CMC Microsystems announces strategic partnership in Canada's newest university-based nano-fabrication facility

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CMC Microsystems is pleased to announce its strategic partnership in the Kingston Nano-Fabrication Laboratory (KNFL), a state-of-the-art facility for designing, making and testing micro- and nano-scale materials, devices and structures.

Launched today at Innovation Park, Queen's University, the $5 million, 3,000 square-foot facility has been made possible through collaboration among the Canada Foundation for Innovation, the Ontario Ministry of Research and Innovation, Queen's University and CMC Microsystems.

The lab is the newest addition to a network of five university-based facilities across Canada that comprise Embedded Systems Canada (emSYSCAN), a $50 million national initiative providing leading-edge equipment, methodologies and expertise for designing and protytyping microsystems. emSYSCAN enables research by more than 350 faculty across 37 Canadian institutions.

In its role as national project manager and strategic partner in emSYSCAN, CMC is providing management and engineering development services to the KNFL.

For academics, this lab aims to remove barriers to demonstrating novel ideas, says Ian McWalter, President and CEO of CMC Microsystems. "The costs and expertise needed to develop an initial concept and complete the refinements needed for commercial viability can sometimes present insurmountable obstacles," he says. "By enhancing these capabilities, we can speed up the transfer of research-generated innovations to industry, and create new opportunities to develop and maintain Canada's leadership in advanced manufacturing."

The new facility also benefits CMC's overall mission in several ways. "The KNFL gives us direct access to facilities to make parts, or integrate devices, where it cannot currently be done quickly and easily," he says. "It helps us meet the needs of academic researchers and companies across Canada's National Design Network."

The lab will also help CMC enhance its business model, which makes advanced equipment and expertise more readily available to academics and graduate students. Faculty and CMC's industrial clients can efficiently advance their research by using the lab's professional services to do custom work for them. "It also does wonderful things for students, who not only learn to operate state-of-the-art equipment, but also experience its opportunities and limitations," Dr. McWalter says. "This enables them to "push the envelope" on established manufacturing practices, potentially leading to better products and processes of value to industry."

Having a lab close by also expands CMC's exploratory work, Dr. McWalter says. "It makes it possible for us to do our own R&D, with the goal of making the results available to other researchers and labs across the country, allowing them to proceed more effectively with their nanotechnology research."

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About CMC Microsystems:

CMC Microsystems, a not-for-profit corporation, operates, maintains and manages the facilities of the National Design Network. Through these facilities, researchers have access to the world's best design tools, manufacturing technologies, nanofabrication laboratory equipment, measurement instruments, and engineering support. CMC works with partners to assist scaling from promising prototypes to larger scale developments.