



WHEN THE DOOR

for Supporting your Innovation *is Slammed Shut*

When financial support for your military or industrial discovery has had the door slammed shut, lost forever are the opportunities to create new military, industrial, cyber, technical, social and economic benefits for Canada. This article provides background and suggestions for the government to form a new department whose primary purpose will be, to take a second look at previously rejected applications.

When applying for funding for an innovative project, among the many reasons for a rejected application is, the one who is evaluating your application does not have a deep understanding or appreciation of how, why, when, or what you propose is actually a benefit for Canada. The result is the door being slammed shut on you, never to open again.

After your application has been rejected, options are: go to another country for support (USA or China), sell your idea to a company, where production would most likely go to another country, keep trying or give up.

Major Cyber Discovery

Allow me to use my discovery as an example. I have made a major discovery for the malware protection of computers. We no longer need to use detection software to do a wide variety of malware safe activities. This is major advance in cybersecurity.

A president of a major Canadian bank has offered to fund our commercial product development for a small equity stake, contingent upon the demonstration of a Proof of Concept (PoC) computer. The enabling technology has been proven in my lab.

Opportunity Lost

For three years I've been self-funding all research. I have run out of cash and now there are no funds to hire the technical help needed to implement my design for a PoC computer for that bank president. By not receiving the support necessary to build a simple PoC computer, will not only result in the loss of a Cyber Secure Computer Manufacturing Industry in Canada, but also the loss of significant

cyber, military, industrial, technical and economic opportunities.

This is not only my funding dilemma, it is also a very typical story for the many other innovators who have had their request for support rejected. When that door is slammed shut on us, that is it. Forever lost are the innovative discoveries made and knowledge gained.

Canada Ranked 3rd in the World

A 2018 report from Swiss based Startup-Blink, ranked Canada 3rd in the world for the support of startups. We need to provide help to startups, as they struggle to cross the finishing line of a successful venture, as to when we are known to provide good support for them when they first approached the starting line. Improving support for crossing the finish line is an area which Canada is now working on improving.

This article is written to focus on just one area, which is when an application is rejected, what we need to do is to turn a

Getting a Second Look

My suggestion is the government needs to develop a new department. For this article, let's call that new department the "Inspector of Second Look".

The Inspector's office should have a mandate to take a second look at previously rejected applications. They need to have the authority and latitude to work with various government departments, but with a more business-like and entrepreneurial mind set. Should an opportunity for Canada be found and the Inspector cannot obtain support from that department, then the Inspector should have the authority to approach government cabinet ministers. The result will be, the doors which were in the past slammed shut, will now be reopened and funding seriously reconsidered.

One big problem for the Inspector of Second Look is, their office would be inundated with frivolous and time consuming inquiries. All inquiries coming into their office need to be from filtered and credible sources. A very good source for second look requests could come from the many Innovation Centers, Centers of Excellence, University Research Centers, etc. These are the people who are on the ground floor. They see and understand the subtle aspects of opportunities which may have been misunderstood or overlooked during the first application.

Conclusion

With the establishment of the Office of the Inspector of Second Look, they will be presented with credible applications to seriously reconsider. They will have the authority to take action and be able to capitalize on previously lost but now newly found military, industrial, cyber, technical, social and economic benefits for Canada. ■



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lost opportunity, into a found opportunity.

The Canadian government is doing a valiant job at attempting to help bolster the economy with a wide variety of support programs. However due to the pandemic, many of those businesses which were on the edge of failure, will fail. Plus the change in consumer purchasing habits are all contributing to a record increase in unemployed. It is generally accepted that the economy of tomorrow will change from what is normal today. In order to support the economy of the future, we need to support, develop and "imagine the future possibilities" of the many new innovative discoveries made today.

Discovery of the Telephone

At a recent cyber conference, I was a speaker on Early Stage Funding for Cyber Initiatives. The following is an example I used for what happens when we do not see the future possibilities of a newly invented product: Many years ago a Scottish Canadian built a box with a wire running into another room where there was another box. The inventor spoke into one of the boxes "Watson come here"; Watson in the other room heard the message coming from the box in his room, spoken by the inventor, Alexander Grahame Bell. The people of that era thought that this new contraption called a tele-phone was a cute parlor trick. He moved to the USA, where his discovery was commercialized. Yesterday, this was an opportunity lost for Canada. Today, it is imperative we reverse this trend.

The hard reality is as a country, we cannot afford to ignore any opportunity to examine any innovation which would support our economy with new and groundbreaking industries. Many of us have found that the availability of government support has been located somewhere between lip-service and the vacuum of nothing. We often hear government officials say "by funding the innovations of today, we support the economies of tomorrow". Not the experience for many innovators. Don't get me wrong, I support the government having a rule book for they are spending our money and there needs to be controls. The problem is, once the funding door has been slammed shut, that is it.

IRAP Rejection

Recently, when speaking to an IRAP advisor, he truly understood the opportunity for Canada which my malware secure computers represent. Although he wanted to help, he simply could not, because my project did not fall within their guidelines to obtain IRAP funding. Disappointed he could not help, he sincerely apologized. This is not only my story, but it is also an all too familiar experience for many other innovators. Details will vary, but most of our stories can simply be rolled up into one large pile and expressed as "same song, different words".

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