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industries. It does this by offering investment, advisory and incubation services. The company's objective is to work with other provincial agencies to increase exports in the IT and life sciences industries by \$1.5 billion over the next five years.

InNOVAcorp

Incubation services under three roofs

Through its three business incubation facilities, the company, with between 50 and 60 employees, provides its clients with a range of services and expertise.

The facilities are the Technology Innovation Centre in Dartmouth, AgriTECH Park in Truro, and the BioScience Enterprise Centre in Halifax. In addition to flexible leasing arrangements, the facilities offer everything from administrative support to networking opportunities, and seminars on a wide range of topics, most notably export-readiness.

Offering export expertise

"When a new company starts up with us, we immediately begin to talk to them about export and export potential," explains David McNamara, Director, Technology Innovation Centre Development. "If we have the expertise in-house, we provide it, but we also go to agencies such as the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency (ACOA), the International Trade Centres (ITCs), and the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade (DFAIT). We always have expertise a telephone call away."

Nurturing partnerships

Client companies in the incubators, whether they reside on-site or access services remotely, are given ample opportunity to network with the representatives from foreign trade delegations and embassies who visit the incubators.

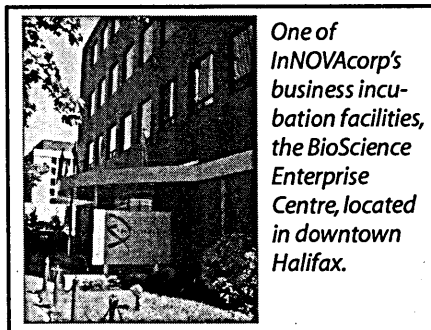
InNOVAcorp has also hosted trade missions, including two to Sweden. "The

Canadian Embassy in Stockholm was instrumental in setting up meetings between our Nova Scotia companies and those in Sweden," says McNamara.

North America-wide incubator alliances

Closer to home, InNOVAcorp has solid

connections with incubators across the United States, through membership in the U.S. National Business Incubation Association (NBIA). "We have a particularly close affiliation with the NASA incubator," notes McNamara. "If I have a company interested in selling to NASA, I can phone my contact



One of InNOVAcorp's business incubation facilities, the BioScience Enterprise Centre, located in downtown Halifax.

there, who will find out if there's a market for the product or service."

InNOVAcorp also coaches its clients on how to present at international trade shows and hosts an annual trade show — Innovation Showcase — which gives its clients what McNamara describes as a "dry run" at presenting and networking with potential customers.

Successful graduates

According to the "Nova Scotia Business and Technology Incubation Strategy" (Gardiner Pinfold, February 1998), the rate for survival of incubator graduates beyond five years is 87%. InNOVAcorp's business incubators have graduated more than 55 companies, of which McNamara estimates 50% are export-ready.

Two of its most successful graduates are Survival Systems and CORD Group, each of which developed its product

in the Technology Innovation Centre's research and development facilities, as well as benefiting from the incubator's export expertise.

"Directly and indirectly the Innovation Centre contributed to our being more successful in the export world," says Survival Systems President and CEO Albert Bohemier. "They provided us with stability in our early years and coached us in aspects of exporting."

Another graduate, Ocean Nutrition Canada, was able to bring its nutritional products to market more quickly by conducting its research and development at the BioScience Enterprise Centre. The company is currently distributing its products all over the United States.

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