



AQUAHACKING IMPACT REPORT

2020 November



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Throughout this report, the different regional Challenges will be identified according to the following colors:

- British Columbia
- Lake Winnipeg
- Atlantic Canada



A Word from the AquaHacking Team

As we reflect on 2020, to say that it was a year unlike any other is an understatement by far.

COVID-19 hit in March and it impacted our lives, our families, and our communities. For the AquaHacking team, the lock-down came 5 days before our first major in-person event of the year, the British Columbia (BC) Challenge Semi-Final. In the space of that week, the BC AquaHacking organizing team set up offices in our respective homes in Kelowna, Toronto and Montreal. Our commitment to the outcomes of the Challenge and the 169 BC AquaHacking participants who had been working hard to prepare their solutions and pitches, pushed us to climb the steep learning curve of the steep learning curve of managing events on online platforms. The collaborative spirit of everyone involved pulled us through and we successfully pivoted all of our planned programming to virtual.

It was, in large part, the openness and courage of everyone involved that this success was possible. Thank you to our Board of Directors, funders, regional co-host partners, program delivery partners, university recruitment hubs, judges, mentors, and, of course, the 300+ participants: we are very grateful to all of you for your commitment to the shared outcomes of AquaHacking in 2020.

And what were those outcomes this year? In the pages ahead you will read about the 15 incredible teams from coast to coast that developed innovative tech solutions to some of the most critical water issues we face in Canada. Over \$430,000 of seed funding was invested in their newly established water enterprises. Click on the video links throughout included later in this report to hear their pitches, watch the recap video of the virtual expeditions to feel their enthusiasm and read their testimonials. Their talent and passion are inspiring.

We also launched the AquaHacking Alumni program with a virtual networking gathering. It was a wonderful thing to see familiar faces from Challenges of years past, gathered on the screen, sharing their stories and success.

To be working on something as meaningful as solutions to freshwater issues is extremely gratifying. Not much is more essential to life on earth than water. It sustains us, it connects us, it nourishes us all.

With that in mind, we will continue to harness the talent of young Canadians for water tech solutions and support the growth of the water tech enterprises within our growing Alumni community.

We are deeply motivated as a team and look ahead to 2021 and beyond!

The AquaHacking Team

A Word from Valerie Chort, Vice-President of Corporate Citizenship for RBC and Executive Director of the RBC Foundation



Foundation

Canada is blessed with 20% of the world's freshwater, and our large share of the world's freshwater supply means it is critical that Canadians act as guardians and protectors of this valuable resource. At the same time, Canada is home to a strong innovation ecosystem, which presents a secular opportunity to be global leaders by bringing these technology capabilities and natural resources together to create solutions that generate economic value and advance freshwater sustainability in Canada and around the world.

RBC Tech for Nature was created to bring this ambition to life. Through this multi-year commitment, RBC is working to preserve the world's natural ecosystem by fostering new ideas, technologies and partnerships focused on protecting our shared future.

Initiatives like the AquaHacking Challenge help identify, develop and scale the innovative solutions needed to address the complex challenges facing our water systems today, and RBC is proud to be a long-standing partner and supporter of the program. We believe in and are inspired by the ability of young visionaries to create ground-breaking solutions through the Challenge and we are encouraged by their potential to scale.

While it has been a challenging year given the significant impacts of the global pandemic, continuing to make progress towards a more sustainable future is more important than ever, and AquaHacking demonstrated its resilience and ability to thrive in this difficult environment.

Complex challenges require bold solutions, and we are confident that the AquaHacking Challenge has the elements that enable both the discovery of remarkable solutions and the support to ensure they realize their potential.

A Word from Dominique Monchamp, Fondation de Gaspé Beaubien



The de Gaspé Beaubien family has invested significantly in building the AquaHacking program which was founded in 2015. All members of the family are committed to the cause of water and believe deeply in it. Thanks to an extraordinary team of employees and committed partners, the AquaHacking Challenge has become one of the country's leading initiatives in supporting emerging water innovations.

