CENGN Announces Living Lab Partnership with University of Waterloo and Rogers Communications

CENGN partners with U of Waterloo & Rogers for Robotic Connectivity Living Lab, enabling Canadian startups to test AI/robotics innovations.

WATERLOO, ONTARIO, CANADA, September 26, 2025 / EINPresswire.com/ -- Pour la traduction en français, veuillez consulter: https://www.cengn.ca/fr/information-centre/nouvelles/cengn-annonce-un-partenariat-de-laboratoire-vivant-avec-luniversite-de-waterloo-et-rogers-communications/

Today, CENGN announced a Living Lab partnership with the University of Waterloo and Rogers Communications to advance Canadian innovation. Through the partnership, the CENGN Living Lab Initiative will now include co-funded access to the Robotic Connectivity Living Lab, powered by the University of Waterloo's RoboHub and Rogers. The Living Lab will enable Canadian startups and scaleups to test and validate their cutting-edge products and services in critical sectors like defence, robotics, and applied artificial intelligence, accelerating their path to market readiness.

Supported by a $45 million investment from the Federal Government's Strategic Response Fund (SRF), CENGN's national Living Lab Initiative aims to help over 100 Canadian startups and

scaleups looking to prepare their innovative products and solutions for commercialization and industry adoption.

By offering access to advanced infrastructure, expert support, and real-world testing environments, the CENGN Living Lab Initiative drives technology adoption across key economic sectors. It plays a critical role in boosting Canadian industry competitiveness, fostering new Intellectual Property, and fueling the growth of the country's most promising technology ventures.

CENGN Launches Connected Robotics Living Lab, Powered by the University of Waterloo's RoboHub and Rogers

As Canada's Centre of Excellence in Next Generation Networks, CENGN drives the innovation and adoption of advanced networking technologies in Canada through connected infrastructure, technical expertise and services, talent development, and the nurturing of a thriving innovation ecosystem.

The organization has expanded its services to include access to the Connected Robotics Living Lab, which includes the University of Waterloo's RoboHub, AVRIL, and CIARS facilities. The Living Lab combines indoor lab spaces and outdoor testing areas for robotics solutions that boost productivity, increase work safety, optimize fleet and multi-robot coordination, create more effective human-to-robot interactions, and drive robotic improvements through data and applied AI. With support from Rogers Communications, these facilities combine controlled and real-world testing environments with

advanced connectivity infrastructure, including LTE and 5G networks.

“By partnering with CENGN, our University will be taking a leading role in supporting the Canadian innovation ecosystem. We are proud to provide access to our facilities and our deep expertise in research and development to drive the commercial success of Canadian startups and introduce new transformative technology across Canada’s key economic sectors.” Mary Wells, Dean of the Faculty of Engineering at the University of Waterloo.

“As Canada’s largest and most reliable 5G+ network provider, Rogers is proud to be working with the federal government on CENGN’s Living Labs to advance new 5G technology in Canada for robotics and industrial applications through our 5G testbed at the University of Waterloo.” Mark Kennedy, Chief Technology Officer, Rogers.

Federal Government’s ISED Invests $45 Million

Innovation, Science, and Economic Development Canada (ISED)’s $45 million investment in CENGN aims to expedite the technology transformation of Canadian industry while directly supporting Canadian innovators through Innovation and Adoption Projects. Each Innovation Project includes up to $250K in co-investment funding to the startup or scaleup, a number which increases up to $500K for Adoption Projects.

"Strengthening Canada’s leadership in robotics, AI and advanced connectivity is essential to our country’s innovation competitiveness agenda. By supporting inclusive, collaborative initiatives like the CENGN Living Lab partnership, our government is investing in the growth of highly skilled Canadian tech talent, fostering the development of transformative products, and ensuring entrepreneurs can confidently test and deploy solutions that will power our industries for years to come." The Honourable Mélanie Joly, Minister of Industry and Minister responsible for Canada Economic Development for Quebec Regions.

This funding is expected to provide a major return on investment, including

- A significant boost in GDP growth
- The creation and safeguarding of critical tech jobs in Canada
- The launch of innovative Canadian products in the global market
- The generation of disruptive and impactful Canadian IP patents
- Sales growth and substantial follow-on investment for participating Canadian startups and scaleups
- Acceleration of Technology Readiness Levels for participating Canadian companies
- The entry of skilled professionals into critical digital technology roles nationwide

“The Connected Robotics Living Lab is fuelling Canadian innovation by giving startups access to advanced facilities where they can develop and refine AI-driven robotics. This initiative fast-tracks the adoption of intelligent automation and showcases our country’s potential on the global

stage. I commend CENGN and its partners for supporting the next generation of leaders in AI-powered technology." The Honourable Evan Solomon, Minister of Artificial Intelligence and Digital Innovation and Minister responsible for the Federal Economic Development Agency for Southern Ontario.

