

Genome Prairie Strategic Plan

2026-2030

Abstract

Genome Prairie has spent twenty-five years building the foundation for genomics research and application in Manitoba and Saskatchewan. Through these efforts, we have deepened our understanding that living systems underpin the region's health, environment, and economy. From the outset, Canada's model has been distinctive, advancing human and non-human health under one umbrella, and our role has been to translate that model into Prairie realities. As part of a national effort, and as one of six regional genome centers, we continue to convene researchers, Indigenous partners, industry, governments, and communities to turn discovery into practical benefit. This 2026–2030 plan focuses that work, prioritizing collaboration, commercialization readiness, and measurable outcomes, so that genomics delivers lasting value for people and places across the Prairies.

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STRATEGIC PLAN

GENOME PRAIRIE

2026 - 2030

MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

MESSAGE FROM THE CEO

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This strategic plan is an opportunity to look forward – to build on our progress, respond to a changing landscape, and identify where our region and our organization can lead. The Genome Prairie Strategic Plan for 2026 – 2030 sets a renewed course for genomics leadership across Manitoba and Saskatchewan, building on 25 years of achievement and positioning the Prairies as a driver of Canada’s innovation economy. The plan reflects a refreshed vision, a commitment to collaboration and inclusion, and a sharper focus on economic and societal outcomes, from GDP growth and job creation to commercialization, adoption, and Indigenous leadership.

Over the past two decades, Genome Prairie has catalyzed more than 40 large-scale genomics initiatives, generated over \$350 million in GDP impact, and contributed to advancements in agriculture, health, climate resilience, and environmental stewardship. With strong partnerships across academia, government, industry, and Indigenous communities, Genome Prairie has established itself as both a connector and a catalyst, linking Prairie strengths to national and global opportunities.

The coming five years bring new expectations and new possibilities. Funders and communities are looking for clearer outcomes, stronger equity, and greater resilience in how we work. Technologies such as artificial intelligence, eDNA, and bioinformatics are shaping what is possible. Prairie-based strengths in agriculture, health, research, and environmental science continue to evolve. Indigenous communities and partners are leading new conversations around data sovereignty, land stewardship, and co-designed innovation.

This plan responds with three overarching strategic objectives and supporting actions:

1. Advance Genomics Research Aligned with Regional Strengths and National Priorities
 - Aligning all new initiatives with national priorities and provincial growth plans.
 - Diversifying funding sources beyond Genome Canada.
 - Developing competitive proposals, with a focus on regional and national priority areas
 - Increasing Genome Prairie’s share of approved Genome Canada projects.
2. Strengthen Organizational Capacity for Sustainable Growth and Impactful Outcomes
 - Increasing non-Genome Canada operating revenue by \$200,000 over five years.
 - Implementing a centralized project and grants management system by 2027.
 - Investing in staff training, retention, and early-career development.
 - Building a dynamic partner database to support matchmaking and track engagement.
 - Enhancing cybersecurity and risk management across operations.

3. Demonstrate Impact Through Measurement, Storytelling, and Engagement

- Growing digital engagement across platforms.
- Deploying real-time results framework to track and report outcomes.
- Enhancing Indigenous partnerships through co-designed frameworks and visible leadership.

Through these objectives and key actions, Genome Prairie will drive measurable outcomes across five areas of impact:

- **Economic Growth:** Increased GDP contributions through genomics-enabled innovation and commercialization.
- **Jobs and Talent:** Creation of new jobs and opportunities for highly qualified personnel (HQP) and early-career researchers.
- **Commercialization and Adoption:** Greater translation of genomics discoveries into market-ready products and services.
- **Sector Productivity and Resilience:** Stronger agricultural competitiveness, reduced healthcare diagnostic wait times, and sustainable environmental solutions.
- **Partnerships and Investment:** Expanded private-sector investment, Indigenous participation, and cross-sector collaboration.

This Strategic Plan is more than an organizational roadmap; it is Genome Prairie's commitment to ensuring that every dollar invested in genomics produces tangible benefits for people, industries, and communities. By aligning with provincial priorities, Genome Canada's 2025–2030 vision, and global trends, Genome Prairie will strengthen the Prairie region's role as a leader in genomics innovation, driving inclusive growth, resilience, and prosperity for Canada.

ABOUT GENOME PRAIRIE

Who We Are

Genome Prairie is one of six independent regional genome centres that comprise the national genomics enterprise in Canada, delivering high-impact research in alignment with Genome Canada, our primary funder and national strategic partner. Operating across Manitoba and Saskatchewan, Genome Prairie plays a unique bridging role by connecting Prairie researchers and organizations to others with complementary expertise and resources across Canada and globally, as well as with Federal research funding.

Our work is grounded in regional realities and informed by national and global trends. We are committed to supporting solutions that addresses pressing challenges across agriculture, human health, climate adaptation, biodiversity, and Indigenous land stewardship.

With deep partnerships across academia, government, industry, and Indigenous communities, Genome Prairie acts as a connector, catalyst, and convener. We bring together diverse partners, unlock co-funding, and foster a collaborative research ecosystem that prioritizes bringing a positive impact and value for people, communities, and the environment.

What sets Genome Prairie apart is our ability to work across jurisdictions and disciplines, adapting to evolving policy landscapes, funding mechanisms, and research needs. Our depth of scientific expertise, strategists, and relationship-builders is small but highly agile, with a shared commitment to amplifying Prairie-based strengths on the national stage.

Celebrating 25 Years

2025 marks a significant milestone for Genome Prairie – 25 years of advancing genomics innovation across Manitoba and Saskatchewan. Since our founding in 2000, we have been an integral part of Canada's Genomics Enterprise, contributing Prairie-based expertise and leadership to research that improves lives, strengthens industries, and protects ecosystems.

Over the past quarter century, Genome Prairie has built deep expertise in developing and managing genomics projects from concept to completion, ensuring alignment of regional strengths with national priorities. Our work spans basic discovery science through to applied innovation and commercialization, consistently delivering real-world outcomes.

Our track record includes:

- Catalyzed over \$350 million in GDP impact across the Prairies by translating research investments into tangible economic growth.
- Managed more than 50 large-scale genomics initiatives since inception, ranging from climate-resilient crops to cutting-edge precision health diagnostics.
- Elevated Prairie voices on the national stage, ensuring that regional priorities play a role in shaping Canada's genomics agenda.

- Strengthened Indigenous-led research capacity by embedding respectful collaboration and distinctions-based approaches into our project design.
- Forged lasting partnerships with academia, industry, government, and communities to address challenges in agriculture, health, the environment, and beyond.

Our Portfolio

Genome Prairie supports genomics solutions with measurable, real-world impact across the Prairies. We focus our efforts on projects that matter the most for Manitoba and Saskatchewan – agriculture, health, environment, and innovation & commercialization – connecting world-class researchers, Indigenous partners, industry, and governments to accelerate adoption.

Health

- **Unique Prairie Genomes (PrairieGen/CPHI):** Contributing to a national resource of 100,000+ genomes to power precision oncology research and clinical tools, with Prairie-focused data generation to make precision care more representative and actionable locally.
- **Rare Diseases (CPMN and MGM):** Supporting a pan-Canadian network to make genome-wide sequencing a standard of care for rare diseases, reducing diagnostic odysseys for families and improving data-sharing across provinces.
- **Epidemic Response (CanCOGeN):** Built Prairie sequencing capacity during COVID-19 and strengthened readiness for future outbreaks through coordinated viral and host genomics.
- **Cancer and Infectious Diseases:** Projects such as the Ovarian Cancer diagnostic initiative and the Helicobacter research program will advance precision medicine tools for earlier diagnosis, improved treatment, and population health impact.

Agriculture

- **Wheat (CTAG, CTAG2, 4DWheat):** Enhancing yield and disease resistance while unlocking genetic diversity for breeding programs and accelerating responsible use of new breeding technologies.
- **Canola, Cereals & Soil Health (BENEFIT):** Developing bio-inoculants to optimize soil microbiomes, improving nutrient efficiency, crop resiliency, and emissions reduction.
- **Lentil & Wheat Rotations (EVOLVES, ACTIVATE):** Accelerating lentil variety development and climate-smart rotations, linking breeding and microbiome science to productivity and greenhouse gas reductions.
- **System Coordination (AGAC):** Serving as a knowledge hub to coordinate outputs from nine climate-smart agriculture genomics projects and translate findings for producers and agri-

food partners.

- **Cattle Health (ASSETS, ReVAMP):** Created precision diagnostics to guide antimicrobial stewardship and advanced vaccine approaches for mycobacterial diseases, strengthening herd resilience.

Natural Resource Management and Environmental Monitoring

- Genome Prairie projects advance conservation, environmental stewardship, and ecosystem health. This includes protecting biodiversity through Bison Integrated Genomics (BIG), strengthening environmental response capacity with GenICE II, applying OneHealth approaches to human–animal–environment interactions, and developing regional biodiversity monitoring tools through PrairieDNA.

Innovation & Capacity Building

- **Indigenous Genomics Training & Capacity:** Launched in April 2025, Genome Canada's *Indigenous Genomics Training and Capacity Program* expands technical and community capacity in ways that align with Indigenous self-determination and knowledge systems to build long-term partnerships across the Prairies.
- **Commercialization:** We will leverage Genome Canada's *Genomic Applications Partnership Program (GAPP)* to pair Prairie researchers with industry receptors and move validated genomics into market. Genome Prairie's newly launched GEN-TRAC supports pre-commercialization and data-generation activities, preparing projects for receptor partnerships and GAPP-calibre proposals.

As Genome Prairie enters its next twenty-five years with a renewed vision and mission, we remain dedicated to advancing genomics research, building capacity, and translating knowledge into solutions that improve health, agriculture, environmental stewardship, and community well-being across the Prairies and beyond.

OUR VISION

Driving transformative genomics innovation – rooted in the Prairies, improving lives everywhere.

OUR MISSION

Leading genomics research, innovation, knowledge translation, capacity building and collaboration to drive impactful outcomes for the people of Manitoba, Saskatchewan, and beyond.

OUR VALUES - INSPIRE

Integrity: Genome Prairie operates with integrity, honesty, and resolve in all our conduct with staff and stakeholders.

Novelty (Innovation): Genome Prairie is innovative, and open to pursuing opportunities and challenges together with our stakeholders.

Stewardship: Genome Prairie uses resources responsibly, honors the trust placed in us, and works to create lasting value for our stakeholders and communities.

