

2013-2014
ANNUAL REPORT



While 2013 presented a challenging environment, the Offshore Energy Research Association (OERA) continued to deliver on its vision to lead energy research that enables the sustainable development of Nova Scotia's energy resources. OERA has always been about seeing a need, making things better, breaking new ground and imaging workable solutions. We proudly added to that legacy in 2013-14.

I am pleased to report that in the past year the OERA continued to play a vital role in providing a deeper understanding of how Nova Scotia develops in a responsible and sustainable fashion, its offshore energy resources. To serve this important mandate, the OERA has organized itself into three distinct areas of business operation:

- Marine Renewable Energy;
- Offshore Geoscience & Petroleum; and
- Seismic & Marine Sound

As we know, all organizations need an effective plan to carry out their work, allocate resources on an efficient basis, and achieve the highest impact for their stakeholders, and I am pleased to confirm that the OERA's plan for the 2013-14 fiscal year was an outstanding success. I'd like to focus in particular on three specific areas where the OERA has made significant progress in filling its mandate.

Research Priorities

The OERA worked during the past year with a broad range of key industry, academic and government stakeholders within both the marine renewable and petroleum geoscience sectors to identify a robust set of research priorities. These priorities are a result of collaborative work effort of all stakeholders to select the areas for focus that will have the greatest impact on the responsible development of Nova Scotia's offshore resources by conducting scientific research, answering critical questions to reduce risk, and attract new investment. The details on OERA's research priorities can be found at: www.oera.ca

The intention for the new fiscal year is to continue to work to identify research programs and individual research projects within each theme area of the research priorities, using a "workshop format" with key stakeholders. This process will enable active discussion with industry stakeholders, leading to their direct participation in individual research projects. In addition, it is anticipated the Value Proposition study undertaken in the marine renewable theme area will provide a mechanism to engage public and private sector investment.

Research theme areas have also been set for the OERA's marine sound sector. The theme areas however, are currently quite broad, with research principally focused on bringing greater understanding to the relationships between fish/marine mammals and offshore seismic and drilling activities. For the coming fiscal year, plans are to further refine these theme areas to identify specific projects and build collaborations to leverage funding, and lead to the implementation of one to two projects.

Partnering for Success

In almost all of its endeavours, the OERA works with other organizations in order to create leverage, share responsibilities, and attract the best resources required to deliver on its mandate. I am pleased to report during the past year, the OERA has added to its already robust network of partnerships with the establishment of partnership Memorandums of Understanding (MoU) with the Technology Strategy Board of the UK and Fundy Ocean Research Center for Energy.

The foundation work of the 2013 research priority setting process has contributed to productive discussions with key stakeholders, such as the Nova Scotia Department of Energy, Shell, BP, Encana and others relating to their participation in the implementation of research projects. The 2013-14 business plan established the financial viability of the OERA over a five-year period, based upon the general assumption of a continuation of the existing level of research activities and modest success in securing new research funds.

It is anticipated that with the successful implementation of an MoU between the OERA and the Nova Scotia Department of Energy, significant, consistent and long-term funding may be available to support implementation of a selected number of research programs and projects. It is also reasonable to expect a certain degree of success in securing financial participation from industry relating to the research theme areas. Further, the efforts to create financial leverage through partnerships with organizations such as the Technology Strategy Board of the United Kingdom, FORCE, UMass Dartmouth (USA), etc. will also provide additional financial capacity in this regard.

Dedicated Committees

Committee support remains integral to OERA's effectiveness. One specific aspect of the OERA that sets it apart from similar organizations is its committee structure. This active, diverse, and professional group of volunteer members represent a broad range of scientific expertise from government, academia and industry drawn from many countries. This high powered committee structure allows the OERA to develop, manage and evaluate complex scientific projects in a time and cost efficient fashion contributing to a flexible and high-impact approach to serving its stakeholders interests. The strategic and operational guidance of the committees provide the direction for follow-through of OERA's agenda while maintaining the objectives of its key stakeholders. On behalf of the OERA Board of Directors, I would like to express my gratitude to all committee members who have served faithfully and selflessly during the past year.

The View Ahead

As we move forward from this year of achievements and successes on all fronts, we plan to concentrate on key priorities while continuing to invest in our core research programs, growth strategies and stakeholder engagement. We have generated a great track record in standards and service offerings in Geoscience Research for offshore Nova Scotia, and we intend to continue leveraging our experience in the marine renewable energy and petroleum sectors.