Empowering Canada's Leadership in Connected Robotics through CENGN Living Labs

Chris Joyce, Vice President, Business Development and Marketing of CENGN, explains the concept behind the CENGN Living Lab Initiative:

"By leveraging our comprehensive program services and funding alongside our partner's controlled robotics testing environments, we enable Canadian innovators to bring their cutting edge technologies to market faster and with greater confidence. This initiative strengthens Canada's position as a global leader in robotics, advanced communications, and applied AI technologies. These technologies are key to transforming connected systems across industries and supporting the country's economic resilience and long-term growth."

Startups and scaleups can access these services through an Innovation Project, where they utilize CENGN Living Lab environments and expertise to test, validate, and certify their solutions for market entry or expansion. Alternatively, a startup can participate in an Adoption Project, where they work directly with a potential customer to test and validate their solution against the customer's needs and requirements.

Uniting a Pan-Canadian Innovation Ecosystem

Through CENGN, the Living Labs are connected to a greater pan-Canadian ecosystem of tech-leading organizations, innovation hubs, and sector-focused organizations. This ecosystem enables the accessibility and promotion of CENGN Living Lab services to startups and scaleups nationwide, ensuring all innovative Canadian companies can apply for a project.

"Carrying out a CENGN project will allow our organization to accelerate the integration and testing of our PASSENGER platform within a world-class robotics environment. PASSENGER is designed to unify fleets of hardware-agnostic robots, IoT systems, and automation tools into a single intelligent orchestration layer that gives customers real-time visibility and management. We've already integrated the platform across multiple robotic systems and seen growing demand from partners across logistics, infrastructure, and public services. It's another step in proving that Canada can not only build world-class robotics…but also commercialize them at scale." Cameron Waite, Founder & CEO, Real Life Robotics.

Resources:

CENGN Living Lab Initiative – https://www.cengn.ca/strategic-innovation-fund/
ISED SRF Program – https://ised-isde.canada.ca/site/ised/en/programs-and-initiatives/strategic-

response-fund
University of Waterloo's RoboHub – https://uwaterloo.ca/robohub/
University of Waterloo's CIARS – https://uwaterloo.ca/centre-for-intelligent-antenna-and-radio-systems/
University of Waterloo's AVRIL – https://uwaterloo.ca/autonomous-vehicle-research-intelligence-lab/
Real Life Robotics - https://www.realliferobotics.com/
Connected Robotics Living Lab, Powered by University of Waterloo's RoboHub and Rogers Communications - https://www.cengn.ca/living-lab-initiative/connected-robotics-living-lab

Media Contact:

Rick Penwarden
Senior Communications Manager
CENGN -Centre of Excellence in Next Generation Networks
613-963-1203
Rick.Penwarden@cengn.ca

CENGN – Canada's Centre of Excellence in Next Generation Networks

CENGN, Canada's Centre of Excellence in Next Generation Networks, drives innovation and adoption of applied AI, IoT, and advanced networking technologies through its Living Lab Initiative, technical expertise, and partner ecosystem. Through our services, we enable the digital transformation and competitiveness of the Canadian industry and the commercial growth of Canadian digital technology solutions. CENGN provides access to real end-user environments and the end-to-end testing services and expertise that accelerate validation, demonstration, commercialization, and adoption of digital innovation solutions across Canada and the globe.

Our unique expertise and positioning as a neutral third party in an ecosystem of technology, innovation, government, and academic partners, paired with a long track record of overperforming on program mandates, have made CENGN a trusted leader in delivering Government initiatives that support network technology innovation.

For more information on the CENGN Living Labs or for general inquiries on CENGN, please contact services@cengn.ca.

University of Waterloo

University of Waterloo is a leading global innovation hub that drives economic and social prosperity for Canada and the world. With more than 42,000 students, we are home to the world's largest co-op education talent pipeline, to game-changing research and technology, and to an unmatched entrepreneurial culture. Together, these create partnerships and solutions to tackle today's and tomorrow's challenges.

Find out more at uwaterloo.ca.

Rick Penwarden
CENGN
+1 613-963-1200 ext. 329
email us here