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# News Release

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## GOVERNMENT OF CANADA INVESTS IN NEW STRATEGIC RESEARCH NETWORKS

### *Canada's Economic Action Plan is helping Propel Manufacturing in Canada*

OTTAWA, February 2, 2010 — The Honourable Tony Clement, Minister of Industry, today announced funding for several groundbreaking, large-scale, multidisciplinary research projects. These projects will play an important role in connecting academic researchers to Canadian organizations in an effort to propel new knowledge generation and technology applications for the benefit of Canadians right now. The grants, totalling \$56 million over five years, from the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada (NSERC) will support 11 research networks focused on areas of social and economic importance. The networks will create new market opportunities for various sectors, including manufacturing and forestry. Minister Clement made the announcement during a keynote address at the Canadian Manufacturers & Exporters conference held today in Ottawa.

“Our government’s investments in science and technology are creating jobs, stimulating the economy and improving Canadians’ quality of life,” noted Minister Clement. “We are investing more in innovation than ever before in Canada’s history. By supporting the research being done by these networks, we are building the economy of tomorrow and helping our universities blaze the way to greater long-term prosperity and innovation that will benefit Canadians for years to come.”

“Each of these 11 research networks will accelerate research in areas that could strongly enhance Canada’s economy,” added NSERC President Suzanne Fortier. “Research networks also offer enhanced training opportunities for highly qualified people and facilitate knowledge transfer and mobilization to put research and development to work in communities across the country.”

Each research network will receive between \$4.8 million and \$5.3 million over five years to create strategic partnerships that bring together university researchers, industry and government. They have been chosen through a peer-reviewed competition. The 11 networks are:

- NSERC Biomaterials and Chemicals Strategic Network, University of British Columbia;
- NSERC Canadian Integrated Multi-Trophic Aquaculture Network (CIMTAN) for the development of responsible aquaculture, University of New Brunswick;



- NSERC Canadian Network for Research and Innovation in Machining Technology (CANRIMT), University of British Columbia;
- NSERC Digital Surface Software Application Network (SurfNet), University of Calgary;
- NSERC Green Fibre Network, McGill University;
- NSERC's HydroNet: A national research network to promote sustainable hydropower and healthy aquatic ecosystems, Université de Montréal;
- NSERC Network for New Manufacturing Technologies for Plastic Systems, University of Toronto;
- NSERC Photovoltaic Innovation Network, McMaster University;
- NSERC Strategic Network for the production of single-type glycoform monoclonal antibodies (MabNet), University of Manitoba;
- NSERC Strategic Network on Innovative Wood Products and Building Systems, University of New Brunswick; and
- NSERC Strategic Network on Value Chain Optimization, Université Laval.

NSERC is a federal agency whose vision is to help make Canada a country of discoverers and innovators to the benefit of all Canadians. The agency supports some 28 000 students and post-doctoral fellows in their advanced studies. NSERC promotes discovery by funding more than 11 800 professors every year and fosters innovation by encouraging more than 1500 Canadian companies to participate and invest in post-secondary research projects.

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## **Backgrounder**

### **2009 Strategic Network Grants**

The objective of the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council's Strategic Network Grants (SNG) is to increase research and training in targeted areas that could strongly enhance Canada's economy, society and/or environment within the next ten years.

The program funds large-scale, multi-disciplinary research projects in targeted research areas that require a network approach and that involve collaboration between academic researchers and Canadian-based organizations. The award recipients should be established researchers with solid track records in collaborative research, student training and grant management, and who demonstrate the leadership and other skills necessary for managing complex, interdisciplinary, multi-institutional projects.

The following 11 networks were awarded a total \$56 million over five years through the 2009 SNG:

- NSERC Biomaterials and Chemicals Strategic Network will develop technologies based upon cost effective harvesting of biomass. Research in this area will explore efficient biofuels and rapid processing of residues such as short cellulose fibre. This network is led by biochemist Dr. John Kadla of the University of British Columbia.
- NSERC Canadian Integrated Multi-Trophic Aquaculture Network is focused on developing balanced systems for aquaculture species for environmental sustainability, economic stability and social acceptability. Canada is at the forefront of the research and development of this concept. This network is led by biologist Dr. Thierry Chopin of the University of New Brunswick.
- NSERC Canadian Network for Research and Innovation in Machining Technology (CANRIMT) is focused on modeling, analysis, monitoring and control of machining processes for manufacturing automation. This network is led by mechanical engineer Dr. Yusuf Altintas of the University of British Columbia.
- NSERC Digital Surface Software Application Network (SurfNet) will generate new knowledge and technology relevant to digital surfaces, including improved understanding of human interactions with digital surfaces. This network is led by Dr. Frank Maurer of the University of Calgary's Department of Computer Science.
- NSERC Green Fibre Network will develop fine papers made in combination with Canadian softwood chemical pulps that will provide a competitive solution to the tropical, short-rotation species grown in other countries. This network is led by chemist Dr. Theodorus van de Ven of McGill University.

- NSERC's HydroNet: A national research network to promote sustainable hydropower and healthy aquatic ecosystems is a national research network to promote sustainable hydropower and healthy aquatic ecosystems. This network is led by biologist Dr. Daniel Boisclair of Université de Montréal.
- NSERC Network for New Manufacturing Technologies for Plastic Systems will develop innovative manufacturing technologies for high value-added plastics with applications based on four targeted plastics systems: biomaterials, lightweight hybrid composite materials, micro- and nano-structured polymeric materials, and microcellular foams. This network is led by mechanical and industrial engineer Dr. Chul Park of the University of Toronto.
- NSERC Photovoltaic Innovation Network will provide a knowledge and technology base that will allow Canadian companies to compete in a burgeoning global market place for solar energy. This network is led by engineer Dr. Rafael Kleiman of McMaster University.
- NSERC Strategic Network for the production of single-type glycoform monoclonal antibodies (MabNet) will look at strategies for the large-scale production of single-type glycoform monoclonal antibodies (“Mabs”), which are used in the treatment of cancer, rheumatoid arthritis and coronary disease and more. This network is led by microbiologist Dr. Michael Butler of the University of Manitoba.
- NSERC Strategic Network in Innovative Wood Products and Building Systems that will apply new technologies in wood-based materials into sustainable building systems such as wood-biopolymer-based composite materials. This network is led by Dr. Ying Chui of the University of New Brunswick’s Faculty of Forestry and Environmental Management.
- NSERC Strategic Network on Value Chain Optimization is aimed at optimizing efficiencies across the supply chain, from harvesting trees to bringing a product to market. This network is led by mechanical engineer Dr. Sophie D’Amours of Université Laval.