

CDL-Atlantic partners with Atlantic Canada's top business leaders

Accelerator program bolsters entrepreneurship and investment through mentorship

Monday, September 18, Halifax, Nova Scotia— Clearwater Fine Foods President John Risley and IMP Group Founder and Executive Chairman Ken Rowe have been named today as two of the many top Canadian business leaders to serve as mentors in CDL-Atlantic, the Dalhousie University–hosted offshoot of the Creative Destruction Lab, the prestigious Toronto-based national startup accelerator.

Like the University of Toronto parent program, CDL-Atlantic, housed in the Rowe School of Business, will provide startups with access to a powerful network of accomplished entrepreneurs and investors through a nine-month, milestone-based mentoring program. In addition to a general CDL programming stream, Dalhousie will have a specialty program for ocean, clean tech and agri-food technology companies. Past mentors in the program have included the founders of Wind Mobile, Kik, Kobo, as well as companies that have been sold to tech giants such as Microsoft and Amazon.

The fellows and associates with CDL-Atlantic are mentors and potential investors, who support startups through the completion of the competitive program. CDL-Atlantic has attracted fellows and associates who are leaders not only in the region but nationally and globally.

"This is a tremendous effort to help increase the regional prosperity of Atlantic Canada," says Ken Rowe. "I'm looking forward to mentoring and sharing my experiences with early-stage, high-potential companies."

The mentors to be announced tonight include:

- John Risley, President of Clearwater Fine Foods
- Ken Rowe, IMP Group Founder & Executive Chairman
- Jevon MacDonald, Co-Founder & CEO, Manifold & GoInstant
- Brice Scheschuk, Co-Founder & Past CEO, Wind Mobile; CEO, Globalive Capital
- Julia Dexter, Co-Founder & CMO of Squiggle Park
- Rob Sobey, former CEO & President of Lawtons Drug Stores
- Robert Orr, CEO & Managing Director, Cuna del Mar
- Amy Regan, CEO, Skinfix
- Annette Verschuren, Chair & CEO, NRStor
- Chuck Hartlen, former Executive Vice President, Customer Experience, Nova Scotia Power

"It's an exceptional list of people and an excellent sampling of the talent and leadership found in our region," says Dr. Richard Florizone, President of Dalhousie University. "We're very pleased to see CDL-Atlantic attracting this caliber of support."

The CDL-Atlantic team is also working to support ventures with women founders. Gillian McCrae, Venture Manager for CDL-Atlantic, and Melody Pardoe, Chief Operating Officer of Volta Labs, are collaborating to ensure mentorship and investment from successful women entrepreneurs. "Gender diversity amongst investors and entrepreneurs is a core value of CDL-Atlantic," says McCrae. "We are looking forward to creating additional support for female entrepreneurs across Atlantic Canada."

CDL-Atlantic aims to be a regional initiative and there are mentors, and applicant companies, from each province. Dalhousie is in discussions to partner with UNB and other Atlantic universities to open its CDL course to their students.

"I'm proud to be part of launching this program in Atlantic Canada," says Risley. "It will bring a new collaborative approach to growth and prosperity for our region, one that will set up our innovation-driven technology companies to emerge as world leaders."

The first CDL-Atlantic cohort will begin in December 2017.

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