Partnership: Genome Prairie cultivates strong, respectful partnerships with researchers, Indigenous communities, governments, industry, and diverse stakeholders to drive meaningful change.

Inclusion: Genome Prairie champions diversity, equity, inclusivity, and accessibility in all conduct, at all times, throughout the entire organization and genomics ecosystem we inhabit.

Respect: Genome Prairie is considerate, empathetic, and respectful in all interactions between staff and stakeholders.

Excellence: Genome Prairie continually strives to be consistent in exceeding partners' expectations.

OUR MANDATE

Support Genomics Research That Addresses Regional and National Challenges

Genome Prairie's primary mandate is to catalyze genomics research that strengthens Canada's global competitiveness while delivering meaningful outcomes for the Prairie region. By supporting innovation aligned with regional strengths (agriculture, health, natural resources including critical minerals, and environmental science), Genome Prairie helps position Manitoba and Saskatchewan as key contributors to Canada's comparative advantage in genomics.

In doing so, Genome Prairie also plays an essential role in economic development. We work with academic institutions, Indigenous communities, industry partners, and small- and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) to co-develop research that leads to scalable innovation, commercialization opportunities, and new markets. Our initiatives enable Prairie-based innovations to contribute to pan-Canadian goals in areas such as climate-smart agriculture, precision health, and biomanufacturing.

Recent projects, such as PrairieGEN (precision health), BIG (Bison Integrated Genomics), and GenICE II, demonstrate the value of genomics across sectors. Future projects will continue to prioritize food security, climate resilience, AI integration, Indigenous-led research, and the development of a regional innovation ecosystem that supports SME growth and economic diversification.

Manage Projects and Translate Research into Impact

Genome Prairie remains committed to the effective management and oversight of all funded projects. We will continue to meet and exceed funder expectations through active project governance, risk management, and performance reporting. We will also enhance the visibility and accessibility of project outcomes through improved storytelling and targeted communications, ensuring that funders, governments, and communities understand the value genomics research delivers.

Where appropriate, we will revisit completed projects to identify opportunities for downstream knowledge translation, adoption, or commercialization in partnership with stakeholders.

Enhance Regional Genomics Capacity in Priority Areas

We recognize that strong research ecosystems require deliberate capacity-building. Genome Prairie will support emerging research teams, academic institutions, Indigenous organizations, and co-funders in identifying and pursuing opportunities aligned with regional needs. Through partnerships with provincial governments, innovation clusters, and funders, we will explore pathways to develop smaller projects and platforms that can scale toward larger, nationally competitive initiatives.

This includes efforts to grow local expertise in bioinformatics, genomics policy, AI integration, and community engagement, helping our region remain competitive and resilient.

Foster Collaboration for Responsible Genomics Innovation

We will continue to collaborate across sectors and disciplines to enable the responsible adoption of

genomics-based innovation. Genome Prairie's work will increasingly be guided by co-designed partnerships, particularly with Indigenous communities, ensuring projects are inclusive, culturally relevant, and grounded in ethical data practices. Our focus on commercialization, knowledge mobilization, and social license will be underpinned by a practical Genomics Adoption Strategy co-developed with key regional actors.

Resources Required to Fulfill our Mandate

1. Critical mass of qualified personnel for critical genomics science review and economic and social value articulation, resulting in new project development.
2. On-demand external expert support – through expert reviewers and consultants. Ongoing partner engagement and support.

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VALUE PROPOSITION

Genome Prairie's overall value proposition is to convene and lead the Prairie genomics ecosystem – connecting people, funding, and ideas, so discoveries become solutions with measurable benefit. At the corporate level, we position Genome Prairie as a leader in genomics innovation, funding stewardship, and research management, with a pragmatic role in enabling commercialization through partnerships. At the business level, partners experience competent execution, credible stewardship, proactive problem-solving, and a trusted voice advocating their needs. At the functional level, we bring the tools that make collaboration work: co-funding leverage, streamlined grant/project management, partnerships, and diversified funding pathways.

Our Promise

We will lead and convene genomics innovation for the Prairies: aligning research with regional priorities, stewarding competitive funding, and coordinating delivery with partners (public, private, and community). We will enable commercialization through partnerships rather than building duplicative programs, prioritizing collaboration with Prairie innovation organizations to move outcomes to market responsibly.

Partner Experience

Partners can expect impactful outcomes, consistent competence and expertise, and a proactive, solutions-oriented approach. We will act as a voice for our target groups, ensuring end-user needs inform project design, selection, and delivery. This is how we will translate science into tangible benefits for communities, sectors, and the Prairie economy.

What We Bring

We bring the practical enablers of collaboration: co-funding leverage and diversified funding pathways, a strong network and public presence, grant and project management tools, and partnership models that reduce friction from intake to reporting. These capabilities let teams focus on science while we streamline delivery and accountability.

Our value proposition is operationalized through this plan's key actions such as a centralized projects and grants management system to streamline intake to reporting, and a partner database to improve matchmaking, track diversity of partnerships, and inform outreach, so that our corporate, business, and functional value shows up reliably in day-to-day delivery.

ENVIRONMENTAL SCAN

Regional

Genome Prairie continues to operate across the vast geography of Saskatchewan and Manitoba, which together comprise 13% of Canada's landmass. As of 2024, the region is home to 2.7 million people, representing approximately 7% of the Canadian population. Notably, Manitoba and Saskatchewan also host the largest proportion of Indigenous peoples in the country, with roughly 25% of Canada's Indigenous population residing across the two provinces. This demographic distinction continues to shape the Prairie genomics landscape and provides opportunities to support Indigenous-led research.

Both provinces maintain an immigration rate well above the national average and are relatively youthful compared to other regions in Canada. The median age in Manitoba is 37.3, and in Saskatchewan, 38.3, compared to the Canadian average of 40.3 (2024). Roughly half the Prairie population resides in the three largest urban centres - Winnipeg, Saskatoon, and Regina, each of which is anchored by a major research university. The University of Manitoba and the University of Saskatchewan remain members of the U15, Canada's group of leading research-intensive universities.

Economic structures in the two provinces differ but remain complementary. In Manitoba, the key GDP drivers are real estate and rental leasing (13%), health care and social assistance (10%), and manufacturing (9%). In Saskatchewan, mining and oil & gas (16%), real estate (10%), agriculture, forestry, and fishing (8%) dominate the landscape. Notably, both provinces are increasingly prioritizing growth in sectors such as biomanufacturing, sustainable energy, critical minerals, and human health innovation, aligning with emerging opportunities for genomics application.

The median total income of all families in Saskatchewan is \$103,830 while Manitoba is \$97,040. Healthcare remains the largest employment sector across both provinces, with over 140,000 combined workers in the field.

While our two Prairie provinces have many similarities, it is important to note each has unique strengths. It is understanding those strengths well that leads to opportunities for collaboration, cooperation and the promise of mutually beneficial results in the development of successful genomics-based research.

Saskatchewan-Based

Saskatchewan continues to be a hub of agriculture, mining, and life sciences research, with a strong academic and innovation ecosystem anchored in Saskatoon and Regina. The province's genomics landscape is shaped by deep expertise in agri-food systems, growing investment in sustainable resource development, and the emergence of new provincial priorities, particularly in critical minerals, clean energy, and biomanufacturing.

The Vaccine and Infectious Disease Organization (VIDO) has advanced its role as a national centre for

pandemic research, supported by over \$100 million in recent federal and provincial investments. With enhanced capacity in virology, immunology, and translational research, VIDO represents a valuable partner for Genome Prairie in health-oriented genomics research.

The Global Institute for Food Security (GIFS), in partnership with the University of Saskatchewan, continues to operate the Omics and Precision Agriculture Laboratory, a state-of-the-art facility offering genomics, phenomics, and bioinformatics services to public and private sector partners across the Prairies. These resources position Saskatchewan as a national leader in applying genomics to food security and agricultural sustainability.

The Canola industry remains a key economic driver, with significant investments in new processing facilities and genomics to improve yield, disease resistance, and environmental resilience. These efforts are complemented by the growth of Saskatchewan Food Industry Development Centre, and the province's leadership role in the federally funded Protein Industries Canada supercluster, focused on plant-based innovation.

Critical minerals, including potash, uranium, and rare earth elements, represent one of Saskatchewan's fastest-growing areas of strategic importance. Genome Prairie will prioritize research that applies genomics to critical minerals and mining ecosystems, supporting bioremediation, environmental monitoring, and sustainable extraction practices.

The Saskatchewan provincial government has created a Plan for Growth that outlines 30 Goals by 2030. Genome Prairie has reviewed this plan and **highlighted at least 18 of those goals where there is alignment with the capacities and priorities of the genomics enterprise.** Genome Prairie can support the accomplishment of these goals, within the prescribed time, through the development of impactful and supportive genomics-based projects. The provincial goals are summarized below:

Saskatchewan 30 Goals by 2030

- 1. 1.4 million people living in Saskatchewan.**
- 2. 100,000 new jobs.**
- 3. Grow private capital investment in Saskatchewan to \$16 billion annually.**
- 4. Increase the value of exports by 50%.**
5. Grow the number of international markets to which Saskatchewan exports more than \$1 billion.
- 6. Grow Saskatchewan's agri-food exports to \$20 billion.**
- 7. Increase crop production to 45 million metric tonnes and livestock cash receipts to \$3 billion.**
- 8. Expand irrigation in Saskatchewan.**

9. **Increase agriculture value-added revenue to \$10 billion.**
10. **Crush 75% of the canola Saskatchewan produces in Saskatchewan.**
11. **Process 50% of the pulse crops Saskatchewan produces in Saskatchewan.**
12. **Double meat processing and animal feed value-added revenue to more than \$1 billion.**
13. Increase oil production by 25% to 600,000 barrels per day.
14. Increase the annual value of uranium sales to \$2 billion.
15. Increase the annual value of potash sales to \$9 billion.
16. **Double the growth of Saskatchewan's forestry sector.**
17. **Grow Indigenous participation in Saskatchewan's natural resource industries.**
18. **Triple the growth of Saskatchewan's technology sector.**
19. **Increase the value of Saskatchewan manufacturing exports by 50%.**
20. Increase tourist expenditures in Saskatchewan by 50%.
21. Enhance oil recovery, carbon capture utilization and storage and position Saskatchewan as the best place in North America to test, commercialize and scale new oil and gas technologies.
22. Invest \$30 billion in infrastructure over the next decade.
23. Build and upgrade 10,000 kilometres of highways.
24. **Expand Saskatchewan's export infrastructure.**
25. Keep the budget balanced.
26. Keep Saskatchewan's debt-to-economic growth (GDP) ratio within the top three in Canada.
27. **Deliver on Saskatchewan's climate change strategy, Prairie Resilience.**
28. Advance development of zero-emission small modular reactor technology.
29. Support communities through \$2.5 billion in revenue sharing.
30. **Reduce surgical wait times to a three-month target.**

Manitoba-Based

Manitoba continues to assert its leadership in genomics-enabled health research, Arctic science, and environmental innovation. Anchored by a strong network of academic, clinical, and industry

partners, the province is increasingly focused on building research capacity in human health, sustainable resource development, and climate resilience – all of which align with Genome Prairie’s mission and Genome Canada’s national challenge areas. As of 2024 – 2025, the province is advancing multiple high-impact genomics initiatives that align with its economic growth and research priorities.

