

For Immediate Release

Lab2Market Atlantic, UNB, and Vimy Forge Announce Canada's First Lab2Market Validate Dual-Use Cohort

August 25, 2026 – HALIFAX, NS – Lab2Market Atlantic, led by Dalhousie University, has joined forces with the University of New Brunswick and Vimy Forge to deliver Canada's first Lab2Market Validate Dual-Use program. The program supports the next generation of entrepreneurial researchers developing dual-use solutions for defence and security challenges.

The Fall 2026 cohort welcomes 10 student-led ventures comprised of graduate students and post-doctoral fellows from post-secondary institutions across Canada. Over the next 16 weeks, participants will explore the potential of innovations in artificial intelligence, quantum-secure communications, Arctic and maritime surveillance, autonomous systems, advanced manufacturing, and other dual-use technologies aligned with Canada's defence and sovereignty priorities.

Hosted by Dalhousie University, this national cohort equips participants with the skills to evaluate the dual-use potential of their research through a rigorous customer discovery process. Teams will engage directly with potential customers while learning about the complexities of operating in the defence sector.

"This is Canada's first national Lab2Market Validate Dual-use cohort and we are excited to be partnering with UNB and Vimy Forge to help student researchers quickly evaluate the viability of their dual-use technologies with potential customers," said Jeff Larsen, Assistant Vice-President, Innovation, Commercialization and Partnerships at Dalhousie University.

As Canada's defence technology accelerator, Vimy Forge provides specialized mentorship, coaching, and industry connections designed to help founders navigate the defence innovation ecosystem.

"This Lab2Market cohort represents highly promising student-led ventures that strengthen Canada's defence innovation pipeline. Vimy Forge is proud to support this initiative through mentorship and industry connections, creating national resilience and economic stimulus from our world class knowledge economy," said Duncan McSporran, Managing Director of Vimy Forge.

"Dual-use technologies represent an important way that research and innovation can respond to Canada's sovereignty and security needs," said Dr. Kelly Scott-Storey, Associate Vice President, Research, Innovation & Partnerships at the University of New Brunswick. "We're proud to share our knowledge and relationships in this sector in support of the next generation of innovators."

This fall cohort starts today and includes participation in DEFSEC Atlantic 2026, the second largest annual Aerospace, Defence & Security industry event in Canada. Together, Lab2Market and Vimy Forge are helping researchers transform Canadian innovations into ventures that strengthen national security, retain intellectual property in Canada, and contribute to economic growth.

Lab2Market Validate is part of the continuum of programs offered nationally by Lab2Market and is one of several programs delivered by Dal Innovates' innovation and entrepreneurship network. Each Lab2Market Validate team will benefit from:

- Instruction from leaders in innovation and entrepreneurship
- Hands-on support to test ideas in real-world markets
- Access to industry experts and experienced mentors
- The opportunity to receive \$10,000 in funding to advance their projects

MEET THE TEAMS

Student Participants	Institution	Venture Description
Nima Ahmadian Faculty Lead: Weimin Huang	Memorial University of Newfoundland	Reliable Arctic Intelligence Enhancing Arctic surveillance and search-and-rescue operations through AI-powered sea ice analysis for safer navigation.
Bitra Asghari Faculty Lead: Henry Leung	University of Calgary	Low-Power Edge AI Hardware for Real-Time Surveillance Enabling real-time object detection and tracking for defence operations in remote and resource-constrained environments using low-power edge AI hardware.
Iqra Batool Faculty Lead: Zubair Md Fadlullah	University of Western Ontario	Quantum-Safe Wireless Security Securing critical wireless networks against emerging cyber threats with a quantum-resistant cybersecurity platform.
Ricardo Cardenas Faculty Lead: Mohammad Khondoker	University of Regina	Light-Weight Energy Systems Providing energy storage solutions for unmanned systems, electric vehicles, and wearable technologies through compact, customizable lithium-ion batteries.
Mousumi Dhar Faculty Lead: Terry Peckham	Saskatchewan Polytechnic	SkyRelix Empowering security and defence organizations with reusable counter-drone technology that neutralizes unauthorized drones while reducing operational costs and inventory requirements.
Christopher Elash Faculty Lead: Li Chen	University of Saskatchewan	Novigrad Technologies Inc. Improving the reliability of mission-critical electronics for aerospace and aviation through semiconductor radiation testing, analysis, and design expertise.

