

## University of Waterloo researcher to lead national research team advancing fuel cell technologies

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Waterloo, ON: Attempts to create a viable and economical fuel cell vehicle are well underway, however mass production of these vehicles is still at least several years away. Advancing this research is the goal of a national research team being led by a University of Waterloo researcher. Dr. Xianguo Li, a mechanical engineering professor, is coordinating the team that consists of researchers at Simon Fraser University, University of Ontario Institute of Technology, University of Toronto and University of Windsor. The team was recently awarded funding of up to \$666,500 from the AUTO21 Network of Centres of Excellence and several industry supporters.

Dr. Li says the team is investigating proton exchange membrane fuel cell components to develop the best design in a cost-efficient manner. A life cycle analysis of the environmental benefits will also be conducted to determine how the design can be optimized and performance enhanced. "The fuel cell power system and all of its components will be thoroughly reviewed to develop future variants of fuel cell vehicles."

"The project aligns with our significant work in automotive research at the University of Waterloo," says Paul Guild, UW's Vice-President, University Research. "The work on the fuel cell technologies ultimately addresses air pollution, a key issue surrounding the automobile of this century."

"We are pleased to support this innovative project that will advance the hydrogen economy," 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 seven students at the five 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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