A standout achievement is PrairieGEN, a \$7.2 million initiative supported by Genome Canada and partners to sequence the genomes of over 3,000 individuals from Manitoba and Saskatchewan, enabling breakthroughs in early detection and treatment for conditions like cancer, rare diseases and inflammatory disorders.

In addition, PrairieDNA, a new eDNA surveillance project co-funded by Genome Prairie and Genome Canada, focuses on microbial biodiversity monitoring in partnership with Indigenous communities along Hudson Bay.

Genome Prairie remains engaged with CancerCare Manitoba and has supported precision health projects like Helicobacter Pylori and Ovarian Cancer genomics through GAPP funding announced in 2023. These collaborations help reduce testing wait times and accelerate genomic integration in clinical care.

Manitoba’s 2023-28 Strategic Plan emphasizes fostering collaboration with community partners, priorities that directly align with Genome Prairie’s mandate and create new opportunities for genomics-driven innovation in the province.

The University of Manitoba’s “Change Through Research” Strategic Research Plan (2024–29) highlights seven priority themes of which **five highlighted aligns with the mandate of Genomics enterprise:**

1. Foundations
2. Social Justice and Human Rights
- 3. Research by, for, and with Indigenous Peoples**
- 4. Water and Food Security**
- 5. Health and Well-Being**
- 6. Climate Action and Sustainability**
- 7. Manitoba, Hudson Bay, Arctic and the World**

Genome Prairie will work relentlessly to further expand and align these proficiencies with the opportunities for funding that Genome Canada’s Strategic Vision outlines as areas of focus. This Vision has been endorsed by the Government of Canada through the 2021 federal budget with robust funding support of \$136 million over six years for a pan-Canadian genomics strategy.

In addition, the Manitoba provincial government has built a plan for growth that outlines high- level

goals. Genome Prairie has a valuable role to play in collaborating with the Manitoba government in striving towards the achievement of **four of the following six goals through new project development**. This is especially important as it relates to leveraging federal opportunities through Genome Canada's mission- based project funding.

- 1. Rebuild and strengthen the health care system**
2. Provide cost-of-living relief for Manitobans
- 3. Grow the economy and create good jobs**
- 4. Support safer communities and healthier families**
5. Modernize government services
- 6. Protect Manitoba's economic interests**

National

The Canadian Genomics Enterprise consists of Genome Canada and the six regional Genome Centres namely: Genome BC, Genome Alberta, Genome Prairie, Ontario Genomics, G nome Qu bec and Genome Atlantic. Genome Canada has released its strategic directions for 2025 – 2030, which commits the organization to a mission-driven, challenge-based approach focused on impact and coordination across federal and regional priorities. These directions sharpen Genome Canada's mandate as a delivery partner for the Canadian Genomics Strategy, backed by \$400 million in federal investment and additional funding commitments through Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada (ISED).

Genome Canada's renewed mission centers on four audacious challenges:

- 1. Precision Health:** Transforming healthcare delivery through AI-enabled genomic infrastructure and equitable access to personalized medicine.
- 2. Agriculture and Food:** Building resilient food systems through next-generation crop and livestock innovation, sustainability, and competitiveness.
- 3. Bioeconomy and Natural Resources:** Driving low-emission economic growth by enhancing productivity and stewardship in natural resource sectors.
- 4. Commercialization and Adoption:** Accelerating genomics adoption in Canadian industry through translational research, GE3LS integration, and support for homegrown SMEs.

These challenge areas aim to address both immediate needs, such as supply chain resilience and biodiversity loss, and long-term ambitions like economic sovereignty, data infrastructure leadership, and inclusive research practices.

Saskatchewan and Manitoba are particularly well-positioned to lead in these areas. Genome Prairie is uniquely equipped to support Genome Canada's mandate by advancing genomics applications in:

1. One Health and Antimicrobial Resistance
2. Agricultural Resilience and Food Security
3. Bio-based Manufacturing and Sustainable Resource Development
4. Precision Health

Canada remains one of the world's top five exporters of agri-food products, with Saskatchewan and Manitoba contributing a combined 35% of the national total. This positions the Prairie provinces as central players in reinforcing Canada's food supply chain amidst growing global demand and climate risk. Genomics is an indispensable tool for Canada's response, offering data-driven solutions to enhance yield, manage pests, and reduce the environmental footprint of food production.

Nationally, the genomics ecosystem is also aligning around new imperatives:

1. **Inclusive Genomics:** With a growing commitment to Indigenous data sovereignty and distinctions-based approaches,
2. **Commercial Strength:** Supporting SMEs and filling gaps between discovery and commercialization,
3. **Talent and Data Infrastructure:** Investing in AI-ready platforms and next-generation workforce capacity to support genomic insight at scale.

Genome Prairie's regional research development model supports this national alignment by translating national strategy into local impact, bridging federal programs with regional priorities in health, agriculture, energy, environment, and the bioeconomy.

Global

While the acute phase of the COVID-19 pandemic has passed, its effects will continue to shape global priorities for years to come. Public health systems have undergone a reckoning, with increased emphasis on genomic surveillance, data-sharing infrastructure, and early-warning platforms to detect emerging pathogens before they become crises.

The expansion of genomic surveillance systems, from wastewater monitoring to pathogen sequencing networks, remains central to global preparedness. Yet, stark disparities persist; high-income countries typically sequence at least 0.5% of COVID-19 cases within 21 days, while lower-income countries fall far short. This gap underscores the need for equitable capacity-building, something Genome Prairie can contribute to through domestic and international partnerships.

Concurrently, AI and CRISPR technologies are accelerating breakthroughs in medicine, agriculture, and climate resilience. For instance, AI-enhanced CRISPR applications are being deployed to reduce methane emissions from livestock and develop heat-tolerant RNA molecules for biomanufacturing. These and similar advances are giving rise to a growing bioconvergence market, blending genomics with engineering, AI, and environmental sciences.

Food systems are under increasing pressure worldwide amid climate change and rising demand. Agricultural genomics is emerging as a new priority tool to increase crop resilience, yield, and sustainability. Meanwhile, global initiatives like the Earth BioGenome Project aim to sequence the genomes of all named eukaryotic species by 2028, enabling biodiversity conservation and ecosystem management at ecological scale.

Global governance has also evolved, with frameworks like the updated Global Health Security Agenda 2024 and Global Alliance for Genomics and Health (GA4GH) promoting responsible data sharing, interoperability, and ethical standards across borders. Together, these global developments are transforming genomics into a cornerstone of public health, agricultural resilience, biodiversity conservation, and economic innovation worldwide.

For Genome Prairie, this global landscape presents both heightened relevance and opportunity: the Prairie region's research ecosystems, environmental diversity, and genomics-enabled innovation position it to contribute meaningfully to global challenges while reinforcing Canada's international leadership.

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SWOT Analysis

A useful strategic plan is a plan well informed by the external and internal environment it inhabits. This is especially important as it relates to the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT) that the organization faces both now and into the future.

Strengths

Critical State-of-the-Art Infrastructure and Research Capacity in Manitoba and Saskatchewan

The space we inhabit enjoys a critical mass of research infrastructure and highly qualified personnel. In Saskatchewan and Manitoba this includes, but is not limited to, the Canadian Light Source, the only Canadian Biosafety Level 4 National Microbiology Lab, Advanced Diagnostic Research Laboratory, CancerCare Manitoba, Center for Global Public Health, the significant research assets of the National Research Council, Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, the Western College of Veterinary Medicine, the Vaccine and Infectious Disease Organization (VIDO), the Global Institute for Food Security, the Global Institute for Water Security, the Livestock and Forage Centre of Excellence, the Prairie Swine Centre, the Saskatchewan Health Quality Council, the Genomics Centre for Cancer Research and Diagnosis, and two medical, doctoral universities in Saskatchewan and Manitoba. In addition, Manitoba and Saskatchewan host the Richardson Centre for Functional Foods and Nutraceuticals, the Food Centre, Innovation Place (Saskatoon) research parks and the SMARTpark Innovation Hub (Winnipeg).

The region also hosts large not-for-profit research funders such as the Western Grains Research Foundation, the Canola Council, and the Saskatchewan Pulse Growers whose vision and strategy position Saskatchewan and Manitoba as global leaders in commodity crops research.

From the outset, both Manitoba and Saskatchewan have demonstrated the strongest research capacity in the field of agriculture within the genomics enterprise. This has translated into the greatest share of agriculture- related funded research projects amongst the six regional centres. Genome Prairie's strengths are increasingly aligned with Genome Canada's mission-based approach, positioning the organization to lead projects that integrate health, agriculture, and climate priorities for regional and national benefit.

A Committed, Diverse, and Experienced Leadership Team

Learning from the past 25 years, the current leadership team brings strengths in community engagement, genomics adoption strategy, building and leveraging partnerships, and finance. The leadership team has brought fresh ideas and vision to Genome Prairie, strengthening strategy, partnerships, and community engagement.

Talented and Engaged HQP Within the Research Community

Saskatoon, Winnipeg, Regina and Brandon, along with other locations throughout our provinces, enjoy a cadre of highly qualified researchers, scientists and academics in both the public and private sectors across a multitude of disciplines. The research community in both provinces also boasts robust connections to global research and end-user networks.

Strong, Engaged Team with Proven Genomics Outreach

Genome Prairie is an agile and flexible organization with a highly engaged team that has successfully delivered more than 50 genomics initiatives and generated over \$350 million in regional GDP impact. Our staff of nine covers both Manitoba and Saskatchewan and consistently demonstrates a strong record of performance, maintaining an approximate \$5 in economic impact for every \$1 of Genome Canada funding. Beyond core research delivery, Genome Prairie has established itself as a leader in extending genomics engagement beyond the research community. Through initiatives such as Genome360 in Saskatchewan and Manitoba, we have introduced training, and advanced genomics equipment into classrooms and clinics across the region. These efforts, largely funded through the Canadian Agriculture Partnership (CAP) and Prairies Economic Development Canada not only expand genomics literacy but also strengthen relationships with potential funders, demonstrating Genome Prairie's value and positioning us for future opportunity.

