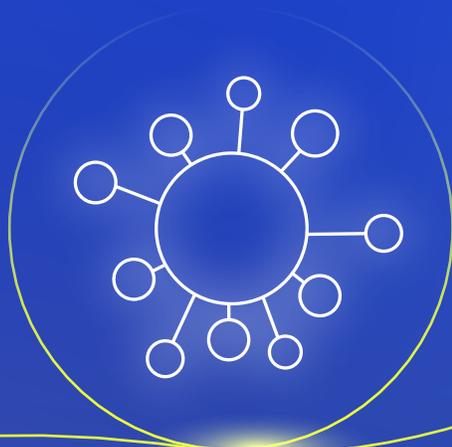


ACCELERATING INNOVATION, BOOSTING COMPETITIVENESS

QUÉBEC LIFE

SCIENCES STRATEGY

2025-2028



PREAMBLE

Life sciences is a strategic sector for Québec. It is central to the lives of Quebecers, generating both significant economic impacts and societal benefits. The sector employs close to 40,000 people, whose work injects nearly \$6.5 billion into Québec's economy each year. Its products and technologies are used every day, notably across the healthcare network to treat patients.

Yet the global economic and political landscape is evolving rapidly. The potential application of most-favoured-nation clauses and new U.S. tariffs in the short term could create major disruptions in global supply chains, research and development (R&D), and product costs. The effects are already visible through numerous life sciences investments announced in the United States. Québec now faces increasingly intense global competition for attracting clinical research projects and investment—key drivers of sector growth, particularly in emerging technologies.

To safeguard its strategic position, Québec must continue to support the sector. Such support is essential to maintain access to medicines and technologies within the healthcare system, ensuring that the population receives modern, innovative care. Although the challenges are significant, Québec has considerable strengths to address them. In this context, the Performance Branch of Ministère de la Santé et des Services sociaux has been tasked with reviewing the full pathway leading to the listing of medicines in Québec, to analyze barriers to access and identify ways to further reduce approval timelines. This reflects the government's strong commitment to maintaining Québec's leadership in Canada.

The Government of Québec is therefore renewing the Québec Life Sciences Strategy for 2025–2028, supported by nearly \$271.5 million in financial measures.

The government has established the following objectives:

- Support the growth and long-term viability of Québec-based life sciences companies
- Stimulate industrial innovation by leveraging Québec expertise
- Strengthen local production
- Facilitate local market access while supporting market diversification

Strategy targets have been adjusted to reflect global uncertainty, which makes forecasting more challenging. By 2028, the government aims to:

- Generate at least \$500 million in private investment to strengthen or expand local production capacity, including personalized biomanufacturing therapies and essential medicines for biosafety
- Support the establishment of a major anchor company within Québec's life sciences ecosystem
- Consolidate and develop new industrial subsectors in emerging fields
- Accelerate the integration of innovative therapies



OVERVIEW OF QUÉBEC'S LIFE SCIENCES SECTOR

Québec's life sciences sector includes:

More than 750 companies¹

Nearly 40,000 jobs, with an average annual salary of close to \$108,000

\$4.2 billion in exports

Numerous leading public and private research centers

World-renowned researchers

¹ Data from the 2022 census conducted by Ministère de l'Économie, de l'Innovation et de l'Énergie

QUÉBEC LIFE SCIENCES STRATEGY 2025–2028

The Strategy is structured around four main objectives that will guide government action over the next three years.

1. Support the growth and long-term viability of Québec-based companies

The government intends to:

- Strengthen the financing chain to support companies as they grow into anchor firms and encourage Québec companies to remain in the province
- Foster the emergence of new entrepreneurs and support them as they develop into senior leaders

Strengthening the financing chain

Bringing a new drug or technology to market requires significant time and capital, and involves substantial risk. A diverse range of financing sources must be mobilized at the right time to support company growth.

Venture capital activity in Québec's life sciences and health technologies sectors has expanded considerably over the past decade. However, additional efforts are required to meet entrepreneurs' capital needs.

