

PRESS RELEASE
For immediate release
CNW 01 and weeklies in Estrie and Montérégie

Canada-Québec Agreement – Knowledge Infrastructure Program

The Canadian and Québec governments announce the awarding of almost \$178 million to Université de Sherbrooke to build Centre d'innovation en microélectronique in partnership with IBM and DALSA, part of a planned investment of over \$218 million.

Bromont, September 1, 2009 – Québec Premier Jean Charest; the Hon. Christian Paradis, federal Minister of Public Works and Government Services; the Minister of Economic Development, Innovation and Export Trade Clément Gignac; and Brome-Missisquoi MNA Pierre Paradis today announced the awarding of funding to Université de Sherbrooke as part of the Knowledge Infrastructure Program, to build a center for microelectronics innovation.

Total investment in this project amounts to \$218.45 million. Industry Canada is contributing \$82.95 million, Ministère du Développement économique, de l'Innovation et de l'Exportation, \$94.9 million, and the industrial partners IBM Bromont, DALSA Semiconducteurs Inc., and equipment suppliers \$40.6 million. The project aims to create an international center of excellence for assembling electronic microchips and microelectromechanical systems (MEMS). The center will carry out research and development (R&D) in Technoparc Bromont on packaging microsystems and electronic microchips. This project will bring together 250 industry and university researchers and safeguard over 3,000 jobs in the field of microelectronics in Québec.

The project will also help create a true microelectronics cluster in Québec, which will fit very strategically into the northeastern North America microelectronics corridor, stretching from East Fishkill in New York State to Bromont and representing 35,000 jobs.

“The center will be a key link in the microelectronics chain and will provide Canada with a clear business advantage, by forging an innovative university–business partnership and creating a competitive and thriving business environment. This facility will strengthen Québec’s position as a world leader in microchip packaging technologies and ensure our companies’ competitiveness,” stressed Premier Jean Charest.

“The center for innovation is banking on a unique partnership between Université de Sherbrooke and industry to strengthen Canada’s industrial development potential internationally, provide training for a highly qualified workforce, and ensure the development of cutting edge research in microelectronics,” added the Hon. Christian Paradis.

“This announcement stems from months of work involving Université de Sherbrooke and entrepreneurs in the sector, as well as a number of other actors, including the Québec government. The project marks the birth of a value chain that could eventually match the Québec economy’s flagship innovation sectors—life sciences, aerospace, and computer technologies. The project will reinforce the excellence of publicly funded research in Québec,” stated Minister Clément Gignac.

“Building this center will create a number of highly specialized jobs. This is great news for the City of Bromont and for the Montérégie and Estrie regions. Such projects recognize the expertise present in the regions and help attract a highly qualified workforce,” declared Brome-Missisquoi MNA Pierre Paradis.

“Université de Sherbrooke is always ready to meet new innovation challenges by reinventing ways of working with business, government, and the communities in which it is established. Thanks to the creation of the center for innovation, Université de Sherbrooke will benefit from new facilities that will boost the quality and number of its international research partnerships by keeping renowned researchers in Québec and attracting others,” added Luce Samoisette, Rector of Université de Sherbrooke.

“IBM has an impressive track record in microelectronics innovation, and Bromont is just one of numerous achievements in this field. In the new center for innovation, our competent, experienced staff will work with our partners in defining the future of microelectronics and strengthening Québec’s and Canada’s position in the forefront of the global technology industry,” indicated Dan Fortin, CEO of IBM Canada.

“Innovation has played a fundamental role in DALSA’s past successes and is just as important to our future achievements,” concluded DALSA CEO Brian Doody. “So we are delighted to be a founding partner of the 200 mm and 3D microelectronic systems (MEMS) manufacturing unit at the new innovation center.”

The mission of Centre d’innovation en microélectronique is to be an international pioneer in packaging the next generation of microchips. Its role will be to choose technologies for cutting out the microchips, linking them electrically to innovative packages (like 3D packs), managing heat dissipation, and testing them and preparing them for shipment. The Center will also work on designing packages for future generations of microelectronic systems (MEMS).

Based on proven university-business partnership models, the Center will be an essential link in the microelectronics ecosystem in the northeastern part of the continent, one of the world’s biggest hubs in this field. The Centre will serve as the interface between university and industrial research and the manufacturing of complex microsystems.

This huge short term investment is a boon to the measures and actions in Québec’s Infrastructure Plan and its Research and Innovation Strategy, which once implemented will have represented an investment of over \$1.2 billion by the Québec government since its launch in 2006. It also backs efforts under the Regional Development Strategy in All Regions Via Sectors of Excellence. The construction of this facility is central to implementing the action plan for the ACCORD Micro/Nanotechnologies for cutting edge electronics sector, a sector in which manufacturers in Montérégie and Estrie are combining their strengths.

The Knowledge Infrastructure Program at a Glance

The agreement signed by the Canadian and Québec governments is part of the Knowledge Infrastructure Program, a \$2 billion dollar, two-year initiative that aims to upgrade infrastructures in colleges and universities and stimulate the economy. The projects include new buildings and active maintenance, renovation, repairs, and maintenance.

For more information on the Knowledge Infrastructure Program visit www.ic.gc.ca/infrastructure-savoir.

To follow the progress of the Québec Infrastructure Program, visit www.infrastructures.gouv.qc.ca.

- 30 -

Sources:

Hugo D'Amours
Press Secretary
Office of the Premier of Québec
418-643-5321

Mary-Ann Dewey-Plante
Press Secretary
Office of the Minister of Public Works and
Government Services
613-218-6961

Anne-Sophie Desmeules
Press Relations Officer
Office of the Minister of Economic Development,
Innovation and Export
418-691-5650

Jean-Guy Fournier, Communications Director,
IBM - Bromont
450-534-6389
jafourni@ca.ibm.com

Joanne Fortin , Communications Director, IBM
Canada
514-964-8558
fortin@ca.ibm.com

Patrick Myles
Vice President, Communications
DALSA
519-886-6001, ext. 2177
patrick.myles@dalsa.com

Université de Sherbrooke
Caroline Dubois, Media Relations Advisor,
Université de Sherbrooke
819-821-8000, ext. 63395;
caroline.dubois4@usherbrooke.ca

To keep up-to-date on breaking news, subscribe to Ministère du Développement économique, de l'Innovation et de l'Exportation press releases at <http://www.mdeie.gouv.qc.ca/rss>.