Looking forward to the new fiscal year, I am eagerly awaiting the results of the Tidal Energy Value Proposition study which should provide a strong rationale for further investments to build a robust and globally competitive and technologically advanced tidal energy industry based in Nova Scotia. Additionally, as Shell completes its analysis of its ambitious seismic program and BP undertakes the largest ever seismic acquisition program on the Atlantic, the prospects for a revitalized offshore petroleum sector in NS remain energized, and we believe the work the OERA performed on the Play Fairway Analysis has played a fundamental role in this regard. The OERA will continue to play a leading role in further understanding NS's offshore energy resources leading to even greater levels of exploration commitments. Finally, I await with eager anticipation the deployment of new tidal energy devices in the Bay of Fundy realizing upon the full potential of Nova Scotia's world-class marine renewable energy resources.

Acknowledgements

By continuing to place a high priority on robust corporate governance practices, OERA ensures that its stakeholders are well served through the Board's counsel on matters that include risk management, strategy and stakeholder engagement. My thanks to fellow OERA Directors: Jeff Somerville, Kevin Vessey, Tom Herman, Bob Bailey, Bob MacKay, Jim Gogan, Bruce Cameron, and Keith De'Bell each whom has given generously of their time and talents. It has been a pleasure working with each of them over the past year.

The OERA Board of Directors has confidence that OERA's leadership, strategy, focus and talent will enable the OERA to continue its high level of performance for all stakeholders. Our Executive Director, Stephen Dempsey, continues to work collaboratively to set out a renewed research strategy for OERA. His insights and knowledge are vital to the growth of OERA and I am confident that he will continue to provide continuity of OERA's strategy, culture and values. I'd like to recognize the efforts of OERA's talented team, Jennifer Pinks, Nalani Perry, Lisa LeRoux, Carey Ryan and Karen Fraser, whose great work is a key contributor to OERA's success. OERA's employees show remarkable commitment to our stakeholders, as demonstrated by their outstanding efforts to set research standards and reduce the risks related to investment in Nova Scotia's offshore energy resources through the provision of scientific research initiatives.

We continue to express our acknowledgement of the fundamental role the Province of Nova Scotia has played to make funding available which allows the OERA to carryout ground-breaking research.

And to all of our stakeholders, we appreciate your confidence and look forward to building value for you in 2014 and beyond.

The Offshore Energy Research Association of Nova Scotia (OERA) was established in March, 2006 and operates as a not-for-profit contract research association. OERA's mandate is to foster research and development related to offshore petroleum, renewable energy resources and their interaction with the marine environment, and the diffusion of that knowledge. Our vision is to be the leading energy research organization in the country, providing efficient, timely and strategic solutions to complex research challenges. OERA membership includes the Nova Scotia Department of Energy, Acadia University, Cape Breton University, St. Francis Xavier University, Dalhousie University and Saint Mary's University.

Our members:



Joshua Leon, Chair and Director
Dalhousie University

Tom Herman, Vice-Chair and Director
Acadia University

Bruce Cameron, Director and Secretary
Nova Scotia Department of Energy

Keith De'Bell, Director
St. Francis Xavier University

Robert Bailey, Director
Cape Breton University

Kevin Vessey, Director
Saint Mary's University

Jeff Somerville, Director and Treasurer

Robert MacKay, Director

Jim Gogan, Director

Our Team

Our Staff

Stephen Dempsey, Executive Director
Jennifer Pinks, Research Manager
Nalani Perry, Research & Communications Coordinator
Lisa LeRoux, Operations Coordinator
Carey Ryan, Senior Manager—Business Development
Karen Fraser, Accountant

Consultants

Legal: David Reid, Cox & Palmer
Audit: Grant Thornton

*The strength of the team is each individual member.
The strength of each member is the team.*

Environmental Research Advisory Committee

Rod Doane, *Fisheries and Oceans Canada, Chair*
Gord MacDonald, *Area 23 Snow Crab Fisherman's Association*
Lucia MacIsaac, *Cape Breton University*
Sandra Farwell, *Nova Scotia Department of Energy*
Graham Daborn, *Acadia University*
Edwin DeMont, *St. Francis Xavier University*
John Wanczycki, *Environmental Services Association Nova Scotia (ESANS)*
Eric Theriault, *CNSOPB*
Stephen Dempsey, *(Executive Director) OERA*