We extend our warm thanks to all the young innovators from coast to coast who participate year after year in the AquaHacking Challenge and are committed to finding concrete solutions to water issues. In doing so, they contribute to improving water conservation and, by becoming entrepreneurs and creating their own businesses, they also contribute to the economic development of our country. This is a winning formula for all stakeholders.

The de Gaspé Beaubien family and I would also like to thank the team of Aqua Forum employees and all of its partners and suppliers who have demonstrated their resilience in these difficult pandemic times. Thanks to their flexibility and openness, they have allowed Aqua Forum to deliver its entire program as planned for the year 2020. You will see from this report that the impact of AquaHacking 2020 programming is indeed miraculous.

All of us at the de Gaspé Beaubien Foundation are very proud to be associated with such a success and Aqua Forum can continue to count on our support for years to come.

Congratulations to all!

Dominique Monchamp

Executive Director of the Fondation de Gaspé Beaubien

**AquaHacking
Challenge**

**AquaHacking
Challenge**

**AquaHacking
Challenge**

**AquaHacking
Challenge**

Highlights

2020 in Numbers



3 AquaHacking Challenges delivered.



100% pivot of all programming to virtual.



386 young innovators engaged.



15 critical water issues tackled.



100 mentors and experts engaged.



58 multi-sector expert judges involved.



39 pitches presented at the Semi-Final events.



17 solutions developed & startups launched.



\$180K seed funding invested and \$250k+ additional funds invested through Mitacs programs



AquaHacking Impact Through Innovation

Helping to restore and maintain freshwater health is our mission. We believe the tech skills, innovative thinking and entrepreneurial drive of young Canadians are key to achieving this mission. The vehicle we have developed to harness them is the AquaHacking Challenge.

The AquaHacking Challenge is a tech innovation program designed to:

- **Engage** tech and next-generation talent to solve critical water issues.
- **Ensure** tech-solutions are demand-driven by partnering with local stakeholders.
- **Empower** young talent to become entrepreneurs and business leaders through mentoring.
- **Enable** the launch of startups through seed funding investment and incubation placements.

While AquaHacking is a **catalyst** for innovation in the water sector, it's also an **entrepreneurial discovery journey** in the water sector for the participants and acts as:

- **A launchpad** for young entrepreneurs in the water sector/startups.
- **A pre-incubator** for young talent in technology and engineering.
- **An investor** in future water leaders.



AquaHacking: Coast to Coast in 2020

Working with regional partners
across Canada

Thanks to the RBC Foundation's Tech For Nature Initiative AquaHacking programming was able to reach more regions across Canada, expand its programming for Alumni and develop new initiatives aimed at safeguarding freshwater.

[Read the full press release about RBC Tech For Nature here.](#)



**British
Columbia**

Hosted by
 Okanagan Basin
WATER BOARD



**Atlantic
Canada**

Hosted by
 Atlantic
Water
Network  SAINT MARY'S
UNIVERSITY



**Lake
Winnipeg**

Presented by
 IISD
International Institute for
Sustainable Development

AquaHacking British Columbia



The **Okanagan Basin Water Board (OBWB)**, headquartered in Kelowna, BC, was formed in 1970 as a valley-wide partnership to identify and resolve critical water issues in the Okanagan watershed between the Okanagan Nation Alliance, the Water Supply Association of BC and the Okanagan Water Stewardship Council. In addition to its Milfoil Control Program and Sewage Facilities Grants Program, the OBWB provides the Water Management Program which includes the Water Stewardship Council (WSC), Water Conservation and Quality Improvement Grants and Water Research, and Communications and Outreach.

AquaHacking Lake Winnipeg



The **International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD)**, headquartered in Winnipeg, MB, is an award-winning independent think tank working to create a world where people and the planet thrive. Their mission is to accelerate solutions for a stable climate, sustainable resources, and fair economies. With offices in Geneva, Ottawa, Toronto, and Winnipeg, their research spans the globe.

