



*Media Release*

*Communiqué*

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## **Carleton University researcher to lead national research team investigating driver interaction and telematic systems and sensors**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

November 12, 2003

Ottawa, ON: Intelligent systems and sensors can assist drivers as they travel in their cars, but drivers with different profiles will interact with them in unique ways. Creating a knowledge database of how driver profiles such as commuters, leisure drivers and the elderly use and interact with these systems and sensors is the goal of a national research team being co-led by a Carleton University researcher. Dr. Ata Khan, a civil and environmental engineering professor, is coordinating the team that consists of researchers at Carleton University, University of Calgary, University of Guelph and the University of Montreal. The team was recently awarded funding of up to \$2.7 million from the AUTO21 Network of Centres of Excellence and several industry supporters. The project is being co-led by Dr. Jeff Caird at the University of Calgary.

Dr. Khan says telematics systems and sensors can provide a wealth of information to a driver, but it is important that the driver not be overloaded to the point it affects their driving. Commuters hurrying to work will interact differently with other drivers, the road and telematic systems than elderly drivers who may have slower response times and visual or dexterous limitations.

“Using driving simulators allows us to investigate how drivers react in real-time situations without risk of accident or injury,” says Dr. Khan. “The knowledge database will help determine what systems and sensors can be used effectively. It will also assist with regulations and policy development.”

Dr. Feridun Hamdullahpur, Vice-President (Research and International) at Carleton University said: “Dr. Khan’s research is cutting edge and it will provide new and innovative discoveries in sensor network technology. Carleton University researchers are already setting trends in this area internationally.”

“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 about 25 students at the four 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.”

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 AUTO21 investigative team. Over 250 university and industry researchers, and more than 250 graduate and post-graduate students are already part of the AUTO21 team. AUTO21 is funded by the Networks of Centres of Excellence of Canada program.

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**Carleton University—Canada's Capital University**

Carleton University is a dynamic research and learning institution located in Ottawa, Canada. The University is a national leader in the study of public affairs and management, and high technology, as well as a leading innovator in undergraduate education. Carleton University offers outstanding programs in both the undergraduate and graduate levels in the major disciplines of the Arts and Social Sciences, Science, Engineering and Design and Public Affairs and Management. With close to 23,000 full and part-time students and over 2,000 faculty and staff, Carleton University has a vibrant work and learning environment, with close ties to the region's business, cultural, government, and high technology communities.

Over the past three years, Carleton University has experienced a remarkable rise in research activity. Sponsored research funding rose 62.3 percent last year placing it third among comprehensive universities in Canada. Research funding now stands at close to \$100 million. In 2000, Carleton University was named #1 in Canada for international research collaboration and #3 in Canada for quality of research by the Observatoire des Sciences et des Technologies (OST). This year, Carleton was selected as the first Canadian Alcatel Global Research Partner and signed an historic research agreement with the University of Arizona.

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