To encourage private investment and improve access to capital across the financing chain, the government will implement the following measures:

Creation of the Fonds Impulsion

This new \$200 million fund announced in the 2025–2026 budget will provide early-stage investment capital to innovative biopharmaceutical and high-growth medical technology companies, helping them move through the pre-commercialization phase. The fund aims to generate at least \$45 million in life sciences investments.

Support for strategic investment initiatives

The government will invest \$50 million in major investment funds, alongside private and institutional partners. This will increase access to capital at various points along the financing chain.

Investissement Québec (IQ) direct investments

IQ's specialized life sciences team will invest approximately \$125 million in equity in promising Québec companies over the next three years.

Complementary measures

The government also invests in numerous capital funds listed through [Réseau Capital](#), which provides easy access to active life sciences investment funds by sector and stage of development.

Fostering the emergence of new entrepreneurs and supporting them in developing into senior leaders

Highly specialized talent development remains essential for industry growth. To achieve this, Québec benefits from a strong ecosystem of organizations that specialize in supporting high-potential innovative startups. These organizations provide high-quality incubation and acceleration services and offer access to an extensive network of advisors, mentors, investors, and experts who can assist companies with research, intellectual property, commercialization, and regulatory processes.

This ecosystem will be leveraged to promote:

- **Access to specialized advisory services and support** for startups and emerging entrepreneurs through powerful incubators and accelerators in the life sciences
- **Advanced training and mentorship** for experienced entrepreneurs, including support for business succession and scale-up activities

Given current geopolitical conditions, many industry experts are seeking to relocate outside the United States. This presents an opportunity for Québec companies to attract top talent and accelerate growth. The government will therefore promote Québec's strengths internationally to **attract senior leaders** who can help scale more mature companies.

2. Stimulate industrial innovation by leveraging Québec expertise

The U.S. government is overhauling its research financing programs and withdrawing support from a number of emerging fields with direct implications for public health. Québec must set itself apart by supporting innovation and building strong public-private collaboration. These shifts create opportunities for Québec to consolidate its leadership in emerging subsectors.

Québec must also continue efforts to encourage clinical studies, which give residents access to innovative therapies.

Renewing the Québec Life Sciences Strategy confirms the government's ongoing investment in innovation, specifically through public-private partnerships. Investments will support the following initiatives:

- **Support for Québec businesses investing in emerging sectors.** The government will encourage the emergence and development of future-oriented subsectors that will ensure the sustainability and growth of Québec's life sciences sector. These emerging areas include RNA-based therapies, which have already received significant investment in previous strategies, as well as promising new fields such as rare diseases and cell and gene therapies. The government also plans to leverage Investissement Québec International teams to attract companies that will complement and strengthen the local ecosystem.
- **Support will be provided for collaborative innovation projects** facilitated by Québec's two life sciences sectoral industrial research clusters (RSRIs): CQDM and MEDTEQ+.
- **Continuation of activities** to promote excellence in clinical research within Québec healthcare institutions. This initiative facilitates and accelerates clinical research projects conducted by pharmaceutical companies or contract research organizations in partnership with public healthcare institutions.
- **Continued efforts to coordinate access** to public expertise to support industrial research and innovation in medical and digital health technologies.

- **Support to maintain the expertise** necessary for accessing health information that fuels both public and private R&D. These initiatives will be carried out through collaboration between Ministère de l'Économie, de l'Innovation et de l'Énergie (MEIE), MSSS, and Fonds de recherche du Québec (FRQ), with a shared vision of leveraging health data for research purposes.

