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Vale establishes institute to promote scientific and technological research

Vale's challenges in the 21st century are the same as those faced by today's society. How can we produce and preserve at the same time? How can we provide comfort and wellbeing without harming future generations? The solutions to these questions lie in the development of new technologies, the production of clean energy from renewable sources, nature conservation and man's integration within the environment. With these challenges on the horizon, Vale created the Vale Technology Institute (ITV), a nonprofit institution designed to promote postgraduate research and teaching, focusing on innovation in strategic areas.

Discussions about ITV's underlying concepts began in 2007. The institute's goal is to coordinate Vale's science and technology actions, emphasizing long-term research projects conducted in partnership with the Brazilian and international scientific communities. Through this initiative, Vale aims to expand scientific research output and technology-based economic development in Brazil, as well as generating and sharing knowledge to spur socioeconomic, environmental and mining industry-related development.

Since it was established, the institute has entered into 97 research and development agreements, provided more than 50 research scholarships, and created partnerships with 36 Brazilian and international institutions, including Brazil's agricultural research institute, Embrapa, the National Council for Scientific and Technological Development (CNPq), the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) and the École Polytechnique Fédérale de Lausanne (EPFL) in Switzerland.

ITV has also established groundbreaking partnerships with the state research foundations of Minas Gerais, São Paulo and Pará, involving total investment of R\$120 million, to promote scientific and technological research projects in mining, energy, eco-efficiency, biodiversity and steelmaking processes. This is the largest public-private research partnership ever seen in Brazil. Announced in 2009, the partnerships with the foundations are now in the project award phase. So far, 117 research projects have been approved - 57 individual and 60 as part of a network whereby researchers from the selected states carry out studies together.

In addition to these research partnerships, ITV is building a series of facilities across Brazil to be staffed by world-class researchers. Initially, the institute will invest R\$350 million in two research centers in the states of Minas Gerais (Ouro Preto) and Pará (Belém).

Both centers will focus on a specific theme: the mining of the future in Minas Gerais and sustainable development in Pará. They will each accommodate an average of 300 professionals, including professors and students, of whom at least 60 will be researchers with doctorates and post-doctorates.

The ITV research centers will be landmarks in terms of their cutting-edge architectural design, offering an inclusive, stimulating and safe workplace. Both centers will feature efficient energy generation and usage systems, reduced water use, rainwater collection, and materials with a low environmental impact.

From the very start, ITV has had an international mindset, arranging for researchers in Brazil and other countries to work together as part of a network of international research institutes. The idea is to involve a broad range of actors, bringing

benefits for society, since local development will be promoted, and for Vale, given that value will be added to its business as it develops its network of relationships with the domestic and international scientific communities.

The ITV centers will also offer postgraduate courses and invest in the creation of technology-based enterprises, focusing on the development of entrepreneurs and the creation of business incubators. This will enable the technologies and research developed at the institute to be transformed into businesses with high potential for growth and innovation.

"The idea is that interaction between the company, universities and government entities will stimulate high-quality scientific output, and therefore make the institutions better able to attract government funds. This will generate a virtuous cycle that will benefit the whole community," says Luiz Mello, director of the Vale Technology Institute.

More information



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