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Media Release

Communiqué

Université de Sherbrooke researcher to lead national research team investigating creating quieter rides for vehicle passengers

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Sherbrooke, PQ: Low frequency noise such as the sound of rough pavement under tires or a noisy heater spouting hot air can easily aggravate the most patient driver. Most of today's cars use advanced systems to reduce interior noise for passengers, but a national research team being led by a Université de Sherbrooke professor is investigating ways to incorporate new acoustic materials to help block or reduce noise. Dr. Noureddine Atalla, a mechanical engineering professor, is coordinating the team that consists of researchers at the University of Ottawa, University of Toronto and Université de Sherbrooke. The team was recently awarded funding of up to \$951,000 from the AUTO21 Network of Centres of Excellence and several industry supporters.

The project is developing new non-homogenous acoustic materials and active noise control strategies that enhance sound absorption and attenuation at low frequencies. These materials (foams, fibres, felts) are used extensively in automotive sound package components, such as floor, door panels and headliners. They play a vital role in reducing the noise a vehicle occupant hears.

“Automotive sound packages have several layers to absorb and or block sounds. For example, a traditional car floor consists of decoupling foam sandwiched between the sheet metal and a carpet nap backed by a heavy impervious layer,” says Dr. Atalla. “The composite foams constructions that we are developing combine lightweight with a higher rate of absorption, damping and isolation than what is currently used.”

Mr. Bruno-Marie Béchar, president of the Université de Sherbrooke, says he is pleased to see another scientist from the Université contributing to AUTO21 by directing the new research project. “Thanks to the world recognized expertise of our acoustic and vibration group (GAUS), led by Dr. Atalla, the new project investigating the development of innovative acoustic materials complements the active noise control project that was started by other Sherbrooke researchers two years ago through AUTO21.”

“We are pleased to support this innovative project that will enhance tomorrow's vehicle,” says Dr. Peter Frise, CEO and Program Leader of AUTO21. “In addition to the technical knowledge created, the project provides an excellent training opportunity for six students at the three universities to work with expert researchers and also collaborate with industry representatives. This experience will help develop the students into the innovators of Canada's future automotive sector.”

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The project is one of seven new research projects worth a total of \$6.5 million being supported by the AUTO21 Network of Centres of Excellence and industry. AUTO21 is a federal program that supports 28 other auto-related R&D projects at 33 universities across Canada, with combined federal and industry funding of more than \$8 million per year. The new projects add 32 researchers and 53 student researchers to the current AUTO21 investigative team of more than 250 university and industry researchers, and more than 250 graduate and post-graduate students. AUTO21 is funded by the Networks of Centres of Excellence of Canada program.

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