AquaHacking Atlantic Canada



The **Atlantic Water Network (AWN)**, based in Halifax, NS, provides equipment, training, and resources for water monitoring organizations and communities throughout Atlantic Canada. They work with organizations on both a national and regional scale to improve water data collection at the community level. AWN is part of the longstanding Community-Based Environmental Monitoring Network and is home to all of its water related resources.

Key Regional Partnership Take-Aways

This was the first year that Aqua Forum embarked on the regional delivery model of the AquaHacking Challenge. It was also the first year that more than 1 edition of the AquaHacking Challenge was delivered simultaneously across the country. The close and collaborative nature of Aqua Forum's relationships with each of its 3 regional partners was central to the success of the 2020 editions of the AquaHacking Challenge, through the program pivots, learnings, adjustments, milestone events, and evaluation processes.

Indeed, 2 key desired outcomes for the regional delivery model for the AquaHacking Challenge are:

- To support the establishment of interregional connections and networks centred on water conservation and protection, and;
- To connect water organizations with “unlikely partners” in the business and technology sectors.

We are pleased to report that each of Aqua Forum's regional partners from 2020 expressed achieving both of these goals:

“The Atlantic Canada AquaHacking Challenge was a good excuse for us to connect with the entrepreneurial world in Atlantic Canada.”
- **Emma Wattie, Atlantic Water Network**

“We were really pleased with the new relationships forged with the tech community through the delivery of the Lake Winnipeg AquaHacking Challenge.” - **Pauline Gerrard, International Institute for Sustainable Development Experimental Lakes Area**

“The interregional connection between regional AquaHacking partners was particularly helpful in navigating the programming pivots during the COVID experience.” - **Carolina Restrepo, Okanagan Basin Water Board**

Aqua Forum is proud of the social capital and networks made accessible to our 2020 regional partner organizations through the co-hosting and co-delivery of the AquaHacking Challenge and interregional collaboration. We are grateful for all we learned alongside regional partners and for the feedback provided which will be integrated in future editions of the Challenge to continue evolving, improving, and growing.

Academic Recruitment Hubs

Recruitment for regional AquaHacking Challenges prioritizes engagement with students and young professionals in the specific Challenge regions but is open for registration by participants from across Canada. The key recruitment audience is university students studying environmental science, engineering, computer science, and business and management. Working closely with professors and administrative staff who serve as recruitment champions in universities, this year the AquaHacking program team **delivered over 20 info-sessions** both on-campus and virtually. Combined with other recruitment activities such as online “Ask Me Anything” sessions with Water Issue Leaders, outreach to entrepreneurial hubs such as incubators and accelerators, and engagement with young professional’s associations, we successfully recruited **386 young innovators** from across Canada in the 2020 AquaHacking Challenges.



Thanks to the recruitment champions from the following academic hubs for their dedication in helping get the word out about the AquaHacking Challenge:

Lake Winnipeg Challenge:

- University of Winnipeg
- University of Manitoba
- Brandon University
- University of Regina
- Red River College
- University of Saskatchewan

British Columbia Challenge:

- Okanagan College
- Simon Fraser University
- Thompson Rivers University
- University of British Columbia Okanagan
- University of British Columbia Vancouver
- University of Victoria
- University of Northern British Columbia
- British Columbia Institute of Technology

Atlantic Canada Challenge:

- Saint Mary’s University
- Dalhousie University
- University of Prince Edward Island
- University of New Brunswick
- Memorial University of Newfoundland
- Cape Breton University
- Holland College



AquaHacking

Enablers of Success

Our multiple partners enable the success of AquaHacking.
Each plays a key role and brings a particular expertise and perspective to the program.



Advisory
Committee



Recruitment
Champions



Mentors



Incubators



Sponsors &
Funding Partners



Water Issue
Leaders



Pitch Competition
Judges

The 2020 Challenge Timeline

Congratulations to all our partners for having adapted so quickly to virtual programming as COVID restrictions hit. It was a remarkable sign of your commitment and our shared resilience.

