



For immediate release

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## **BC's Health and Technology District Signs MOU with Israel's Center for Digital Innovation Negev**

*International Partnership building collaborations on health & technology related innovations and creates virtual pathway between Israel and Canada*

Surrey, BC, Canada & Be'er Sheba, Israel - **The Health and Technology District** in Surrey is pleased to announce an international partnership with the **Center for Digital Innovation** in Israel, to formalize a number of action oriented collaborations on health related technologies, creating an international network between partners to support health-tech innovations in Israel and across North America.

The **Center for Digital Innovation (CDI)** is located in the Advanced Technology Park in Be'er Sheba (Israel), the growing 'Silicon Valley' of the Middle East. CDI is a leading-edge, non-profit innovation center created through the collaborative efforts of some of Israel's most outstanding entrepreneurs and Ben-Gurion University of the Negev. CDI operate in the areas of digital healthcare, healthy aging, education and smart cities and converges experienced entrepreneurs, start-up companies, innovators, researchers, industry leaders, academics, the public sector and investors to generate a high Return on Innovation (ROI), for the mega challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, such as the cost of healthcare and chronic diseases to provide solutions.

"Both CDI and Surrey's Health and Technology District have aggressive goals to drive innovation across the health sector and Canada stands to deeply benefit from the mentorship and leadership that Israel can bring to our innovation agenda here in Canada," says Rowena Rizzotti, Vice President of Health & Innovations for the Health and Technology District.

The Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the Health and Technology District and CDI will co-create and share respective solutions to global healthcare challenges by expediting the implementation of innovations in critical healthcare improvements for both countries.

"It's great to see that Canada and Israel have parallel visions and focus in developing high level innovations," says Ziv Ofek, Founder & CEO of CDI. "We are excited about this partnership with Canada and with the Health and Technology District and we look forward to collaborating and working together to create technologies that will benefit the world in which we live."

The partnership was finalized during a recent trade mission organized by the **Conference Board of Canada** where participants studied the culture and key success factors that have led to Israel's groundbreaking developments in innovation and commercialization, helping to secure Israel's position as the global high-tech pioneer.

"Israel is a hot bed of high tech innovations and boasts world-class skills and capabilities with universities and forward-thinking organizations developing some of the world's latest technology



breakthroughs,” says Paul Preston, Conference Board of Canada. “It’s hugely beneficial for Canadians to learn from this success and assist us in developing the talent and capacity to lead a culture in innovation in Canada.”

Every year, the **Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs (CIJA)** brings more than one hundred Canadians to visit and learn firsthand from the ‘Start Up Nation’, and is honoured to facilitate trips in recent years for the City of Surrey, the Government of BC, and the Conference Board of Canada.

“This exciting partnership is a prime example of how, in bringing the best Canadian and Israeli minds together, we can achieve remarkable things for both countries,” said Jason Z. Murray, Chair of CIJA Pacific Region.

“CIJA is proud to serve as a bridge between Canadians and Israelis, helping to build stronger bilateral ties in government, business, technology, academia, and civil society. Today’s announcement is a demonstration of the tangible benefits that stem from these vital, high-level connections.”

The **Health and Technology District** is holding a celebratory reception on **Thursday, March 23<sup>rd</sup>** with CDI and special guest the Honourable Dianne Watts, Member of Parliament for South Surrey – White Rock, Ziv Ofek, Founder & CEO of the Center for Digital Innovation Negev, and members of the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs (CIJA) of Greater Vancouver.

**About the Health and Technology District:**

The Health and Technology District in Surrey, British Columbia, is a series of high-tech buildings located immediately adjacent to Surrey Memorial Hospital, creating a unique ecosystem for clinicians and health-care providers to work alongside innovators, entrepreneurs and tech companies. Developed by Canadian based company, The Lark Group, the District is receiving international interest, leading to a series of investments by local start up as well as global leading organizations, seen as an unparalleled landscape for research, development and innovation. [www.HealthandTechnologyDistrict.com](http://www.HealthandTechnologyDistrict.com)

**About CDI:**

The Center for Digital Innovation (CDI) is one of a kind innovation center in Be’er Sheba, Israel. Its unique approach to innovation begins and ends with the citizen in the center. At the heart of the Start-Up Nation, we bring together the entire innovation ecosystem; entrepreneurs, researchers, industry leaders, academia, government and investors to focus on common challenges facing the citizen around the globe in the fields of digital healthcare, healthy aging, education and smart cities. We aim to bring a new type of ROI to the world: Return on Innovation. Join us on our journey to improve the life of each individual citizen in Israel and beyond. [www.cdi-negev.com](http://www.cdi-negev.com)