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Alberta and Quebec to collaborate on information technology & telecommunications research projects

(Calgary and Montreal) – Alberta and Quebec, both leaders in new technology research, will work together to develop pan-Canadian research initiatives that support the emerging high-tech sector, according to a new agreement signed this week.

The two organizations – the Alberta Informatics Circle of Research Excellence (iCORE), and Partnerships for Research on Microelectronics, Photonics and Telecommunications (PROMPT-Québec) – have signed an agreement to develop specific means to promote collaborative research between Alberta and Québec in information and communications technology.

“We want to see the development of jointly funded research initiatives involving researchers from both Alberta and Québec,” says Dr Brian Unger, President and CEO of iCORE.

“Both provinces have an extraordinary pool of highly qualified expertise which, through the synergy resulting from this agreement, will be leveraged to provide even greater value to industry and thus greater scope and financial support for research activities,” says Dr. Charles Despins, President of PROMPT-Québec.

The agreement will actively foster and produce pan-Canadian research initiatives in areas already supported by iCORE, through research partnerships in network and wireless communications, one of iCORE’s target research areas.

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Backgrounders attached.

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About iCORE

iCORE works to attract exceptional researchers to Alberta in the field of informatics, that is, areas of computer science, electrical and computer engineering, physics, mathematics and other disciplines related to information and communications technology (ICT). iCORE invests in people – the highest caliber research scientists who work on fundamental and applied problems in informatics. Around these leaders, world-class research teams are developed. It was established in October 1999 by the Government of Alberta to foster world-class university-based research that supports the ICT sector.

Three primary clusters, supported by over 200 iCORE-funded researchers, are developing in:

- **Networks and Wireless Communications** (such as wireless communications, Internet protocols, protocol design and performance analysis, cryptography and secure systems integration)
 - **Intelligent Software Systems** (including artificial intelligence, machine learning, intelligent systems, software systems, distributed systems including grid computing, very large database systems, and computational science)
 - **Nanoscale and Quantum Informatics** (for example, quantum computing, molecular computing, and nanocomputing)
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iCORE operates grant programs to cultivate and expand the development of these teams:

Chair Establishment Grants (CPE Grants)

to establish Chair and Professor positions in ICT and associated research teams

Industrial Chair Establishment Grants (ICE Grants)

to establish Industrial Research Chairs and associated research teams

Visiting Professor Grants (VP Grants)

to support Visiting Professors at Alberta universities for six months to two years

Recruitment Grants (ISPR Grants)

To assist university faculty members with ICT strategy, planning, and recruiting

Graduate Student Scholarships

to support graduate students in computer science, electrical and computer engineering who hold an NSERC Post Graduate Scholarship.

For more information, visit www.icore.ca.

About PROMPT-Québec

PROMPT-Québec, a non-profit organisation recently incorporated in 2003, is devoted to enhance industry's competitive edge through partnerships with Québec's university research community. PROMPT-Québec's specific objectives are:

- Improve the sector's economic performance;
- Strengthen links between industry and academia;
- Create the scientific and technology environment required to attract new private investment;
- Increase industry support through university partnerships for pre-competitive research or targeting product development;
- Create partnerships between researchers for the development of major R & D projects;
- Increase the pool of highly qualified personnel;
- Foster the emergence of start-up companies.

In order to achieve these objectives, PROMPT-Québec is focusing its activity on providing "Research Capital" and on a "Research Broker" offering.

The "Research Capital" orientation includes the pre-competitive R&D funding for the "Major Projects" and "Special Projects" launched in 2003 through a cooperative R&D grant competition within Québec's academic community. As such, twelve large-scale partnerships with close industry-university collaboration have initially been created.

In addition to funding pre-competitive R&D partnerships, PROMPT-Québec will seek to provide "Research Capital" to support prototyping, proof-of-concept and product development activities for early-stage companies by developing partnerships with the venture capital community.

PROMPT-Québec's "Research Broker" function provides a forum to further leverage public investments in R&D skills and infrastructure, a convergence point of expertise as well as a complete information and referral source for industry and a virtual technology showcase for Québec.

Through all its activities, PROMPT-Québec gathers together researchers, entrepreneurs, the investment sector, government representatives and specialized media in order to create a broad-based community that represents the key players in the microelectronics, photonics and telecommunications industry.

For more information, visit www.promptquebec.com