[Read our news release](#)



3 AquaHacking Challenges delivered through 2020

All programming pivoted to 100% online delivery when COVID-19 struck.



Water Issues & Leaders

15 Critical Water Issues

National issues with a regional focus



Invasive Mussels

James Littley, Okanagan Basin Water Board

▶ The webinar



Stormwater Contamination

Led by Heather Larratt, Larratt Aquatic Consulting Ltd.; and Marta Green, Associated Environmental Consultants Inc.

▶ The webinar



Access to Clean Drinking Water for Indigenous Communities in B.C.

Led by Tessa Terbasket and Sarah Alexis, Okanagan Nation Alliance

▶ The webinar



Risk of Flooding

Led by Steve Litke, FraserBasin Council, and Heather McGrath, Natural Resources Canada

▶ The webinar



Outdoor Water Use

Led by Ed Hoppe, City of Kelowna and Jennifer Miles, Regional District of North Okanagan

▶ The webinar



Microplastics

Led by Chelsea Rochman, University of Toronto, Michael Rennie, Lakehead University and Sarah Warrack, IISD Experimental Lakes Area

▶ The webinar



Fish Health

Led by Vince Palace, Lee Hrenchuk and Lauren Hayhurst from IISD Experimental Lakes Area

▶ The webinar



Financing a Healthier Lake Winnipeg

Led by Geoff Gunn and Madeline Stanley from IISD

▶ The webinar



Drinking Water in Northern Communities

Led by Pauline Gerrard from IISD

▶ The webinar



Water and Land Management

Led by Mitchell Timmerman from Manitoba Agriculture and Resource Development and Alanna Gray from Keystone Agricultural Producers

▶ The webinar



Sediment and Pesticide Runoff

Led by Angela Banks & Mary Finch, PEI Watershed Alliance

▶ The webinar



Microplastics from Fishing gear

Led by Ariel Smith, Coastal Action

▶ The webinar



Algal Blooms and Eutrophication

Led by Roxanne Mckinnon, ACAP St. John

▶ The webinar



Safety of Private Well Drinking Water

Led by Gavin Kennedy, Nova Scotia Department of Energy & Mines and Gordon Check, Nova Scotia Environment

▶ The webinar



Treatment of Drinking Water in Rural and First Nations Communities

Led by Stephanie Gora, formally at Centre for Water Resources Studies, Dalhousie University and Mike Chaulk, CBCL Limited

▶ The webinar

Thank you to the **Water Issues Leaders (WILs)** who offered their time and expertise in the 2020 AquaHacking Challenges. WILs serve as valuable mentors for the teams throughout the Challenge, guiding them through gaining a comprehensive understanding of the water issue, defining the scope of their market, and identifying the needs of end-users.

“They developed a really cool device that will be helpful to users and they really thought through not only the science behind the device, but also the marketing and direct needs of potential consumers.”

- Lake Winnipeg WIL

“Felt like sustainability and business mixed very nicely. Participants brought a great perspective.”

- Lake Winnipeg WIL

“It was a great way to work on the solutions part of water issues, which often isn’t explored much in the realm of non-profit and research work. It was very inspiring!”

- Atlantic Canada WIL

“It was a great way to engage with young entrepreneurs and cross collaborate and learn about other water issues.”

- Lake Winnipeg WIL

“It is definitely a good idea for issues that have a clear technological component.”

- British Columbia WIL

“It was a rewarding experience and the teams benefitted substantially from the opportunities to engage with subject matter experts.”

- Atlantic Canada WIL



A Diverse and Resilient Ecosystem of Actors

Since the AquaHacking Challenge was first launched in 2015, we have seen our community of partners grow year after year. Just as high biodiversity is a sign of a vibrant and resilient environmental ecosystem, a diverse set of organizations within a community of stakeholders sets the stage for new ideas to emerge and thrive.