Relationships – Connectivity and Collegiality

Through 25 years of project development and funding, long-term and beneficial relationships have been developed at government levels (federal, provincial and municipal) as well as through the private sector, academic and research community. In addition, we have formed relationships beyond our national border through the development of initiatives such as DivSeek International. The Saskatchewan and Manitoba research community also generally enjoys a unique reputation of collegiality. Our ability to position genomics research and adoption for the benefit of the region in all relevant sectors will help our reputation in ways that will allow Genome Prairie to have greater impact in the coming years.

Regional Alignment with Genome Canada

Genome Prairie's research priorities and project portfolio are closely aligned with Genome Canada's mission-based approach, including climate-smart agriculture, inclusive innovation, and health-related genomics. This alignment ensures that Genome Prairie remains a relevant and valued partner in the national genomics enterprise and well-positioned for future funding and collaboration opportunities.

Indigenous Engagement Leadership

Genome Prairie has earned recognition as a leader in Indigenous engagement within the genomics sector with a community based Indigenous Genomics Advisory Community. Through relationship-building, community collaboration, and an emphasis on distinctions-based approaches, the organization is contributing to a more inclusive, responsive, and equitable genomics ecosystem across the Prairies.

Strong Co-Funding Performance

Through effective collaboration with governments, industry and community partners, Genome Prairie has established a strong co-funding track record. This includes maintaining an approximate 5:1 economic impact ratio for every dollar invested by Genome Canada, demonstrating a capacity to scale research initiatives and deliver measurable value for stakeholders.

Program Delivery Track Record

Genome Prairie has demonstrated consistent success in designing and delivering high-impact genomics programs across multiple sectors. This program delivery capacity reinforces the organization's reputation as a reliable, capable partner able to manage complex projects from development through to implementation.

Engaged and Strategically Aligned Board of Directors

Genome Prairie has successfully attracted and retained a high-performing volunteer Board of Directors whose collective expertise, strategic insight, and commitment to the organization's mission have significantly strengthened governance and oversight. The Board includes members with diverse backgrounds in science, policy, finance, and industry, and plays an active role in shaping Genome Prairie's long-term direction. This engagement reflects both a generational renewal and a shared commitment to advancing genomics for regional and national benefit.

Weaknesses

Other Sources of Funding

While Genome Prairie has enjoyed tremendous support of the provincial governments at the project funding level, the same cannot be said for sustained operational funding for business development or regional initiatives. This is a primary weakness that will be addressed, and we will strive to overcome through the execution of our 2026-2030 Strategic Plan by demonstrating sustained value.

Limited Internal Data and Analytics Infrastructure

Genome Prairie's operational capacity is limited by the absence of a centralized system for grant and project management, as well as limited internal data infrastructure to support advanced analytics, AI integration, and real-time reporting. As the genomics enterprise increasingly emphasizes data-driven decision-making, performance tracking, and outcome measurement, addressing these gaps will be essential to improve efficiency, and maintain competitiveness.

Gaps in Commercialization Infrastructure

While Genome Prairie has demonstrated success in project development and research delivery, the organization currently lacks a structured commercialization program and dedicated innovation hub. This gap presents a significant opportunity to a Prairie based commercialization program to accelerate the translation of genomics research into market ready solutions.

Opportunities

Vaccines, Pandemic Research and Genomics Surveillance

The onset of the COVID-19 pandemic has focused intense effort and resources on vaccines and pandemic-related research. VIDO in Saskatoon and the National Microbiology Lab in Winnipeg are home to critical infrastructure and highly qualified personnel in Canada's public health sphere. VIDO

has developed and commercialized several vaccines targeted at animal and zoonotic diseases and based on a strong working relationship with Genome Prairie, will generate opportunity for research projects for many years to come.

Genomics as a Platform (Partnership Opportunities)

Through the progress of human understanding of the genome over the past two decades and our abilities to study, manipulate, modify and edit, along with advancements in equipment and analytic methods great strides and improvements have been made. This evolution has allowed for the emergence of a “genomics as a platform” approach. That is, scientific study is focusing more on what can be done in the way of improvement of the world condition through the practical use of genomics tools.

Commercialization of Genomics Research as a Business Model

The advent of companies in the private sector to not only provide sequencing services but to bring innovations forward as a third-party solutions and service providers builds on the point noted above. Recent examples of this evolution include companies such as Israel’s NRGene joining the bioscience community in Saskatoon. We anticipate that this trend will grow in the coming years and provide new opportunity for Genome Prairie in a space where basic and applied research intersect with commerce (especially with respect to GAPP projects).

Indigenous Participation in Genomics Research and Innovation

Saskatchewan and Manitoba enjoy the strongest representation of Canada’s Indigenous population on a percentage basis of any of the provinces. Emerging interest in traditional Indigenous medicines, wild rice, bison, nutrigenomics and other fields of study provide Genome Prairie with the opportunity to play a lead connectivity role in this space going forward.

We Are a Northern People

As global attention shifts toward the Canadian North, new opportunities are emerging in genomics research related to climate adaptation sustainable development, and northern energy and trade corridors. The Port of Churchill and proposed northern transportation infrastructure have positioned Manitoba as a key access point to the Arctic. At the same time, the impacts of climate change, particularly in agriculture, forestry, and environmental systems, are amplified in northern latitudes and remain underexplored.

Genome Prairie is uniquely positioned to lead and support genomics research in these regions. Manitoba’s growing strength in Arctic and environmental research, including projects such as GENICE II, offers a strong foundation for future work in northern resilience, bioremediation, and sustainable resource management. These northern-focused initiatives will be critical to understanding and addressing regional challenges while advancing Canada’s strategic interests.

Food Security, Agri-Food Production and Processing

COVID-19 has demonstrated the importance of agri-food production and processing along many

lines. It has been reinforced in the minds and hearts of many that within a hierarchy of needs, safe sources of sufficient calories rank near the very top. In other words, food security is less taken for granted than before COVID-19. It has also become evident, and centrally linked to the previous point, agri-food production and processing remains a linchpin of the economic well-being of Saskatchewan and Manitoba. When much else becomes “nice to have” one of the primary drivers of our high standard of living is a “must have” around the world. This will remain so, and we are well positioned to ensure our focus remains on the very things we have become best at.

Regional GAPP Funding as a Transformative Opportunity

The development of the Regional Genomic Applications Partnership Program, GenTrac, presents a transformative opportunity for Genome Prairie to increase funding, expand project pipelines, and deepen collaborations across the prairies. Proactive engagement in this program will allow the organization to build capacity and deliver impact aligned with local and national priorities.

Public Engagement and Genomics Literacy

Expanding public engagement and science literacy initiatives across Manitoba and Saskatchewan will strengthen Genome Prairie’s profile as a trusted, visible leader in genomics. Investing in communications, storytelling, and community partnerships will build understanding, trust, and long-term support for genomics research and applications.

Threats

Sustained Funding

Genome Prairie has always been faced with the ongoing threat of insufficient sustained funding. This funding could be operational or project-based, through matching funding from provincial governments, private sector and other sources. Genome Prairie thrives on its ability to create a paradigm of a Reputation – Trust – Credibility – Support in its approach to secure long-term funding.

For any organization to both survive and prosper, it must be able to maintain the trust and support of those it relies on for its continued existence. Genome Prairie has partners with unique and important relationships across many spheres. Unless stronger efforts are made with communications, partner relations and one-on-one relationships that continually advocate both the importance and the value that Genome Prairie brings, we risk becoming perceived as irrelevant or non-fundable.

Regulatory Environment

Canada has a well-established safety and approval system for human, animal, plant and environmental health. Initially we were considered world leaders in protocols such as the “plant with novel traits” approval process that allowed us robust market access given the confidence the rest of the world placed in Canada’s ability to assess and manage risk. As technologies such as gene editing (like CRISPR) have emerged, Canada’s approval process has not kept pace in terms of speed and cost. Our approval process remains slow, cumbersome, complex and uncompetitive. These risks place Canada at a severe disadvantage relative to other global competitors, especially in the important agri-

food sector. It also acts as a barrier to entry to SMEs pursuing genomics innovation at all in our space, as they recognize the steep hill that regulatory approval places in the development and commercialization pathway.

Limited Regional Bioinformatics, Data Science and AI Capacity

While Genome Prairie does not require large in-house bioinformatics for day-to-day operations, a regional shortage of bioinformatics, data science, and AI expertise constrains project design, data interpretation and delivery. It reduces competitiveness in data-intensive national/international calls, slows adoption of AI/ML and compliance with evolving data standards and reporting, and makes proposal development and ongoing report more burdensome for investigators.

Broad Shift in Priorities at National and Subnational Levels

Canada, like many jurisdictions around the world, has recently incurred a tremendous amount of public debt. At the same time, the genomics enterprise has always relied heavily on the public purse to advance projects. The unprecedented debt might force a shift in priorities that does not include future support for the advancement of genomics in Canada. Given the plethora of misinformation, fear and the reluctance to take risks, the world of genomics could be a perceived easy target for policymakers and funders to make cuts. This makes it ever more important for the genomics enterprise to focus on outcomes and the impact of work going forward.

Black Swan Events

While rare and difficult to plan for, COVID-19 has demonstrated the impact of an unpredictable and unanticipated black swan event on the world we inhabit. While they can be difficult to anticipate, the threat is both real and substantial. The best approach to confronting black swan events is to build the strongest possible team, maintain high team morale and robust business relationships, ensure budgets remain balanced and ideally have a surplus/reserve built up.

Data Governance and Indigenous Data Sovereignty

As expectations for transparent data management grow, Genome Prairie must navigate increasingly complex data governance requirements, including Indigenous data sovereignty principles and evolving national standards. Failure to address these requirements proactively could create barriers

Cybersecurity and Data Integrity Risks

While Genome Prairie does not directly conduct genomics research, its role as a funder, convener, and strategic partner involves managing sensitive project data, facilitating digital collaboration, and engaging with secure platforms across the genomics enterprise. As digital systems expand, including grant management, reporting, and stakeholder engagement, cybersecurity threats pose a growing risk to operational continuity, data integrity, and partner trust. Strengthening cybersecurity policies and infrastructure will be essential to ensure resilience and maintain Genome Prairie's reputation as a reliable and secure regional partner.