Geoscience Research Advisory Committee

Sandy MacMullan, *Nova Scotia Department of Energy*
Kim Doane, *Nova Scotia Department of Energy*
Carl Makrides, *CNSOPB*
Brent Smith, *CNSOPB*
Andrew MacRae, *Saint Mary's University*
Sonya Dehler, *Natural Resources Canada*
John Hogg, *MGM Energy Corporation*
Paul Durling, *Corridor Resources*
Mladen Nedimovic, *Dalhousie University*
Stephen Dempsey (Executive Director) - *OERA*

Tidal Area Sub-Committee

Keith Towse, *LaHave Renewable Inc., Chair*
Ashley Sprague, *Ecology Action Centre*
Anna Redden, *Acadia University*
Chris Peters, *Minus Pulp & Paper*
Mana Wareham, *NS Department of Energy*
Ken Lee, *DFO*
Joe Kozak, *FORCE*
Dan Thompson, *Nova Scotia Power*
Alain Joseph, *NSCC*
Deborah Greaves, *University of Plymouth*
Stephen Dempsey, *OERA*

Marine Sound Area Sub-Committee

Gord MacDonald, *Area 23 Snow Crab Fisherman's Association, Chair*
Eric Theriault, *CNSOPB*
Paul Barnes, *CAPP*
Kim Doane, *Nova Scotia Department of Energy*
Hilary Moors-Murphy, *Fisheries & Oceans Canada*
Jim Theriault, *Defense Research & Development Canada (DRDC)*
Stephen Dempsey, *OERA*

The achievements of an organization are the results of the combined effort of each individual.



Our past, our present, and whatever remains of our future, absolutely depend on what we do now.



Independent auditor's report

Grant Thornton LLP
Suite 1100
2000 Barrington Street
Halifax, NS
B3J 3K1
T (902) 421-1734
F (902) 420-1068
www.GrantThornton.ca

To the members of the Board of Directors of
Offshore Energy Research Association of Nova Scotia

We have audited the accompanying financial statements of Offshore Energy Research Association of Nova Scotia, which comprise the balance sheet as at March 31, 2014 and the statements of revenue and expenses and net assets and cash flows for the year then ended, and a summary of significant accounting policies and other explanatory information.

Management's responsibility for the financial statements

Management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of these financial statements in accordance with Canadian accounting standards for not-for-profit organizations, and for such internal control as management determines is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

Auditor's responsibility

Our responsibility is to express an opinion on these financial statements based on our audits. We conducted our audits in accordance with Canadian generally accepted auditing standards. Those standards require that we comply with ethical requirements and plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements are free from material misstatement.

An audit involves performing procedures to obtain audit evidence about the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. The procedures selected depend on the auditor's judgment, including the assessment of the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error. In making those risk assessments, the auditor considers internal control relevant to the Association's preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the Association's internal control. An audit also includes evaluating the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates made by management, as well as evaluating the overall presentation of the financial statements.

We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained in our audits is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our audit opinion.

Opinion

In our opinion, the financial statements present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of Offshore Energy Research Association of Nova Scotia as at March 31, 2014, and the results of its operations and its cash flows for the year then ended in accordance with Canadian accounting standards for not-for-profit organizations.

Halifax, Canada
June 16, 2014

A stylized, handwritten-style signature of "Grant Thornton LLP" in black ink.

Chartered accountants

Offshore Energy Research Association of Nova Scotia Statements of revenue and expenses and net assets

Year ended March 31	2014	2013
Revenue		
Contributions (note 4)	\$ 2,352,954	\$ 2,007,425
Management services agreement	19,838	56,593
Interest income (note 3)	84,442	98,774
	<u>2,457,234</u>	<u>2,162,792</u>
Cost of research		
Projects	2,128,964	1,704,049
Research management	223,990	115,370
Seminars and forums	-	188,006
	<u>2,352,954</u>	<u>2,007,425</u>
Excess revenue before operations expenses	<u>104,280</u>	<u>155,367</u>
Expenses		
Advertising and promotion	28,015	36,730
Board and committee expenses	3,162	2,082
Business development	8,947	8,251
Information technology	42,808	54,421
Insurance	6,205	7,447
Interest and service charges	9,281	7,558
Office and miscellaneous	10,033	17,479
Professional fees – audit, accounting and legal	33,918	54,250
Professional fees – governance	-	16,957
Rent – premises	28,991	28,058
Salaries and benefits	205,107	332,225
	<u>376,467</u>	<u>565,458</u>
Project revenue recovery of overhead	<u>(354,827)</u>	<u>-</u>
	<u>21,640</u>	<u>566,458</u>
Excess revenue over expenses (expenses over revenue)	\$ <u>82,640</u>	\$ <u>(410,091)</u>
Net assets, beginning of year	\$ 3,269,652	\$ 3,679,743
Excess of revenue over expenses (expenses over revenue)	<u>82,640</u>	<u>(410,091)</u>
Net assets, end of year	\$ <u>3,352,292</u>	\$ <u>3,269,652</u>