“Loved meeting with different mentors and industry connections, this was so valuable to us!”

- Participant of the Atlantic Canada 2020 AquaHacking Challenge



Workshops available to all participants:

- Ask Me Anything Sessions (with WIL & Alumni)
- Design Thinking
- Machine Learning & Artificial Intelligence by **IBM**
- Legal Affairs for Startups 101 by **Lavery Lawyers**
- Pitch Perfect

Workshops available to the Finalists:

- **Mitacs** 101
- Water Leadership Retreat by **Waterlution**
- Governmental Relations 101 by **OBWB**
- Pitch Perfect for the Final events by **Purrpl**, **First Customer Club**, and **SMU Entrepreneurship Center**



TECH & BUSINESS MENTORSHIP 360°

Through the 3 Challenges we engaged 100 experts and mentors to guide and advise the participants and the Finalists through the development of their tech solutions and their business plans. In Phase 2 of the Challenge, most of the mentors and experts were employees of our national and regional sponsors. Special kudos to **RBC**, **OVIVO** and **Lavery Lawyers** who provided several mentors and judges to each of the regional Challenges.



“Connecting with experienced professionals in various sectors was helpful not only in regards to our solution but also eye opening in terms of how science impacts industry.”

- Participant of the Lake Winnipeg 2020 AquaHacking Challenge



AQUAHACKING ALUMNI NETWORK

As we nurture our Alumni network, we welcome all Challenge Semi-Finalists (and Finalists) to this growing innovation ecosystem.

[Discover more about the Alumni Network here](#)

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“The support we received exceeded my expectations. The connections with the mentors and their willingness to support our development surprised me.”

**- Participant of the Atlantic Canada 2020 AquaHacking Challenge**

“Being able to get in contact with so many different experts was crucial for us to understand the problem we are working on from each perspective and finding our market niche.”

**- Participant of the Lake Winnipeg 2020 AquaHacking Challenge**

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Hackworks is our program delivery partner and we are proud to be working with this dynamic and deeply committed team - that helped us navigate the pivot to virtual. This hands-on virtual team welcomes and guides the participants from registration through to the semi-final, providing all the key resources they may need: step-by-step itinerary, team building, training workshops, mentors, etc.

“Making so much progress in such a short amount of time thanks to experts and mentors.”

- Participant of the British Columbia 2020 AquaHacking Challenge

“Definitely helped us significantly with our business plan and pitch because we did not have much prior experience.”

- Participant of the British Columbia 2020 AquaHacking Challenge

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**Waterlution** is our program partner that designs and facilitates the water leadership retreat. They too were able to pivot and convert their content from on-the-water to virtual and maintain the engaging and impactful outcomes. Their program redesign enabled Finalists to connect with water and watershed stakeholders and to develop critical leadership skills.

# Meet the AquaHacking Challenge Winners of 2020

“The AquaHacking Challenge was one hell of a journey. Along the way a lot of people helped us to develop our business model and also gave us the energy to bring it to the next level. We are all grateful for our AquaHacking experience, thank you very much.”

- Team Ozero

# 1

## Ozero Invasive Mussels



### Team members

(all from the Université de Sherbrooke, QC)

- **Benjamin Farley** - Co-founder and Electrical System Development Manager
- **Maxime Guay** - Co-founder and Marketing Manager
- **Olivier Harpin** - Co-founder and R&D Manager
- **Olivier Liberge** - Co-founder and Communications Manager
- **Christophe Morin** - Co-founder and Computer programming Manager
- **Matys Tessier** - Co-founder and Financial Expert

### Solution

An innovative technology to decontaminate ballast water in recreational boats to prevent the propagation of zebra and quagga mussels in freshwater.