How the SWOT Informs Our Strategic Actions

This plan turns analysis into action. Our actions use Genome Prairie’s strengths to pursue opportunities, convert weaknesses into organizational capacity, and reduce exposure to threats. Actions 1.1 – 1.4 align Prairie research with national challenge areas and strengthen our competitiveness in Genome Canada programs. Actions 2.1 – 2.4 address operational gaps by diversifying revenue, implementing a centralized projects and grants management system, building talent, and maintaining a living partner database informed by demographic insights. Actions 3.1 – 3.4 reinforce resilience and trust by convening partners to share information and collaborate, deploying real-time performance dashboards, and embedding Indigenous guidance at every stage through our Indigenous Genomics Advisory Committee (IGAC).

CONFIDENTIAL

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Top Strategic Objectives

Objective 1: Advance Genomics Research Aligned with Regional Strengths and National Priorities

Genome Prairie's foremost commitment over the next five years is to catalyze genomics research that reflects the unique strengths of Manitoba and Saskatchewan while directly advancing the national priorities aligned in Genome Canada's 2025-2030 Strategic Plan. The aim is not only to increase the quality and scope of Prairie-led initiatives but also ensure that these projects deliver measurable benefits to local communities, strengthen Canada's position in global genomics innovation, and contribute to the four national challenge areas – Precision Health, Agriculture & Food, Bioeconomy & Natural Resources, and Commercialization & Adoption.

This objective also positions Genome Prairie as a direct contributor to provincial priorities. In Saskatchewan, genomics research supports the 30 Goals for 2030, from agri-food exports and crop productivity to Indigenous participation and technology growth. In Manitoba, genomics aligns with the 2023-2028 Strategic Plan, particularly in rebuilding healthcare, growing the economy, and strengthening communities.

Over the past twenty-five years, Genome Prairie has demonstrated leadership in agriculture, environmental stewardship, human and animal health, and Indigenous-led research. Building on this foundation, the next strategic cycle will place greater emphasis on three priorities:

1. Ensuring intentional alignment between regional strengths and national challenge areas.
2. Expanding the diversity and resilience of our funding base, so Prairie genomics innovation is not limited by a single funding source or cycle.
3. Strengthening early-stage initiative development so that the Prairie region consistently produces competitive, high-quality proposals with strong pathways to commercialization and adoption.

These priorities reflect the realities of a rapidly evolving research environment, one in which funders expect demonstratable outcomes, partners seek equitable and inclusive collaboration, and tools such as artificial intelligence are reshaping the speed, scope, and scale of genomics research. Genome Prairie's strategy responds to these expectations by deepening our project pipeline, integrating AI and advanced data analytics into proposal development and project delivery, and embedding commercialization and Indigenous leadership into our core research model.

Action 1.1: Align Regional Initiatives with Genome Canada's 2025-2030 Strategic Priorities

Over the next five years, Genome Prairie will embed Genome Canada's four national challenge areas directly into our project development and evaluation framework. This alignment will also support Saskatchewan's goals 6-12 (agri-food exports, crop and livestock productivity, canola/pulse processing) and Manitoba Goal 1 (rebuilding healthcare), ensuring genomics strengthens both food

security and precision health delivery. Every proposed initiative will be assessed not only for its relevance to Prairie-based strengths, but also for its potential to address pressing national challenges. This approach ensures that regional projects are fully positioned to compete in national funding competitions while maintaining a clear line of sight into tangible economic, health, and environmental outcomes.

Practical application of this alignment will include cross-sectoral project design, increased use of mission-based approaches, and active participation in Genome Canada's emerging AI-ready data infrastructure initiatives. Partnerships will be actively sought with institutions and sectors that strengthen our competitiveness in Precision Health (e.g. PrairieGEN, Indigenous-led health genomics), Agriculture & Food, Bioeconomy & Natural Resources, and Commercialization & Adoption

Action 1.2: Diversify Funding Sources

To reduce dependency on a narrow set of project funders, Genome Prairie will broaden the base of research funding sources beyond Genome Canada. This action is closely tied to Saskatchewan Goal 3 (growing private capital investment) and Manitoba Goal 6 (protecting economic interests), as diversified funding safeguards regional resilience. Over the plan period, Genome Prairie will secure increased project funding from sources other than Genome Canada. Diversification at the project level will enable Genome Prairie to develop and deliver initiatives that may not fall within Genome Canada's competition scope but directly address Prairie needs such as biodiversity monitoring, climate-resilient agriculture, and genomic tools for rural and northern healthcare. It will also strengthen Genome Prairie's competitiveness in federal calls by embedding diverse co-funding at the outset. By systematically expanding partnerships and revenue sources for projects, Genome Prairie ensures that Prairie genomics innovation is not constrained by any single program or cycle.

Action 1.3: Increase Proactive Initiative Development

Genome Prairie will strengthen its role as a convener and connector in the Prairie genomics ecosystem, leading the early-stage scoping and development of initiatives that can scale to national and international relevance. The goal is to process 6 competitive proposals annually for consideration in the Regional GAPP (Genome Canada) and co-funded competitions.

This work will include:

- Expanding early-stage pipelines by scouting emerging research teams and technologies within Prairie universities, Indigenous organizations, SMEs, and industry clusters.
- Providing structured proposal development support, including access to subject-matter experts, AI-assisted data analysis, and market validation tools.
- Aligning proposals with commercialization pathways so that projects move from proof-of-concept to adoption more efficiently.

Priority focus areas for initiative development include Indigenous-led research, climate resilience, AI-enabled genomics solutions for Prairie agriculture, and health genomics that addresses service gaps in rural and remote communities.

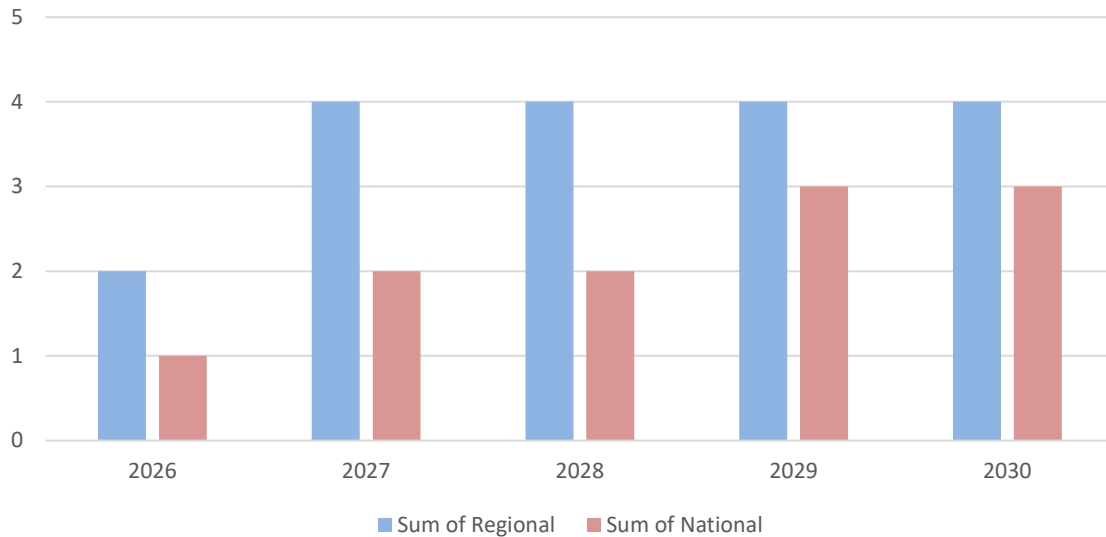
Action 1.4: Grow Genome Prairie’s share of approved Genome Canada projects

Genome Prairie will aim to increase its share of Genome Canada project approvals to at least 11% by 2030 through stronger partner engagement, higher-quality proposals, and strategic positioning in national competitions.

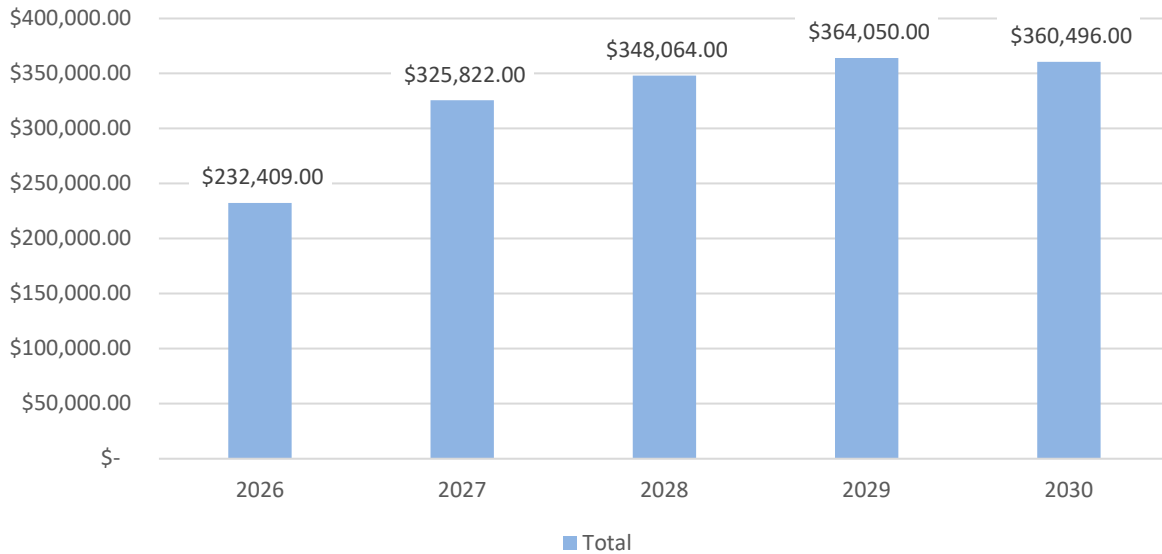
Baseline performance from 2024 will serve as a reference point, with progress tracked through volume and value of approved projects. Emphasis will be placed on competitions where Prairie strengths provide a competitive advantage, such as Climate-Smart Agriculture and Food, Bioeconomy innovations, and health-related genomics with Indigenous community leadership.

Efforts will include more rigorous internal review processes, targeted matchmaking between researchers and co-funders, and earlier alignment of proposals with Genome Canada evaluation criteria.