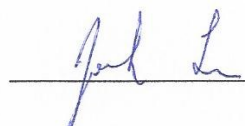
See accompanying notes to the financial statements.

**Offshore Energy Research Association of Nova Scotia
Balance sheet**

March 31	2014	2013
Assets		
Current		
Cash	\$ 345,162	\$ 53,667
Short term investments (note 3)	5,803,845	7,514,170
Receivables	32,692	284,320
HST recoverable	156,736	227,408
Prepaid expenses	47,358	6,755
	<u>\$ 6,385,793</u>	<u>\$ 8,086,320</u>
Liabilities		
Current		
Payables and accruals	\$ 429,820	\$ 326,981
Deferred revenue (note 4)	2,603,681	4,489,687
	<u>3,033,501</u>	<u>4,816,668</u>
Net assets	<u>3,352,292</u>	<u>3,269,652</u>
	<u>\$ 6,385,793</u>	<u>\$ 8,086,320</u>

On behalf of the Board

 Director

 Director

See accompanying notes to the financial statements.

Offshore Energy Research Association of Nova Scotia Statement of cash flows

Year ended March 31 2014 2013

Increase (decrease) in cash and cash equivalents

Operating

Excess revenue over expenses (expenses over revenue)	\$ 82,640	\$ (410,091)
Change in non-cash operating working capital		
Receivables	251,628	151,640
HST recoverable	70,672	594,403
Prepaid expenses	(40,603)	24,786
Payables and accruals	102,839	94,300
Deferred revenue	<u>(1,886,006)</u>	<u>(1,398,095)</u>
Net decrease in cash and cash equivalents	<u>(1,418,830)</u>	<u>(943,057)</u>
Cash and cash equivalents, beginning of year	<u>7,567,837</u>	<u>8,510,894</u>
Cash and cash equivalents, end of year	<u>\$ 6,149,007</u>	<u>\$ 7,567,837</u>

Cash and cash equivalents consist of:

Cash	\$ 345,162	\$ 53,667
Short term investments	<u>5,803,845</u>	<u>7,514,170</u>
	<u>\$ 6,149,007</u>	<u>\$ 7,567,837</u>

See accompanying notes to the financial statements.

Offshore Energy Research Association of Nova Scotia Notes to the financial statements

March 31, 2014

1. Nature of operations

Offshore Energy Research Association of Nova Scotia ("OERA" or the "Association") was incorporated under the Canadian Business Corporations Act on March 22, 2006. It serves communities, corporations and governments requiring information through research into the impacts of offshore energy activity. It is exempt under the Income Tax Act as a non-profit organization.

2. Summary of significant accounting policies

These financial statements have been prepared in accordance with Canadian accounting standards for not-for-profit organizations ("ASNPO") and include the following significant accounting policies:

Revenue recognition

The Association follows the deferral method of accounting for contributions. Contributions from the Provincial Department of Energy and other government sources are allocated to projects as intended upon receipt and recognized as revenue in the year which related expenditures are incurred. Contributions receivable are recorded if the amount to be received can be reasonably estimated and collection is reasonably assured. Revenue for the management service agreement and interest are recorded on the accrual basis, once collectability is reasonably assured.

Deferred revenue

Deferred revenue consists of that portion of contributions received but not yet earned.

Revenue received as grants or contributions and intended for specific project expenditures as envisioned when the grant was made are recorded as deferred revenue. Once an actual expenditure is incurred, an equal or appropriate amount of deferral is recognized as revenue in the year. Deferred revenue thereby consists of contributions received from government for specific purposes for which expenditure contracts may not yet be undertaken.

Cash and cash equivalents

Cash and cash equivalents for the purpose of the statement of cash flows include cash on hand, balances with banks and short term investments.