### Prize package:

- + \$20,000 seed funding
- + Lavery Lawyers credits
- + Spot in a local startup incubator

▶ Their pitch | [ozerosolutions.com](http://ozerosolutions.com)

**OZERO**

**1st place**

**BC AWARDS AQUAHACKING 2020 CHALLENGE**

**OZERO**

Benjamin Farley, Co-founder and Electrical System Development Manager (Sherbrooke University)

Maxime Guay, Co-founder and Marketing Manager (Sherbrooke University)

Olivier Harpin, Co-founder and R&D Manager (Sherbrooke University)

Olivier Liberge, Co-founder and Communications Manager (Sherbrooke University)

Christophe Morin, Co-founder and Computer programming Manager (Sherbrooke University)

Matys Tessier, Co-founder and Financial Expert (Sherbrooke University)



British Columbia

# 2

## GAPSS Stormwater Contamination



### Team members (all from UBC Okanagan)

- **Jacob Sol** - Chief Executive Officer (CEO)
- **Rudransh Kumar** - Chief Business Officer (CBO)
- **Cole White-Robinson** - Chief Financial Officer (CFO)
- **Jayden Wong** - Chief Technical Officer (CTO)
- **Graeme Kumagai** - Chief Design Officer (CDO)

### Solution

An engineered system that fits beneath existing stormwater drain basins to remove hydrocarbon compounds, sediment, and particulate matter from the point source.

### Prize package:

- + \$15,000 seed funding
- + Lavery Lawyers credits
- + Spot in a local startup incubator matching funds

▶ Their pitch | **Social Media: @gapssystem**



British Columbia

→ Meet the AquaHacking Challenge winners of 2020

AquaHacking — 2020 Impact Report

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# 3

## Above Atlantis Flood Damage



### Team members

- **Jay Matsushiba** - Project Lead (Simon Fraser University)
- **Hanieh Daliri** - Data Analyst (UBC Vancouver)
- **Shantanu Dutt** - Environmental Scientist (Simon Fraser University)
- **Joshua Kamijan** - Social Media and Communications Specialist (UBC Vancouver)

### Solution

Above Atlantis addresses the urgent need to provide accurate, intuitive and timely flood information. Our solution provides comprehensive data cataloguing, data collection, flood modelling, and 3D data visualization for communities affected by flooding. We aim to make these tools affordable and accessible to small communities throughout BC.

### Prize package:

- + **\$10,000** seed funding
- + Lavery Lawyers credits
- + Spot in a local startup incubator matching funds

▶ Their pitch | [aboveatlantis.com](http://aboveatlantis.com)

# 4

## Elite Stormwater Contamination



public choice award

### Team members (all from UBC Okanagan)

- **Ahmed Ramadan** - Research and Analysis
- **Harvir Mann** - Marketing Strategist
- **Keyvan Khadem** - Chief Executive Office (CEO)
- **Gavin Saini** - Finance Officer

### Solution

A sustainable gravity-based filtration system that removes oil, hard metals and petroleum contaminants from stormwater runoffs. This innovative, cost-efficient filtration system can filter out contaminants from commercial, residential and municipal runoffs and allows for future modifications without extra expense.

### Prize package:

- + **\$2,500** seed funding
- + **\$1,000** Audience Choice Award
- + Spot in a local startup incubator matching funds

▶ Their pitch | **Social Media:** @elite.250

# 5

## UniteAG Stormwater Contamination



### Team members

- **Waseem Jawad** - Chief Business Officer (Queen's University)
- **Luke Trinity** - Chief Operating Officer (University of Victoria)

### Solution

A digital platform dedicated to protecting water quality by establishing a better relationship between farmers and government programs, and providing novel insights about human behavior to agricultural policy makers and stakeholders.

### Prize package:

- + **\$2,500** seed funding
- + Spot in a local startup incubator matching funds

▶ Their pitch | [www.uniteag.com](http://www.uniteag.com)

# Meet the AquaHacking Challenge Winners of 2020

“I’m speechless. It’s unbelievable what this AquaHacking competition does and I can’t wait to see what happens going forward with all the teams and with our solution,” says **Quinn Desrochers, CEO of winning team** Particuleye Technologies. “Thanks to all the sponsors and supporters, and the mentors who answered all our questions and helped us out along the way.”