Projected Annual Genome Canada Approvals (2026 - 2030)



Projected Program Management Fee from GC Projects (2026 - 2030)



Measuring Success

Progress toward Objective 1 will be measured through:

- The proportion of projects aligned with Genome Canada's four challenge areas.
- Annual funding secured from diversified sources (baseline vs. target).
- Number of proposals developed and submitted per year.
- Genome Prairie's share of approved Genome Canada projects, benchmarked against 2024 levels.

Objective 2: Strengthen Organizational Capacity for Sustainable Growth and Impactful Outcomes

Achieving Genome Prairie's ambitious research and impact goals requires an organization that is equipped to operate at a higher level of efficiency, adaptability, and reach. Over the next five years, Genome Prairie will focus on building the internal capacity, systems, and partnerships necessary to support a larger and more diverse portfolio of projects, respond to emerging opportunities, and sustain long-term organizational health.

This objective reflects an understanding that the ability to deliver transformative research outcomes is directly tied to the strength of our operational infrastructure, the skills and engagement of our people, and the breadth of our collaborative networks. Strengthening capacity will position Genome Prairie to compete more effectively in national and international arenas, leverage AI and advanced analytics in daily operations, and provide a seamless experience for researchers, partners, and

fundlers.

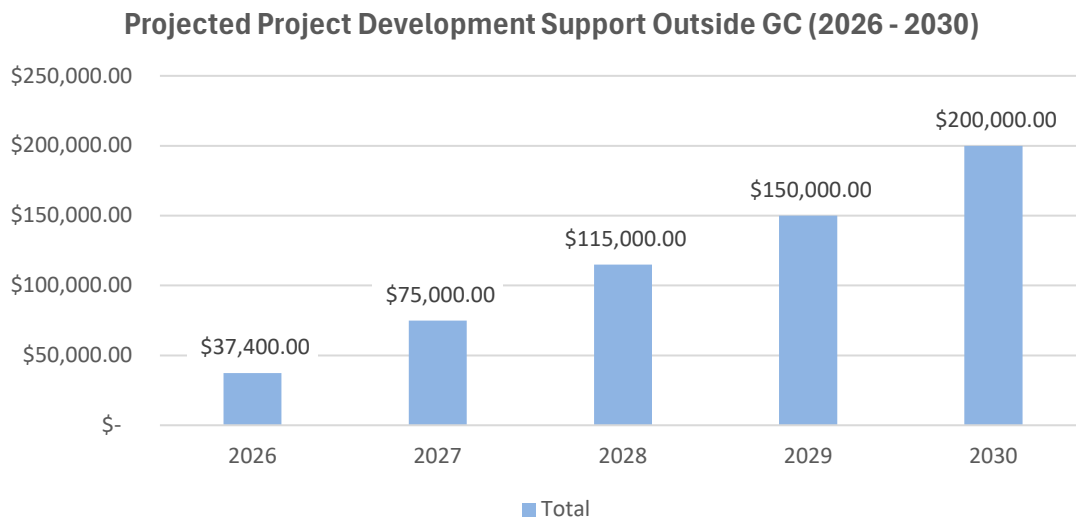
Genome Prairie’s objectives are strongly aligned with provincial commitments to sustainable growth. In Saskatchewan, this includes the government’s goals for new jobs, expanded value-added agri-food revenue, and Indigenous participation. In Manitoba, this supports strategic goals related to modernized government services, economic growth, and building safer, healthier communities.

Genome Prairie’s comparative advantage lies in its ability to operate efficiently with a lean team, delivering high-value outcomes relative to staff-size. However, without targeted investments in non-Genome Canada revenue growth, modernized project management systems, workforce development, and relationship tracking, this advantage could become a limiting factor. Objective 2 directly addresses these priorities.

Action 2.1: Increase Non-Genome Canada Operating Revenue

Sustaining a growing and more complex portfolio requires organizational revenues that extend beyond Genome Canada’s core G&A support. This action focuses on strengthening Genome Prairie’s operational funding base to ensure stability, adaptability, and independence in the face of federal budget fluctuations. Over the Plan period, Genome Prairie will target an additional \$200,000 in non-Genome Canada operating revenue through expanded program management fees, training and consulting services, fee-for-service offerings, and regional or private-sector partnerships.

This revenue diversification is distinct from project-level co-funding, it directly supports the internal systems, staff capacity, and infrastructure needed to deliver excellence in genomics research. By scaling non-GC operational revenue streams, Genome Prairie will reduce over-reliance on a single federal line, secure the resources to invest in talent and technology, and create the financial resilience necessary to pursue ambitious research goals across Manitoba and Saskatchewan.



Action 2.2: Implement a Centralized Project and Grants Management System

A key infrastructure gap is the absence of a centralized project and grants management system. This

limits efficiency, scalability, and the ability to produce real-time reporting for funders and partners. By 2027, Genome Prairie will implement a fully integrated system to manage the complete project life cycle, from proposal intake and review to funding allocation, milestone tracking, and outcome reporting.

This system will improve transparency, strengthen audit readiness, and provide instant access to data that informs decision-making. It will also reduce administrative burden on staff, enabling them to focus more on strategic activities.

Action 2.3: Support Talent Development, Retention, and Strategic Upskilling

Genome Prairie's people are central to its success. Maintaining a $\geq 75\%$ retention rate and building a culture that supports continuous growth will be essential as the organization expands its scope and ambition.

The HR strategy developed in 2025 provides a clear roadmap for workforce planning, employee engagement, leadership development, and wellness. Over the next five years, Genome Prairie will invest in:

- Training programs that build capacity in high-demand areas such as AI-enabled genomics, data governance, commercialization, and Indigenous engagement.
- Wellness and flexibility initiatives to support work-life balance and prevent burnout in a fast-paced research environment.
- Early career development, including a commitment to engage at least one summer student annually in each province, providing mentorship and exposure to genomics research landscape.

These actions will ensure that staff are equipped with the skills and motivation to deliver on the organization's evolving mandate while fostering a reputation as an employer of choice in the genomics sector.

Action 2.4: Build and Maintain a Robust Partner Database

Partnerships are at the heart of Genome Prairie's ability to develop and deliver impactful projects. Yet without a structured, searchable, database of partners, including co-funders, researchers, industry collaborators, and Indigenous organizations, opportunities can be missed, and relationship management can become fragmented.

Over the plan period, Genome Prairie will design and maintain a dynamic partner database that consolidates engagement history, funding collaborators, and areas of interest. This resource will streamline outreach for new projects, support more strategic matchmaking between researchers and co-funders, and enable the tracking of partnership diversity and depth over time.

The database will capture demographic information such as geographic representation, gender, career stage, and Indigenous participation, enabling Genome Prairie to identify gaps and emerging

opportunities. This focus will allow us to better support gender equity in Prairie genomics, including the identification of more female researchers, and to prioritize early-career researchers who represent the next generation of Prairie genomics leaders and can replace an aging cohort of principal investigators.

In addition, the partner database will serve as a tool for facilitating national and international collaboration by tracking relationships across jurisdictions and enabling Genome Prairie to identify alignment between partner priorities, demographic trends, and emerging research needs.

Action 2.5: Risk Management and Internal Control

To sustain a larger, more complex portfolio, Genome Prairie will embed continuous risk assessment and monitoring across the organization so emerging and existing risks are identified early and prevented from crystallizing. This action strengthens our control environment across operational, strategic, financial, compliance, cybersecurity, and AI security domains, protecting our people, partners, data, and reputation while enabling responsible growth.

Cybersecurity will emphasize access controls, timely patching, endpoint protection, backups, vendor security reviews, and periodic tabletop exercises. AI security will be governed through an approved-use policy, an inventory of use cases, documented risk assessments (privacy, bias, robustness, prompt-injection/data-exfiltration), and human-in-the-loop checks for sensitive outputs. Risk information will be surfaced through analyzing risk metrics and quarterly reviews integrated with our centralized project and grants systems to preserve audit trails and enforce controls.

We will monitor enterprise risk management practices within day-to-day operations and systems:

- Proactive review of risk appetite and common taxonomy.
- Continuous update of the enterprise risk register.
- Proactive test of controls in core processes (project intake, contracting, procurement, payments, fund management, data handling).
- Improve current incident response and disaster recovery plans.

Measuring Success

Progress toward Objective 2 will be measured through:

- Annual growth rate in non-Genome Canada operational revenue.
- Successful implementation and utilization of the centralized project/grants management system.
- Retention rates, training participation, and staff satisfaction indicators.
- Number and diversity of active partners recorded in the database.

Objective 3: Demonstrate Impact Through Measurement, Storytelling, and Engagement

To secure long-term support and inspire new partnerships, Genome Prairie must clearly demonstrate the value and relevance of its work, not only through data and metrics, but also through compelling stories that connect genomics to the lives of Prairie communities. Over the next five years, Genome Prairie will strengthen its capacity to measure outcomes, communicate impact, and build relationships that extend beyond the research community.

This objective acknowledges that effective impact is multi-dimensional. It requires rigorous performance tracking systems, active public and policymaker engagement, and platforms that bring stakeholders together to share successes and challenges. It also demands an inclusive approach, ensuring that the voices and priorities of Indigenous partners are woven into both research delivery and the narratives shared with the public.

While Genome Prairie has a smaller footprint than some other centres, it has the advantage of strong regional relationships and credibility in areas such as Indigenous-led research and climate-resilient agriculture. Objective 3 builds on these strengths to ensure that our impact is seen, understood, and valued by diverse audiences.

Action 3.1: Host an Annual Prairie Genomics Forum

Genome Prairie will convene an annual Prairie Genomics Forum, a flagship event to showcase achievements, surface regional needs, and highlight the people behind the research. The forum will also serve as a neutral space for information-sharing, where partners can exchange knowledge, identify common challenges, and explore opportunities for collaboration.

The event will provide a platform for:

- Ministers, community leaders, and funders to share their perspectives on the role of genomics in regional development.
- Researchers to present scientific breakthroughs alongside the societal, environmental, and economic impacts of their work.
- Indigenous partners to share project outcomes and priorities in their own voices, ensuring that their leadership is visible and valued.
- Cross-sector stakeholders to exchange insights, build trust, and co-develop future projects, with an Early Career Researcher showcase to encourage and highlight emerging Prairie genomics talent.

By positioning the forum as both a showcase and a collaborative exchange, Genome Prairie will strengthen relationships, align priorities, and reinforce its role as a convener of ideas and action.