Contracts for office services

Expenditures for salaries and benefits are allocated between research projects and overhead expenses on an estimated basis. The expense named "Salaries and benefits" is the Association's staff costs of administration including the applicable portion of the costs of the Executive Director.

Use of estimates

Management reviews the carrying amounts of items in the financial statements at each balance sheet date to assess the need for revision or any possibility of impairment. Many items in the preparation of these financial statements require management's best estimate. Management determines these estimates based on assumptions that reflect the most probable set of economic conditions and planned courses of action. These estimates are reviewed periodically and adjustments are made to net income as appropriate in the year they become known.

Offshore Energy Research Association of Nova Scotia Notes to the financial statements

March 31, 2014

2. Summary of significant accounting policies (continued)

Financial instruments

The Association considers any contract creating a financial asset, liability or equity instrument as a financial instrument, except in certain limited circumstances. The Association accounts for the following as financial instruments:

- cash and cash equivalents
- receivables
- payables and accruals

A financial asset or liability is recognized when the Association becomes party to contractual provisions of the instrument.

Unless otherwise noted, it is management's opinion that the Association is not exposed to significant interest, currency or credit risks arising from these financial instruments. The fair values of these financial instruments approximate their carrying value, unless otherwise noted.

Initial measurement

The Association's financial instruments are measured at fair value when issued or acquired. For financial instruments subsequently measured at cost or amortized cost, fair value is adjusted by the amount of the related financing fees and transaction costs. Transaction costs and financing fees relating to financial instruments that are measured subsequently at fair value are recognized in operations in the year in which they are incurred.

Subsequent measurement

At each reporting date, the Association measures its financial assets and liabilities at cost or amortized cost (less impairment in the case of financial assets), except for equities quoted in an active market, which must be measured at fair value. The financial instruments measured at amortized cost are cash and cash equivalents, accounts receivable, grants receivable and accounts payable.

For financial assets measured at cost or amortized cost, the Association regularly assesses whether there are any indications of impairment. If there is an indication of impairment, and the Association determines that there is a significant adverse change in the expected timing or amount of future cash flows from the financial asset, it recognizes an impairment loss in the statement of operations. Any reversals of previously recognized impairment losses are recognized in operations in the year the reversal occurs.

3. Short term investments				<u>2014</u>	<u>2013</u>
	<u>Cost</u>	<u>Accrued Interest</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Market</u>	<u>Market</u>
RBC Investment					
Savings Account	\$ <u>5,803,845</u>	\$ <u>-</u>	\$ <u>5,803,845</u>	\$ <u>5,803,845</u>	\$ <u>7,514,170</u>

Interest earned on the investments was \$84,442 (2013 - \$98,774).

**Offshore Energy Research Association of Nova Scotia
Notes to the financial statements**

March 31, 2014

4. Deferred revenue			<u>2014</u>	<u>2013</u>
	<u>Funding</u>	Recognized as revenue (<u>contributions</u>)	Deferred revenue	Deferred revenue
Research projects	\$ 429,948	\$ (2,352,954)	\$ 2,516,681	\$ 4,439,687
Seminars and forums	<u>37,000</u>	<u>-</u>	87,000	<u>50,000</u>
	\$ <u>466,948</u>	\$ <u>(2,352,954)</u>	\$ 2,603,681	\$ <u>4,489,687</u>

The majority of the deferred revenue has been received from the Department of Energy.

5. Comparative figures

Certain of the figures for 2013 have been reclassified to conform with the financial statement presentation adopted for 2014.



Robert MacKay
Director

Bob MacKay is the principal of RAMentor Strategic Consulting and provides strategic planning advice to companies in their business dealings with governments and the petroleum sector.

Prior to his retirement in 2004 from the public service of the Province of Nova Scotia, Bob MacKay held a number of senior executive positions in the government of Nova Scotia, the most recent of which were Senior Advisor to the Premier and as Chief Executive Officer of the Office of Economic Development. During the 1990's, Mr. MacKay served as Deputy Minister for the Technology and Science Secretariat, Intergovernmental Affairs, Priorities and Planning Secretariat and dual roles as Premier's Deputy and Secretary to the Executive Council.

