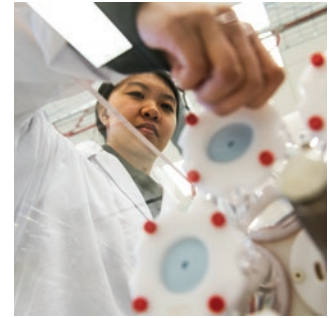
Many B.C. biotech and medtech companies are increasingly leveraging the province's dynamic AI community and, in partnership with academia, some of B.C. health data — among the most valuable in the world for their diversity and time-span. The province's [Health Data Platform BC \(HDPBC\)](#) now offers a one-stop solution to access health data through a secure platform designed for Public Sector and Academic research and analysis. The digital health industry expands rapidly. Canary Medical is specializing in smart, implantable AI-based medical devices, and Thrive Health is developing software solutions to enhance patient and provider experiences.

Drugs and Pharmaceuticals

Job growth was the fastest in the drugs and pharmaceuticals industry group, adding 33% or 1,244 jobs between 2018 and 2021. Most revenue for the life science sector is attributed to the drugs and pharmaceuticals industry group (\$4.4 billion), and more specifically to wholesalers (\$3.3 billion or 46% of the life sciences sector revenue). Six new drugs stemming from B.C. have been approved for market use since 2021, with Chinook Therapeutics' drug marking B.C.'s 20th drug approval in 25 years.

Home Grown Successes

British Columbia is home to global leaders in biopharmaceuticals and biomanufacturing, including STEMCELL Technologies — Canada's largest biotech firm — and rising innovators like AbCellera, Aspect Biosystems, Acuitas Therapeutics, Zymeworks, and Xenon Pharmaceuticals. Supporting this growth, the province is investing in major infrastructure projects such as the \$331.7 million Clinical Support and Research Centre at St. Paul's Hospital, new wetlab and clinical trial facilities, and Canada's Immuno-Engineering and Biomanufacturing Hub in partnership with UBC.



World-Class, Innovative Research Centres

Institution	Areas of Focus
adMare BioInnovations	Incubator, wet-lab space for companies, investment. Provides specialized expertise and infrastructure to identify and de-risk promising discoveries generated by health-related research and transform them into commercially viable investment opportunities, leading to therapies for patients.
BC Cancer Research	Conducts epidemiological and clinical research on cancer prevention, early diagnosis, molecular characteristics of the cancer process and new treatments using drugs and radiotherapy.
Providence Research	Part of Providence Health Care, Providence Research conducts extensive medical research, including significant work on HIV/AIDS to reduce the global burden of infection. Their efforts focus on translational research and support for vulnerable populations.
Michael Smith Laboratories (UBC)	Leads biotechnology research with applications to health, agriculture, forestry, land and food systems to address society's most important problems.
The Life Sciences Institute (UBC)	The Life Sciences Institute's translational research and innovative interdisciplinary sciences is improving health care practices and identifying more sustainable methods to harvest natural resources while minimizing environmental costs.
TRIUMF – Canada's particle accelerator	Pushes the boundaries of research in isotope science and innovation, particle and nuclear physics, and life sciences. Ultimately, their research and consequent commercialization will result in improved health and economic opportunity for all.
Vancouver Coastal Health Research Institute	Research at the Vancouver Coastal Health Research Institute (VCHRI) focusses on an assortment of health conditions, diseases and specialties. VCHRI's overall goals are to improve quality of life and deliver high-quality medical care.
Canada's Immuno-Engineering and Biomanufacturing Hub (CIEBH)	Led by UBC, CIEBH is a national initiative focused on pandemic preparedness and the rapid development of lifesaving medicines. It advances biomedical research, talent development, and infrastructure to strengthen Canada's response to future health threats.

Provincial Research Funding

BC Knowledge Development Fund	Funds research infrastructure and equipment, including for life science. This includes equipment for drug discovery, genomics and medical imaging.
Genome British Columbia	Funds research for genomics innovation on Canada's West Coast and facilitates the integration of genomics in the life sciences into society.
Michael Smith Health Research BC	Funded by the Government of B.C., Michael Smith Health Research BC strengthens the province's health research system by building talent, fostering collaboration, and mobilizing communities for impact. It achieves this through funding, partnerships, and promoting science literacy.

Benefits from strong government and industry support

British Columbia is committed to providing a competitive and stable environment for the life sciences sector. Industry-led associations work with government to encourage investment, promote collaboration among organizations and grow the knowledge-based economy. With our business-friendly environment and abundant trade opportunities, B.C. attracts investments from all over the world.

Supportive Government

- The Small Business Venture Capital Tax Credit encourages equity investments in B.C. small businesses, giving entrepreneurs access to early-stage capital to grow and develop their ventures.
- As part of the StrongerBC Economic Plan, the B.C. Life Sciences and Biomanufacturing Strategy — backed by a \$737 million provincial investment — outlines five pillars to position the province as a global leader in life sciences and commercial-scale biomanufacturing.
- The governments of Canada and British Columbia offer tax credit and funding programs to businesses doing R&D activities such as the Scientific, Research and Experimental Development (SR&ED) tax credit, Mitacs funding, etc.
- British Columbia's InBC strategic investment fund of \$500 million, which (as of March 2025) has invested into Aspect Biosystems, Reverb Therapeutics and Clarius Mobile Health.



Close links between industry, academia and government offer opportunities for robust public-private partnerships. The life sciences sector also benefits from access to the province's world-class centres of excellence — along with industry association Life Sciences BC, which supports and represents the ecosystem through numerous initiatives at the local, national and international level.

Life Sciences BC is a not-for-profit, non-government sector association that advocates for and catalyzes the growth of the life sciences community in B.C.

www.lifesciencesbc.ca



British Columbia's **general corporate income tax rate is 12%.**

When combined with the federal rate, businesses pay an overall rate of 27%. Small businesses with an income of less than \$500,000 qualify for the provincial lower rate at 2%.



British Columbia's Life Sciences Advantages



- Highly collaborative life sciences ecosystem
- Excellent world-class research organizations
- Strong life sciences innovation in pharmaceuticals, medical devices, genomics, research and testing platforms
- Highly educated and skilled workforce
- Established federal and provincial funding programs
- Excellent public infrastructure
- High quality of life
- Prime location



Join this global hub with over 2,000 life sciences companies, including:

- AbCellera Biologics ■ Acuitas Therapeutics ■ Amgen ■ Aspect Biosystems
- Clarius Mobile Health ■ Kardia ■ StarFish Medical
- STEMCELL Technologies ■ Xenon Pharmaceuticals ■ Zymeworks

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