Action 3.2: Increase Genome Prairie's Media and Digital Presence

A stronger public profile will be essential to advancing Genome Prairie's influence and attracting new partners. Over the plan period, Genome Prairie will target an 20% growth in engagement across key

channels, including social media platforms, website traffic, newsletter readership, and media mentions.

Efforts will include:

- Developing a consistent, multi-platform content strategy that highlights project milestones, impact stories, and behind-the-scenes research.
- Leveraging partnerships with post-secondary institutions, Indigenous organizations, and industry networks to expand reach.
- Using targeted digital campaigns to raise genomics awareness in Prairie communities, connecting scientific concepts to everyday benefits.

These actions will create a stronger, more recognizable brand and ensure that stakeholders, from government leaders to high school students, understand the importance and relevance of genomics in their region.

Action 3.3: Expand Internal Data and Analytics Infrastructure

Genome Prairie's ability to demonstrate impact will be significantly enhanced by the expansion of its internal data and analytics capacity. The organization will develop real-time results framework that track progress against all strategic objectives.

This framework will:

- Provide immediate, transparent reporting for leadership, funders, and partners.
- Integrate with the new centralized project and grants management system (Objective 2) to streamline data flow and reduce duplication.
- Capture both quantitative metrics (e.g., funding secured, number of proposals submitted, publications) and qualitative outcomes (e.g., policy influence, community benefit, HQP, GDP impact).

By creating a single source of truth for organizational performance, Genome Prairie will strengthen its ability to make data-driven decisions, respond to emerging opportunities, and communicate achievements with confidence.

Action 3.4: Enhance Indigenous Partnerships in Genomics Research

Building on the advantage that Manitoba and Saskatchewan have the largest share of the Indigenous population in Canada, Genome Prairie will deepen its commitment to Indigenous participation in genomics by embedding co-designed engagement frameworks, capacity-building initiatives, and success story sharing into every stage of the project lifecycle. This aligns with Genome Canada's distinctions-based approach and responds to community calls for greater ownership and visibility in research.

Actions will include:

- Tracking and reporting on Indigenous participation rates annually, including roles as project leads, co-researchers, and community advisors.
- Showcasing Indigenous-led projects and partnerships in the Prairie Genomics Forum and across Genome Prairie's digital platforms.
- Seeking targeted funding to support Indigenous-owned genomics infrastructure and training pathways.

These steps will ensure that Indigenous priorities are central to Genome Prairie's delivery model, with Indigenous Genomics Advisory Committee (IGAC) providing guidance after every stage of the project life cycle to strengthen accountability and knowledge translation.

Measuring Success

Progress toward Objective 3 will be measured through:

- Attendance, sector diversity, and participant feedback from the Prairie Genomics Forum.
- Growth in digital engagement metrics across all platforms.
- Deployment and active use of real-time performance dashboards.
- Annual reporting on Indigenous participation rates and related outcomes.

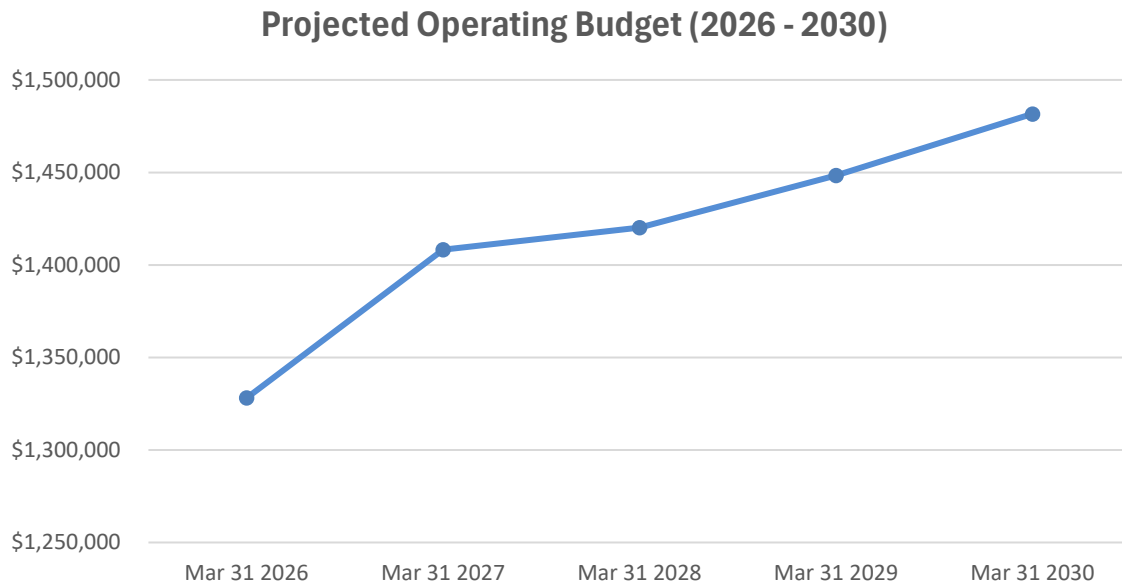
MID-TERM ASSESSMENT

The Board of Directors will evaluate mid-term progress of this strategic plan through a structured review of key performance indicators alignment with the strategic objectives. This assessment will include analysis of key actions across priority areas, implementation milestones, and a comparison of actual results against planned targets. Regular reporting through an annual work plan assessment will ensure transparency and accountability. Additionally, partners input and environmental scans will be incorporated to aid the Board's evaluation of the progress and emerging risks. The Board will use these insights to determine whether strategic adjustments are warranted, thereby ensuring continued alignment with Genome Prairie's mission, objectives and evolving external conditions.

RESOURCE REQUIREMENTS

Genome Prairie will strive to secure and sustain operating funds as follows to ensure that operational and human resource requirements are adequate towards the achievement of the vision, mission and strategic goals of the organization.

For the 2026 – 2030 period, Genome Prairie’s projected operating revenues and expenses total about \$7.08M, rising from \$1.33M to \$1.48M per year, with a balanced operating position each year. Revenues are led by Genome Canada program management support and program management fees, supplemented by interest income, project development support, and expense recoveries.

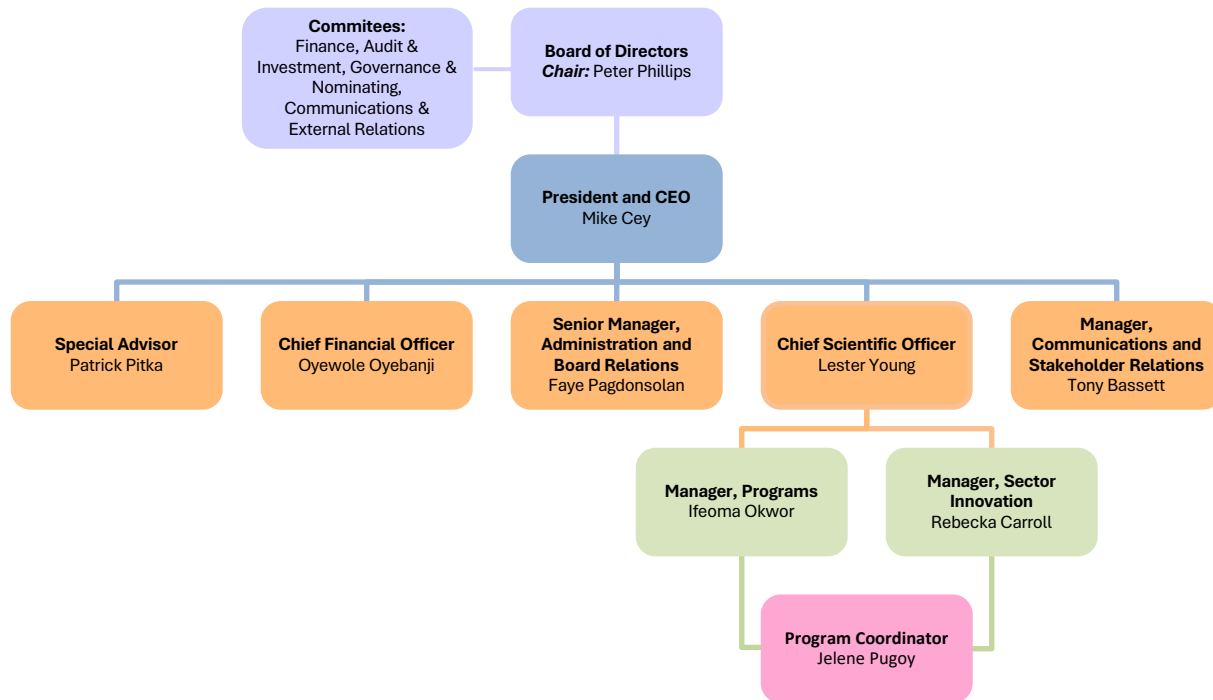


Genome Prairie						
Projected Operating Budget for 2026 - 2030						
	Mar 31 2026	Mar 31 2027	Mar 31 2028	Mar 31 2029	Mar 31 2030	Total
Revenues - Operating						
Genome Canada:						
Program Management Support	\$ 833,333	\$ 833,333	\$ 833,333	\$ 833,333	\$ 833,333	\$ 4,166,665
Program Management Fees	\$ 232,409	\$ 325,822	\$ 348,064	\$ 364,050	\$ 360,496	\$ 1,630,841
Interest income	\$ 142,500	\$ 144,073	\$ 113,799	\$ 91,027	\$ 77,834	\$ 569,233
Deffered Admin	\$ 75,366	\$ 20,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 95,366
Expense Recoveries	\$ 7,102	\$ 10,000	\$ 10,000	\$ 10,000	\$ 10,000	\$ 47,102
Project Development	\$ 37,400	\$ 75,000	\$ 115,000	\$ 150,000	\$ 200,000	\$ 577,400
Total Operating Revenue	\$ 1,328,110	\$ 1,408,228	\$ 1,420,196	\$ 1,448,410	\$ 1,481,663	\$ 7,086,607
Operating Expenses						
Bank Charges	\$ 1,500	\$ 1,800	\$ 2,000	\$ 2,000	\$ 2,000	\$ 9,300
Board expenses	\$ 17,500	\$ 18,000	\$ 18,000	\$ 18,000	\$ 18,000	\$ 89,500
Corporate Travel	\$ 25,157	\$ 26,000	\$ 26,000	\$ 26,000	\$ 26,000	\$ 129,157
Memberships & Subscriptions	\$ 21,024	\$ 21,571	\$ 22,110	\$ 22,662	\$ 23,229	\$ 110,596
Office Expenses	\$ 21,680	\$ 42,244	\$ 22,800	\$ 21,000	\$ 22,000	\$ 129,723
Office Rent	\$ 72,651	\$ 74,540	\$ 74,540	\$ 74,600	\$ 75,000	\$ 371,331
Communications & Public Outreach	\$ 18,800	\$ 19,289	\$ 19,790	\$ 20,000	\$ 20,000	\$ 97,879
Prof. Fees - Legal	\$ 4,000	\$ 4,000	\$ 4,000	\$ 4,000	\$ 4,000	\$ 20,000
Prof. Fees - Accounting	\$ 22,020	\$ 22,681	\$ 23,361	\$ 24,062	\$ 24,784	\$ 116,907
Project Development	\$ 37,400	\$ 38,000	\$ 38,988	\$ 39,963	\$ 40,962	\$ 195,312
Salaries	\$ 1,062,112	\$ 1,115,218	\$ 1,143,098	\$ 1,171,675	\$ 1,200,967	\$ 5,693,071
Telephone	\$ 10,166	\$ 10,420	\$ 10,681	\$ 10,948	\$ 11,221	\$ 53,436
Training	\$ 14,100	\$ 14,467	\$ 14,828	\$ 13,500	\$ 13,500	\$ 70,395
Total Operating Expenses	\$ 1,328,110	\$ 1,408,228	\$ 1,420,196	\$ 1,448,410	\$ 1,481,663	\$ 7,086,607
Operating Income	\$ -	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0

