

OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

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**Seneca**

C 6
COMMUNICATION
CW (WORKING SESSION)
June 17/15
ITEM - 2

June 12, 2015

(sent electronically)

Dear Mayor Bevilacqua and members of the Vaughan City Council:

**RE: Vaughan International Commercialization Centre**

On behalf of Seneca, I would like to provide you and members of Council with a letter of support for the proposed Vaughan International Commercialization Centre (VICC). The proposed mandate of the VICC – to assist small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in commercializing new products and to better prepare them for meeting the needs of the international marketplace with a specific focus on China, Israel and Italy – is well aligned with many areas and activities within Seneca.

For example, Seneca's Applied Research and Innovation (ARI) group leverages the excellence of our students, faculty and programs to work with industry on applied research projects. These projects include action research as well as assisting businesses, particularly SMEs, in commercializing their products and services. Our current research partners would value the opportunity to further develop and bring their products to new international markets.

The proposed program areas of focus for the VICC, specifically the design of technical products, manufacturing and logistics as well as sales and marketing are well aligned with many programs currently offered by Seneca. One example is the new Seneca Mechatronics Simulation and Demonstration Centre. Seneca received funding in the recent Ontario Budget to work with Siemens Canada to develop the Centre and to join an international network of advanced technology partners in education and industry already working with Siemens. Other relevant academic programs include international business, marketing, global logistics and supply chain, international transportation and customs, to name a few.

The VICC would also provide new opportunities for our student and graduate entrepreneurs. In 2014 Startup Canada, a national organization that serves as a voice for entrepreneurs, named Seneca the most entrepreneurial college in Ontario. Seneca also tied the University of Waterloo as a runner-up, behind Ryerson University, in the most entrepreneurial postsecondary institution category from 260 applications and nominations received from across Canada. One on-campus example is the Health Entrepreneurship and Lifestyle Innovation Xchange (HELIX), a business incubator aimed at supporting youth entrepreneurs up to 29 years of age interested in developing their health sector-related business. Business and products developed within HELIX could be excellent candidates to access services through the VICC.

We commend you and Council for your leadership in developing this proposal and look forward to partnering with the City of Vaughan on this initiative. Should you have any questions related to our support for this initiative, please don't hesitate to contact me directly.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'DAVID AGNEW', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

David Agnew