Prior to joining the provincial government, Mr. MacKay was a business management consultant specializing in the energy sector. His consultancy business followed 11 years with Petro-Canada where he had operational responsibility for the company's activities in the Maritimes and provided staff support for undertakings throughout Atlantic Canada. Since 2009, Mr. MacKay had been the chairperson of the Transitional Board, Nova Scotia Agricultural College (NSAC), who's task was to develop a new governance model for NSAC as it ceased to be part of a Provincial Government Department. NSAC is now part of Dalhousie University as a Faculty of Agriculture and is governed as such.



Tom Herman
Vice-Chair and Director

TOM HERMAN is Vice-President Academic and Professor of Biology at Acadia University. For more than 30 years, he and his students have explored the interface between humans and biodiversity.

A population biologist with particular interest in small fragmented populations and their conservation, he is also keenly interested in the role of science in managing protected areas, and in the role of citizen science and community engagement in recovery of species-at-risk. Tom sits on several national and regional advisory committees on endangered biodiversity, and holds an adjunct appointment in Natural Resource Sciences at McGill University. He is also Vice-Chair of the Mersey Tobeatic Research Institute, Vice-Chair of the Acadia Centre for Social and Business Entrepreneurship and a former President of the Canadian Society of Zoologists.



Bruce Cameron
Director and Secretary

BRUCE CAMERON is Executive Director Sustainable and Renewable Energy. He leads the Department of Energy on renewable energy, electricity policy, energy conservation and efficiency and growing the use of natural gas. He is the Government's representative on the Board of the Province's offshore energy research associations – OERA. Mr. Cameron did his undergraduate work in the social sciences at Carleton University in Ottawa and received an MBA from Dalhousie University in 1985.

Mr. Cameron has been involved in energy issues and policies since 1999 in a variety of leadership roles. He also spent three and a half years with the Nova Scotia Department of Finance.



Jim Gogan
Director

JIM GOGAN graduated from St. Francis Xavier University with an Honors Degree in Business Administration and from Dalhousie University with a Bachelor of Laws Degree. Jim subsequently obtained his Chartered Accounting designation and practiced within an Atlantic Canadian Accounting Firm. He is a partner with the law firm, The Breton Group, and practices primarily in the areas of commercial, taxation and energy law.

In his practice, Jim has had the opportunity to represent a number of private and public sector interests in various commercial matters. Jim has acted as Counsel for the Province of Nova Scotia on a number of energy related matters, including the Sable Offshore Energy Project and the EnCana Deep Panuke Project. In the course of his energy law practice, Jim regularly appears before a number of regulatory agencies and tribunals on these issues.



Robert Bailey
Director

ROBERT BAILEY is a BSc and MSc graduate of the University of Guelph and was a Research Associate at the Institute for Environmental Studies at the University of Toronto for two years. Following this position, he completed his doctoral studies at The University of Western Ontario and then became a faculty member at Western. His research focused on applied freshwater ecology as well as teaching courses in biostatistics, aquatic ecology, population genetics and environmental science.

In 2000, Dr. Bailey was appointed Director of the Environmental Science Graduate Program at The University of Western Ontario and subsequently Director of Environmental Research Western and the Undergraduate Program in Environmental Science. One of his most satisfying achievements during those years at Western was being a team member responsible for the creation of Western's interdisciplinary Centre for Environment & Sustainability, which included participants from medicine, business, engineering, social science and science. On July 1, 2009, Dr. Bailey began a five year appointment as Vice-President, Academic & PROVOST, at Cape Breton University where he is also a Professor of Biology. He continues teaching statistics for researchers, and maintains his research program on bioassessment of freshwater ecosystems along with graduate students at The University of Western Ontario and University of New Brunswick through adjunct appointments.



Joshua Leon
Chair & Director

JOSHUA LEON is the Dean of Engineering at Dalhousie University. He previously was Professor and Head of the Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering at the University of Calgary. Before moving to Calgary, Dr. Leon was a faculty member in the Institute of Biomedical Engineering and the Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering at the Ecole Polytechnique de Montreal. He earned his BSc and Master's degrees in Mathematics and a PhD in Biophysics at Dalhousie University.

Throughout his career Dr. Leon has been a very active researcher. He has published over 80 peer reviewed articles on computational science, electromagnetics, bioelectric phenomena and cardiac electrophysiology. His current research focus is on the acceleration of numerical software using Graphics Processing Units (GPU).

Dr. Leon is a co-founder of Acceleware, a publicly traded company based in Calgary Alberta. They are the recognized world leader in General Purpose GPU computing.



