

Media Release

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for immediate release

GSU launches Innovation Centre- The Workshop

(Sudbury, ON)- Greater Sudbury Utilities hosted local dignitaries and community partners today at the launch of **The Workshop**, GSU's new Innovation and Collaboration Centre. **The Workshop** is not only a space in GSU's facility at 500 Regent, it is also a process of taking ideas from origin to end-product by working in multi-departmental teams, which will often include external community partners such as local businesses and post-secondary educational institutions.

"We view The Workshop as a huge opportunity," said Frank Kallonen, GSU CEO. "We think it's a great way to enhance our customer experience, eliminate pain points in our organization, and to increase cost effectiveness by reducing costs or increasing revenues through product development. We also view it as a potential tool to spur economic development in Greater Sudbury, as any products we get to commercialization, we would insist be built here."

Kallonen added, "Arguably the biggest goal is to empower our staff. We know millennials value not only a good salary and job security, they also want to make a difference in their workplace and see their ideas come to fruition. Attracting and retaining talented young professionals is hugely important to us."

GSU, which includes affiliates Greater Sudbury Hydro, @home Energy, Agilis Networks and Convergen, has developed software for idea submission, and a process to curate the ideas, get input from other staff who may wish to contribute, and develop business cases for those that seem to be worthwhile.



“Getting a project into **The Workshop** will be something that anyone in our organization can do,” said Innovation Officer Andrew Athanasopoulos. “Not all ideas will make it. We’ll pick the ones that have the greatest benefit, value or potential for success, and give teams finite periods of time to move their projects forward, reporting on progress regularly.”

“We will have successes, but we will also have some projects that don’t work out,” said Kallonen. “We expect that. But if some fail, they’ll fail early, and minimize our risk. The point is, nothing changes unless you change the way you do things. You can’t get better unless you figure out ways to be better. That’s what **The Workshop** is all about.”

GSU became one of the first Canadian community-owned utility companies to formally adopt a Corporate Innovation Policy in April 2016.

“As a board, we wanted to enhance our culture of innovation, creativity and collaboration within the Organization—making it a dynamic company to do business with and an exciting place to work,” said GSU Board Chair Mark Signoretti. “We believe we are creating a value proposition for our staff, our customers, our shareholder and the communities we serve.”

GSU has launched the Idea Input Portal internally for now, eventually, they expect to have a site accessible to the broader community.

GSU is incorporated under the Ontario Business Act, and has one shareholder, the City of Greater Sudbury, represented by the Mayor and Council.

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