

Accelerating the pace of research in Canada

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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The Shared Hierarchical Academic Research Computing Network (SHARCNET) and the High Performance Computing Virtual Laboratory (HPCVL), two of Canada's foremost High Performance Computing (HPC) facilities, have joined forces to better serve the Ontario research community.

Distinct in operation and organization, HPCVL and SHARCNET share a common mission to accelerate research results by providing state-of-the-art computational resources and services to researchers in a variety of disciplines.

Today, the two organizations announced an agreement to coordinate their activities in the provision of HPC resources and services to members of both communities.

The result? A more efficient and cost-effective solution that will benefit members of both organizations, the Ontario research community, and moving forward, the country as well, says Carmen Gicante, SHARCNET Executive Director.

"We are moving toward the creation of a provincial HPC research culture," confirms Gicante. "Our partnership with HPCVL will strengthen this initiative and greatly enhance the opportunities for Ontario researchers, and ultimately, Canadian industries and citizens as well."

Ken Edgecombe, Executive Director of HPCVL, agrees.

"The coordination of resources and services by HPCVL and SHARCNET is key to maintaining a strong and innovative research base in Ontario and in Canada. Having two of the leading providers of HPC resources coordinate to leverage public and private sector funded infrastructure will accelerate the pace of Canadian research. Our clients will benefit from access to these resources to push their research forward."

Both SHARCNET and HPCVL were established with considerable support from federal and provincial granting agencies, namely the Canada Foundation for Innovation (CFI), the Ontario Innovation Trust (OIT), and the Ontario Research and Development Challenge Fund (ORDCF).

The CFI is an independent corporation established by the Government of Canada in 1997 to strengthen the capacity of Canadian universities, colleges, research hospitals, and other non-profit research organizations to carry out world-class research and technology development.

The ORDCF, together with the OIT, are key research investment arms of the Ontario government and form the heart of the province's strategy to keep Ontario competitive in the knowledge based global economy. Ontario's capacity to retain highly qualified researchers and scientists depends on investment in quality research facilities, state-of-the-art equipment and technology.

This partnership represents a significant step forward in the strategy to establish Canada as global leader in research and development.



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BACKGROUNDER

What is High Performance Computing (HPC)?

HPC is the technology that is used to provide solutions to problems that require significant computational power or need to process very large amounts of data quickly. In Ontario, HPC accelerates the production of research results of benefit to our industries, the economy and society in general.

About HPCVL (www.hpcvl.org)

The High Performance Computing Virtual Laboratory (HPCVL) was formed by a consortium of four universities (Carleton University, Queen's University, The Royal Military College of Canada, and the University of Ottawa) to provide researchers from the founding institutions and institutions from elsewhere in Canada with the secure High Performance Computing (HPC) resources they need to conduct innovative research in a broad spectrum of disciplines. Over 100 research groups from across Canada have been using HPCVL and that number continues to grow.

HPCVL has been awarded funding by the Ontario Research and Development Challenge Fund (ORDCF), the Canada Foundation for Innovation (CFI), the Ontario Innovation Trust (OIT), and NSERC. In addition, it has formed partnerships with Sun Microsystems, Numerical Algorithms Group, and Entrust Inc. to provide one of the best HPC environments for research in the world. With Entrust and Sun, HPCVL has developed and is deploying a Secure Grid Portal that will protect Intellectual Property and help researchers meet compliance and regulatory guidelines.

About SHARCNET (www.sharcnet.ca)

The Shared Hierarchical Academic Research Computing Network (SHARCNET) is a multi-institutional high performance computing (HPC) institute, which accelerates the production of research results in the natural and social sciences, engineering and business, as well as acts as a development and testing platform for HPC tools and techniques.

Formally established in June 2001, SHARCNET consists of a consortium of 11 geographically-distributed HPC clusters at academic institutions across South Central Ontario. The consortium is led by the University of Western Ontario, and includes the Universities of Guelph, McMaster, Wilfrid Laurier, Windsor, Waterloo, Brock, Ontario Institute of Technology and York, and colleges Fanshawe and Sheridan. SHARCNET is founded on academic-industrial collaboration. Its industrial partners include Hewlett Packard, Platform Computing, Bell Canada, Nortel Networks, Quadrics Ltd, and the Optical Regional Advanced Network of Ontario (ORANO).

SHARCNET is generously supported by the Canada Foundation for Innovation (CFI), Ontario Innovation Trust (OIT), Ontario Research and Development Challenge Fund (ORDCF), as well as by its institutional members and industrial partners.



About the Ontario Research and Development Challenge Fund
(www.ontariochallengefund.com)

Created by the Ontario government, the Ontario Research and Development Challenge Fund promotes world-class research of interest to the private sector; encourages collaboration between the private sector and research institutions; attracts and retains top scientists and enables talented young scientists to pursue their research interests; and helps Ontario's research institutions build their R&D capacity, so they are able to obtain funding from other sources. Through the Challenge Fund, the province is investing \$484.3 million in 113 research projects. Private sector and research institution partners are investing an additional \$1.2 billion bringing the total value of Challenge Fund supported research projects to \$1.7 billion.

About the Ontario Innovation Trust (www.oit.on.ca)

Established by the Ontario government, the Ontario Innovation Trust is assisting the province's universities, hospitals, colleges and other non-profit research organizations to carry out scientific research and technology development by enhancing the infrastructure needed for research. To date, the Trust has announced investments of more than \$682.2 million to support 925 research projects.

About the Canada Foundation for Innovation (www.innovation.ca)

The Canada Foundation for Innovation (CFI)-an innovation in its own right-was created as an independent organization by the federal government in 1997. The non-government status of CFI, plus its dedication to responding to funding priorities defined by research institutions across the country, ensures the credibility of its awards. It is this credibility that has won support from provincial governments and private sector partners. CFI funding matched by these partners ensures that Canada's best and brightest can stay here to perform leading-edge research with modern tools in world-class environments.

The initial federal investment of \$800 million to kick-start the CFI has grown to \$3.65 billion and, when matched by provincial and private sector partners and including accumulated interest, is expected to generate a critical mass of investment in excess of \$9 billion by 2010.

