

Niall Kerrigan

Senior Program Officer, Genome Alberta
MBT Class of 2015

Niall is currently the Senior Program Officer with Genome Alberta where he is using his skills and expertise in genomics and partnership development to advance the life sciences innovation sector in Alberta. Niall's work has resulted in significant investments into research spanning a huge variety of sectors including human health, forestry, energy, and agriculture.



Niall credits the MBT program for giving him many of the skills and knowledge required to build successful research projects and partnerships and ensure innovations make it out of the research environment in meaningful ways. The MBT modules around intellectual property, financial valuation, and clinical development are all put to very good use on a daily basis as he works to build promising research projects. The creative process of developing a life science innovation combined with practical exercises in pitching the concept in the MBT program have also given him the necessary skills to distill complex research projects into concise and attractive investment opportunities.

On the environmental side of things, Niall has supported projects that sequence the genetic material in a sample to understand and exploit the function of microbes in remediating oil-contaminated environments and mitigating corrosion of oil & gas infrastructure. In the forestry sector, genome sequencing of economically important tree species is being used to identify and select trees with traits that make them much more resilient to climate change and invasive species. Similarly, in the agriculture sector, Niall has worked closely with industry partners who are using genome sequencing to develop livestock that are more efficient, disease resilient, and emit less greenhouse gases during production. Niall has also been involved in many projects advancing genomics innovations into routine clinical use. Genomics plays a central role in the precision health paradigm through applications like stratifying patients undergoing cancer treatment or using whole genome sequencing to uncover the genetic mechanisms causing disease in children presenting with rare diseases.

During the MBT program, Niall found the networking opportunities and enthusiasm from the local community in quality of graduates from the program very inspiring. Niall settled on a practicum opportunity with Genome Alberta where he was able to explore biotechnology applications outside of human health applications. He continues to be engaged with alumni from the program and is always open to supporting current and prospective students.

Outside of the industry, Niall is a very active supporter of the local music scene where he also runs a small production group focused on creative pop-up events. He can regularly be found most weekends in the mountains pursuing snowboarding, backcountry skiing, and hiking activities.