Additional information

- Health information is essential for research and innovation. With the adoption of the [Act respecting health and social services information](#), researchers not affiliated with health and social services organizations can now submit requests through Centre d'accès pour la recherche (CAR). The information can be found [here](#).
- CATALIS's mission is to improve Québec's clinical research environment to speed up the development of innovative patient care and maximize private investment. The organization's FAST Track Evaluation Service aims to authorize clinical trial projects within eight weeks and to bring total activation time to under 10 weeks.
- Sector companies can also call on contract research organizations (CROs), contract development and manufacturing organizations (CDMOs), and contract manufacturing organizations (CMOs) established and operating in Québec. These organizations offer a [wide range of services](#) covering all phases—from research to production of drugs, vaccines, and biologics—ensuring quality and regulatory compliance.

Photo : Umano Medical



3. Strengthen local production

Global trade disruptions and the uncertainty they create are prompting companies to reassess production, supply chain, and investment strategies.

For Québec, the challenge is to preserve industrial capacities and attract investment projects that will reinforce supply chains and ensure the availability of products and equipment—both in everyday operations and during crises—while promoting sustainable practices.

To achieve this, the government will:

- Support investment projects to establish new production capacities in Québec or increase the production and productivity of existing companies
- Work with the federal government to secure national supply chains for critical and strategic health products

4. Facilitate access to local, national, and international markets

Local market access

The healthcare network is often the first market for Québec life sciences companies. Entering this market accelerates growth and represents a first step toward export opportunities.

Market conditions have a direct impact on the industry.

- Delays in market access affect both patient access to innovative medicines and investment decisions by global pharmaceutical companies. Québec, however, offers a unique market advantage in North America, as its public drug insurance program provides coverage for the entire population.
- The pricing of generic medications drives production abroad to emerging countries, compromising the reliability of our supply.

Québec must therefore support the sustainability of its local market and the competitiveness of local companies using all available tools, including public procurement, while remaining financially responsible.

To this end, MEIE will continue working closely with MSSS through measures such as:

- **A forum for strategic dialogue** connecting industry with government representatives to address innovative drug access and local production challenges, including generics.
- Québec will join other provinces under the pan-Canadian Pharmaceutical Alliance (pCPA) for a **new negotiation process aimed at reducing negotiation timelines** by four to six months for certain cancer medications.
- **Optimizing provincial access to innovative medicines** to improve care and encourage pharmaceutical investment in Québec. As announced on October 3, 2025, MSSS will accelerate new drug listings in 2026, increasing updates from 9 to 12 per year for both the general drug insurance plan and healthcare institution drug lists.
- **Evaluation by MSSS of the entire process for listing medications in Québec** in order to analyze access issues and identify additional improvements that could help shorten listing delays.
- Increasing the number of **local pharmaceutical companies integrated into the supply chains** of the health and social services network.

- **Integrating Québec-made innovative medical technologies** through value-based procurement and system-wide cultural change.
- **Continuing efforts by Comité stratégique d'innovation (CSI) and Réseau des répondants en innovation (RRI)** to scale Québec medical technology innovations essential for a more human, efficient, and high-performing healthcare system.

National and international market access

The government will continue to promote Québec's life sciences sector internationally in order to attract new private investment and partnerships. It will also support Québec companies in expanding their exports and diversifying their markets through:

- **International promotion and communication initiatives**
- **Participation in international events**

Additional resources

In collaboration with MEIE, IQ offers three programs to help Québec exporting companies address customs tariffs and diversify their markets:

- **Panorama** is for seasoned exporters seeking to expand into new markets. Funding is available with personalized support.
- **FRONTIERE** supports the liquidity needs of manufacturing or primary-sector companies whose revenues are significantly impacted by new U.S. tariffs.
- **ESSOR** supports innovation and productivity so companies can become more competitive, diversify their markets, and sustain growth.

Adapting the Strategy to uncertainty

The current context is marked by uncertainty, including threats of targeted tariffs on the life sciences industry and other geopolitical, demographic, and climate-related challenges. For this reason, the Strategy must be continually adapted.

To this end, a committee of sector leaders and industry associations will review the Strategy every six months. This committee will oversee the implementation of announced measures and recommend adjustments as needed in response to changes in the global or Québec context. Ministers involved in implementing the Strategy will be invited to participate in these meetings.