Kevin Vessey
Director

J. Kevin Vessey is the Associate Vice President of Research and Dean of Graduate Studies at Saint Mary's University. Dr. Vessey received his BSc and MSc from Dalhousie University and his PhD from Queen's University. Aside from his 16 years as a Professor of Plant Science at the University of Manitoba, he has also been a Researcher Associate at North Carolina State University, and a Visiting Scientist at the Institut National de la Recherche Agronomique, France. Dr. Vessey took up his current positions at Saint Mary's University in 2005.

Dr. Vessey's teaching and research area is plant physiology, particularly the functional interactions between crop plants and beneficial micro-organisms, and the optimizing of oil-seed crops as biodiesel feedstocks. He has published over 65 peer-reviewed scholarly articles and book chapters and has co-edited one book. He has supervised over twenty graduate students and has been awarded several regional and national research awards.

Positions in which Dr. Vessey has recently served, or is currently serving, include Grant Selection Committees of the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council, Advisory Committees for the NS-CIHR Research Partnership Program, the Nova Scotia Research and Innovation Trust, Petroleum Research Atlantic Canada, and TRIUMF (the Tri-University Meson Facility), and the Boards of Directors for the Atlantic Environmental Sciences Network, Offshore Energy Technology Research Association, and Plant Inoculants Canada.



Keith De'Bell
Director

Keith De'Bell is the Associate Vice President Research at St. Francis Xavier University a post he has held since August 2009. He has extensive experience as a researcher and as a University Administrator. His previous administrative roles included those of the Associate Dean of Arts and Sciences (Science) at Trent University, Dean of Science Applied Science and Engineering at University of New Brunswick (Saint John), and Special Advisor on Health Education and Research to the President and Vice-President (Saint John) at University of New Brunswick.

A particular feature of his work over the last ten years has been working with inter-organizational and inter-sectorial partnerships to increase capacity in areas such as health research and poverty reduction. While at University of New Brunswick (Saint John) he was the project lead for a partnership involving two universities, a community college and a regional health authority to develop interprofessional education for improved health care. The National Collaborating Centre for Determinants of Health, hosted by St. Francis Xavier University and funded through the Public Health Agency of Canada, reports to Dr. De'Bell in his current role as Associate Vice-President Research. He maintains a personal interest in the social determinants of health and community empowerment, particularly in the context of community and public health. As a researcher Dr. De'Bell has published over 70 articles in scholarly journals and given numerous presentations at workshops and conferences. In April 2012 Dr. De'Bell was inducted into the Science Atlantic Hall of Fame as an Outstanding Contributing Member of Science Atlantic/APICS for contributions to that organization over a twelve-year period including a four-year term as Chair of the APICS Council.



Jeff Somerville
Treasurer & Director

A well-respected business and community leader, Jeff became a partner in Venor Search Group in August 2012 to lead its Executive Search Practice. Possessing a vast network and strong connections within Halifax and Atlantic Canada, Jeff has worked in a variety of roles in the region for the past 20 years from leadership in the financial services sector to small business and academia.

Originally from Winnipeg, Jeff earned his BSc (Mathematics) from UBC. He enjoyed a successful 24 year career with the TD Bank, highlighted by the five years he spent in Halifax in the early '90's as Senior Vice President and Region Head for Atlantic Canada. Though Jeff was transferred back to Toronto in 1997, his heart remained in Halifax and he and his wife Angie decided in 2000 to leave the TD and return to Nova Scotia. Jeff then turned his hand to entrepreneurship as managing partner of Premier Executives Suites in its early years and, in 2003, was named one of Atlantic Canada's Top 50 CEO's. From 2003 to 2006, Jeff was Vice-President Business Development at Nova Scotia Community College, and since 2006, he has been an independent consultant, helping a wide range of businesses realize their goals.

An active community volunteer, Jeff has served as Chair of the Halifax Chamber of Commerce and Chair of both the Laing House Association and Laing House Foundation, Treasurer of OTANS, and VP Fund Development at Symphony Nova Scotia. In addition to his board membership at OERA Jeff is a partner at The Carleton Music Bar and Grill, member of the Board of both Nova Scotia College of Art and Design, the Sobey's Pension Investment Committee and is a member of the Atlantic Signature Mortgage and Loans Advisory Board.



Suite 602
5151 George Street

Halifax, Nova Scotia
B3J 1M5