

Solutions for innovation and productivity improvements in the construction industry

Montréal, May 17, 2017 – The construction industry is complex, and given the major projects currently in progress and others on the way, there is a pressing need to pursue innovation and improvements to management processes, with the ultimate goal of achieving greater performance and reducing delivery lead times. Researchers at the **Pomerleau Industrial Research Chair in Innovation and Construction Project Governance** at Polytechnique Montréal, inaugurated today, will study solutions to drive innovation in this industry.

Fertile ground for research

Temporary multi-organization partnerships, hundreds of workers and firms on the job, one-of-a-kind projects, co-ordination of multidisciplinary teams, evolving implementation conditions, stringent safety requirements—the construction industry involves a broad range of risks and complexities. “This key economic sector in Québec, Canada and around the world presents fertile ground for research, and we are very pleased with this partnership between Pomerleau and Polytechnique Montréal,” explained the holder of the chair, Mario Bourgault, a professor in the Department of Mathematics and Industrial Engineering at Polytechnique Montréal and a specialist in management of collaborative projects as well as innovation management. “There is no comparing construction with, say, commodities production, where operations are often repetitive and conducted in a controlled environment,” he noted.

Tangible improvements for the industry

The research chair and its partner, Pomerleau, a major, innovation-driven construction company based in Québec, hope to find practical solutions applicable to the industry, which has maintained more or less the same operating methods in the past few decades. “The commitment to innovation is among Pomerleau’s core values, and we are extremely proud of this partnership with Polytechnique Montréal, which gives us the opportunity to advance the industry as a whole through collaborations with the best available talent,” said Pierre Pomerleau, President and Chief Executive Officer of the family-run firm, which today has operations right across Canada. “The work of this research chair will drive improvements to project management practices and, in turn help raise the profile of Québec and Canadian know-how in the field,” he added.

Indeed, innovation in the construction industry touches on more than materials, methods and equipment: improvements to mechanisms for management and co-ordination among multiple organizations, implementation of new technologies, etc., are equally vital aspects.

A win-win partnership

“This partnership between researchers and private enterprise will foster exchanges and transfers of knowledge between the academic and professional communities, with each enriching the other thanks to their complementary perspectives and resources,” says an enthusiastic Christophe Guy, Chief Executive Officer of Polytechnique. The Pomerleau Industrial Research Chair in Innovation and Construction Project Governance is receiving substantial five-year funding from Pomerleau. Its team of researchers and students will develop high-level scientific knowledge in governance and project management applicable to the construction industry, while conducting international-calibre research, teaching and outreach activities.

About Polytechnique Montréal

Founded in 1873, Polytechnique Montréal is one of Canada's leading engineering teaching and research institutions. It is the largest engineering university in Québec for the size of its graduate student body and the scope of its research activities. With over 45,700 graduates, Polytechnique Montréal has educated nearly one-quarter of the current members of the Ordre des ingénieurs du Québec. The institution offers more than 120 programs. Polytechnique has 250 professors and over 8,200 students. It has an annual operating budget of more than \$210 million, including a research budget exceeding \$70 million.

About Pomerleau

Pomerleau is one of Canada’s leading construction companies and a pioneer in sustainable buildings. It specializes mainly in the building, infrastructure and civil works sectors. Founded more than 50 years ago, the company employs up to 4,000 people at its nine regional offices and more than 125 worksites across the country. With annual sales of more than \$1.7 billion in 2016, Pomerleau is a full-service firm and offers general contracting, project management, construction management and design-build delivery methods among others, as well as alternative financing arrangements. In addition, it is a champion of virtual design and construction. Pomerleau’s divisions include Civil & Infrastructure, Buildings and Beaubois, and it co-owns Borea Construction, the leader in the Canadian wind farm construction industry. For more details about Pomerleau, visit pomerleau.ca.

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Available for interviews:

- **Christophe Guy**, CEO, Polytechnique Montréal
- **Mario Bourgault**, Professor and holder of the Pomerleau Industrial Research Chair in Construction-Project Innovation and Governance
- **Pierre Pomerleau**, President and CEO, Pomerleau

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