

## MES Program Student Develops Sustainable Strategy for International Company

Source: [Mitacs Success Stories October 2014](#)

The rising awareness of environmental pollution and its effects on living organisms are leading companies to re-examine their business practices. Many organizations have adopted sustainable development strategies such as recycling and reducing carbon emissions. For most SMEs like Knowlton Development Corporation (KDC), developing innovative sustainable initiatives is a major challenge that requires both financial and qualified resources.

KDC is a manufacturer of personal care products with facilities in Ontario, Quebec and the USA. The company connected with Kathryn Battista, Mitacs Accelerate intern and graduate student in Master's in Environment & Sustainability at Western University, for a research project aimed at enhancing KDC's environmental practices under the supervision of Professor Ian Colquhoun from the Department of Anthropology.

“Kathryn’s internship focused specifically on designing and implementing boundaries around our waste management,” says Sonya D’Cunha, Director of Sustainability at KDC.

During her Mitacs Accelerate research project, Kathryn conducted an audit to determine the kinds of waste generated at KDC, their volume, frequency and locations. This crucial information enabled her to design an efficient Waste Management Plan that will be implemented in all company facilities in both Canada and the USA. She also signed up KDC for the Materials Exchange Program, an alternative solution that enables businesses to post waste materials online that other companies might want to purchase.

For Sonya D’Cunha, the Mitacs Accelerate program provided support the company needed to further its sustainability program. “Mitacs Accelerate proved to be ideal for us. It gave us a greater incentive to move forward with our new environmental initiatives.”

Thanks to the experience gained during her Mitacs Accelerate internship, Kathryn got a full time position at an environmentally-focused non-profit. “I had a fantastic time at KDC. Everything I learned through my entire internship set me up and gave me the experience I needed for my new job,” says Kathryn.

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