Student Participants	Institution	Venture Description
Matthew Hodgkinson Faculty Lead: Toby Mundel	Brock University	FrostFit Thermal Solutions Inc. Enhancing safety, performance, and recovery for individuals working in extreme heat environments with personal cooling systems.
Jeswin Joseph Faculty Lead: Jean-Pierre Hickey	University of Waterloo	Volantek Inc. Supporting aerospace and defence teams with advanced decision-support software that incorporates uncertainty quantification to improve the design, operation, and surveillance of complex engineering systems.
Mohammadali Karimi Harouni Faculty Lead: Mohsen Mohammadi	University of New Brunswick	Dual-Use Predictive Additive Manufacturing Advancing aerospace and defence manufacturing with an AI-driven predictive manufacturing platform that reduces variability in high-performance components.
Divjot Singh Faculty Lead: Robert Brown	Toronto Metropolitan University	Maritime Trust Assurance Securing maritime operations for naval and commercial fleets with an independent platform that verifies navigation, communication, and behavioural data.

About Lab2Market

Lab2Market™ envisions Canada as a global leader in transforming academic research into innovative solutions that drive social impact and economic growth. As a national beacon for innovation, commercialization, and entrepreneurship, L2M empowers students, researchers, and highly qualified personnel (HQP) through specialized training that bridges the gap between research and real-world applications. Funded by the Government of Canada, Mitacs, and the Ocean Startup Project, Lab2Market draws inspiration from leading programs such as I-Corps and MIT Delta V (U.S.), ICURe (U.K.), and the Quebec Scientific Entrepreneurship Program. Learn more at www.lab2market.ca

About the University of New Brunswick

Established in 1785, the University of New Brunswick is Canada's longest standing English-language university and New Brunswick's only national comprehensive institution. Located on the unsundered and uncaded traditional Wolastoqey land, UNB's Fredericton and Saint John campuses welcome nearly 10,000 students from over 100 countries, offering a world class education across more than 250 innovative programs, certificates and diplomas. UNB is New Brunswick's sponsored research leader, advancing knowledge in areas including energy, health, environment and security. Together, UNB is transforming communities and helping shape a more just, equitable and inclusive world. Learn more at www.unb.ca.

About Vimy Forge

Vimy Forge is a public-private partnership that is closing the gap between Canadian innovation and defence procurement. They support Canadian startups and SMEs with the expertise and connections they need to succeed in the defence sector. Anchored in Fredericton, NB, but built for national impact, Vimy Forge brings together SMEs, academia, industry partners, and government to create the conditions where Canadian solutions can scale and succeed. Learn more at www.vimyforge.ca

About Dal Innovates

Dal Innovates, based at Dalhousie University, provides opportunities for students and faculty to explore entrepreneurship and develop the skills to translate new ideas into innovations. Since its formation in 2020, over 1,600 students and faculty from 50 colleges and universities across Canada have participated in Dal Innovates programs. Dal Innovates alumni have gone on to raise \$21 million in private and public funding and have advanced through accelerators such as Emera ideaHUB, Creative Destruction Lab, and others worldwide. Learn more at www.dalinnovates.ca

About Dalhousie University: Canada's East Coast Research Leader

Dalhousie is the only East Coast member of Canada's U15, the country's leading group of research-intensive universities. With more than 250 million dollars in annual research funding, we are Atlantic Canada's engine of discovery and innovation. Anchored in Halifax, Nova Scotia, with additional agricultural and medical campuses and academic and clinical programs across the province and beyond, we drive positive change in the communities we serve locally, nationally, and around the world. Our faculty work within a highly collaborative research community supported by major infrastructure, including Canada's largest aquatic research facility and advanced platforms accelerating discoveries in health and the physical sciences. Researchers contribute to and benefit from a growing network of centres, institutes, and hubs driving discovery and industry partnership in areas like battery innovation and clean technologies, carbon capture and storage, additive manufacturing, AI and semiconductors, vaccine and immunotherapy development, genomics, cancer treatment, and much more. Learn more www.dal.ca.

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