Human Resources

Genome Prairie has built a team of skilled professionals who provide the management, administrative, accounting, and communications expertise needed to deliver our mandate effectively. Each member of our team brings strong qualifications and experience, ensuring that the organization operates with efficiency, integrity, and impact. The staff profiles below highlight the talent and dedication that will enable Genome Prairie to achieve its strategic goals. The current organizational structure and human resource capacities are outlined below for reference.

Organizational Chart



President and Chief Executive Officer: *Mr. Mike Cey*

Mr. Cey joined Genome Prairie in November 2020 as President and CEO. Mike brings 35 years of broad, cross-sector experience to the organization. In this role, Mike provides overall leadership and strategic direction, guiding the organization’s operations, financial sustainability, and stakeholder engagement.

Throughout his tenure, Mike has emphasized a leadership approach grounded in compassion, collaboration, and purpose. Under his direction, Genome Prairie continues to foster a workplace culture where employees, board members, and partners feel valued and motivated to contribute meaningfully to the organization’s mission.

As CEO, Mike works to position Genome Prairie as a trusted connector in the regional and national genomics ecosystem, supporting high-impact research, advancing innovation, and strengthening relationships across government, academia, industry, and Indigenous communities. He remains committed to transparent communication, long-term partnerships, and building a resilient, future-focused organization.

Chief Scientific Officer: *Dr. Lester Young*



Chief Financial Officer: *Mr. Oyewole Oyebanji*

Mr. Oyebanji joined Genome Prairie in January 2022 as Accountant and became the Chief Financial

Officer in April 2025, having demonstrated excellence in operational efficiency, regulatory compliance, and financial acumen. With over two decades' experience in Canadian and International financial institutions and public accounting, Oyewole oversees financial planning, risk management, and financial reporting at Genome Prairie.

He holds a Bachelor of Science in Accounting and a Master of Science in Finance. His professional credentials include membership of Institute of Chartered Professional Accountants of Saskatchewan (CPA), Institute of Chartered Accountants of Nigeria (ICAN), Compliance Institute of Nigeria (CIN) and Information System Audit and Control Association (ISACA). Whether it is budgeting, financial reporting, strategic management, regulatory compliance, operational efficiency and information security, Oyewole brings hands-on experience and commitment to excellence that drives long term success.

Outside of work, Oyewole values quality time with his family and charitable activities.

Senior Manager, Administration and Board Relations: *Mrs. Faye Pagdonsolan*

Mrs. Pagdonsolan joined Genome Prairie in July 2007 and brings over a decade of senior administrative experience across both corporate and not-for-profit sectors. In her current role, Faye oversees organizational administration, human resources, and governance support. She plays a central role in coordinating board activities and ensuring operational continuity across all areas of the organization.

Before joining Genome Prairie, Faye held key administrative positions at the University of Manitoba and CancerCare Manitoba. Over the years, she has contributed to executive support, regional operations, and program coordination – developing a strong reputation for adaptability, attention to detail, and steady leadership.

Faye holds a Bachelor of Arts in Entrepreneurship and a diploma in Human Resource Management. Outside of work, she enjoys camping, fishing, and spending quality time with her family, while embracing opportunities to explore new cultures.

Manager, Communications and Stakeholder Relations: *Mr. Anthony Bassett*

Mr. Bassett leads Genome Prairie's communications and stakeholder engagement efforts, bringing over two decades of experience in public sector and non-profit leadership. Since joining the organization in 2022, Tony has advanced Genome Prairie's profile through strategic communications, public outreach, and meaningful partnerships with community and government stakeholders.

Prior to joining Genome Prairie, Tony held senior roles with organizations such as United Way of Canada, Inclusion Saskatchewan, the Saskatchewan Abilities Council, and the City of Prince Albert, where he directed corporate communications. He holds a Master of Political Science degree and has called the Saskatoon area home for over 25 years. Outside of work, Tony remains active in his community and is a passionate golfer always chasing a sub-80 round.

Manager, Programs: *Dr. Ifeoma Okwor*

Dr. Okwor joined Genome Prairie in 2021 as Manager of Programs, where she leads all post-award project management activities and collaborates closely with partners across Manitoba and Saskatchewan. Ifeoma's work ensures that funded projects remain on track, deliver value, and meet funder requirements, bridging science and administration to support impactful genomics research.

Ifeoma brings deep academic expertise to the role. She holds a Doctor of Veterinary Medicine (DVM), a Master's in Immunology, and a Ph.D. in Medical Microbiology. Prior to joining Genome Prairie, she contributed extensively to the research community at the University of Manitoba, publishing more than 25 peer-reviewed articles and receiving multiple awards for academic excellence and scientific contribution.

Beyond her professional commitments, Ifeoma is an active volunteer and a passionate advocate for community development.

Manger, Sector Innovation: *Ms. Rebecka Carroll*

Ms. Carroll leads Genome Prairie's sector innovation portfolio, where she focuses on identifying strategic opportunities and developing collaborative projects that apply omics-based research to real-world challenges in agriculture, health, and the environment. Working closely with the Chief Scientific Officer and Chief Executive Officer, Rebecka helps shape competitive funding proposals and facilitates partnerships across academia, government, and industry.

Rebecka brings over a decade of experience in technology transfer, research commercialization, and stakeholder engagement. Her academic background in molecular genetics, paired with an MBA in Technology Commercialization, equips her to bridge scientific innovation with economic impact. At Genome Prairie, she plays a central role in advancing regional innovation and positioning the Prairies as a leader in genomics-enabled development.

Program Coordinator: *Ms. Jelene Pugoy*

Ms. Pugoy joined Genome Prairie in 2023 as Program Coordinator, working closely with the Manager of Sector Innovation and Programs Manager to support pre-funding and post-funding award activities. In this role, she supports program delivery by managing pre-award activities, including coordinating applications, organizing review meetings, and ensuring proposal compliance. She oversees post-award tasks in tracking project milestones, managing reporting, and facilitating communications with teams and stakeholders.

Jelene holds a Bachelor of Environmental Design (B.Env.D), which enhances her strengths in organization, systems thinking, and problem-solving in support of advancing genomics research and innovation in the Prairies.

IMPACT AND OUTCOMES

Genome Prairie will deliver genomics impacts aligned with Genome Canada's mission and the priorities of Manitoba and Saskatchewan. We will focus on domains where our capabilities are strongest, and adoption pathways are clear. The examples that follow are illustrative of the outcomes we intend to enable, not a complete list.

1. Economic Growth

- Growth in Prairie's Bioeconomy.
- Growth in genomics research's contribution to Gross Domestic Product.

2. Jobs and Talent

- Increased number of highly qualified personnels available for transforming genomics research into market ready products.
- Provide platform for early career researchers to develop and contribute to the expansion of genomics ecosystem.
- Job creation through funded projects.

3. Commercialization and Adoption

- Growth in number of genomics research leading to commercialization.
- Increased interest in genomics technology adoption.

4. Sector Productivity and Resilience

- Agriculture: Increased adoption of climate-resilient and disease resistant crops by farmers in Manitoba and Saskatchewan.
- Health: Reduction in diagnostic wait times in Manitoba and Saskatchewan through genomic medicine.
- Environment: Contribute to environmental protection and sustainability through genomics solutions.

5. Partnerships and Investment Attraction

- Increased private investment in genomics research and Biotechnology innovations in Manitoba and Saskatchewan.
- Increased Indigenous engagement and partnership in genomics research in Manitoba and Saskatchewan.

CONCLUSION

The Genome Prairie Strategic Plan (2026-2030) represents both continuity and renewal, continuity in our role as a trusted regional partner within Canada's genomics enterprise, and renewal in our sharper focus on measurable impact, commercialization, and inclusive growth.

Over the next five years, Genome Prairie will build on its proven track record. This plan positions us to go further – strengthening organizational capacity, expanding Prairie-led research pipelines, and ensuring that discoveries move beyond the lab into real-world applications that create jobs, attract investment, and improve quality of life across Manitoba, Saskatchewan, and Canada.

Our objectives are clear:

- Advance genomics research aligned with Prairie strengths and national priorities.
- Strengthen organizational research capacity through diversified revenue, modernized systems, and talent development.
- Demonstrate impact by measuring outcomes, telling compelling stories, and deepening relationships with funders, Indigenous partners, industry, and communities.

Together, these commitments will ensure that every investment in genomics yields tangible benefits, from commercialization opportunities and GDP growth to leadership and early-career researcher development.

Genome Prairie enters its next chapter with confidence: a strong governance foundation, a skilled and committed team, and partnerships that span academia, industry, government, and community. Guided by our values of integrity, inclusion, excellence, and respect, we will continue to convene, catalyze, and deliver genomics innovation that is both future-ready and grounded in Prairie realities.

This plan is more than a strategy; it is a pledge to interested partners that Genome Prairie will remain a trusted steward of resources and a driver of regional and national impact. By linking discovery to adoption, research to commercialization, and ideas to positive economic and societal outcomes, we will ensure that genomics continues to serve as a cornerstone of growth, resilience, and well-being for the Prairies and beyond.

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