## 1 Particuleye Technologies Microplastics



### Team members

- **Quinn Desrochers** - CEO – Project Management (University of Manitoba)
- **Michael Beck** - CTO – Hardware & Embedded Systems (University of Winnipeg)
- **Ryan Tran** - CIO, Image Processing & Programming (University of Manitoba)
- **Zacharie Gousseau** - CIO, Image Processing & Programming (University of Manitoba)
- **Waseem Jawad** - CFO – Finance & Marketing (Queen’s University)

### Solution

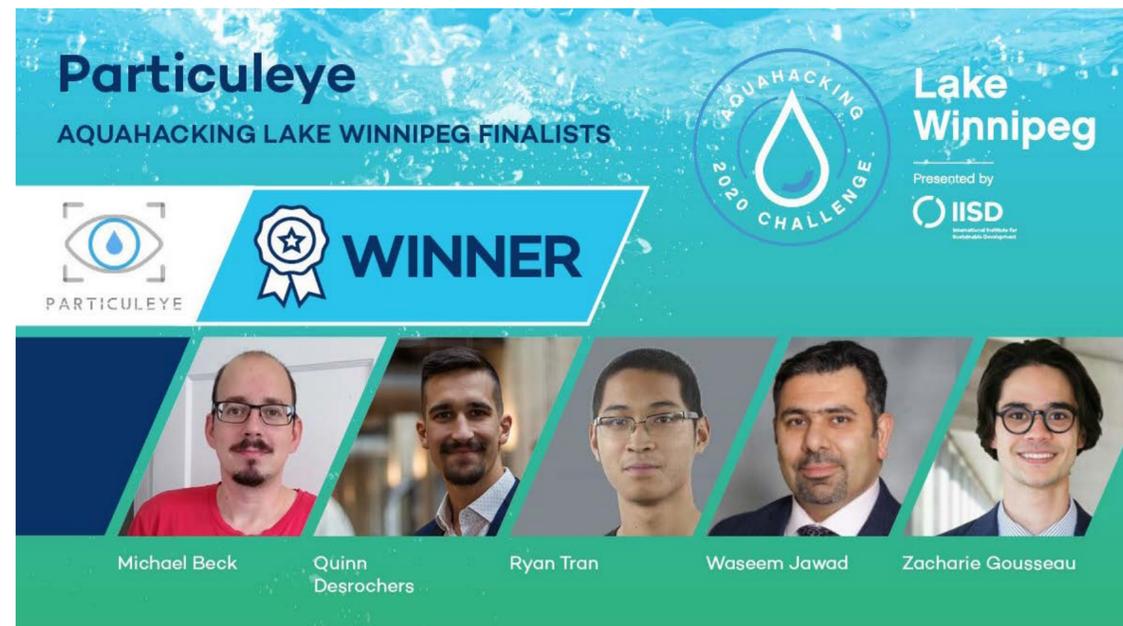
The Particuleye is a smart camera capable of quantifying and classifying microplastic particles

in real time through running water, using machine learning and image processing techniques. Initially, we will apply our device in lab settings and to effluent from wastewater treatment plants to provide accurate microplastics profiles without the need for time-intensive lab analysis.

### Prize package:

- + \$20,000 seed funding
- + Lavery Lawyers credits
- + Spot in a local startup incubator matching funds

▶ Their pitch | [LinkedIn: @particuleye](#)



Lake Winnipeg



## LasIR Nutrient Technology Water and Land Management

### Team members (all from University of Manitoba)

- **Bentley Turner** - Co-Founder
- **Meagan Smith** - Co-Founder

### Solution

Our solution is a portable device that uses infrared spectroscopy to analyze plant-available phosphate concentrations in soil, providing users with on-site, real-time results. We hope to reduce agricultural phosphorus runoff by providing this device to agronomists and consulting companies as a decision support tool that will be easier and cheaper to use than current alternatives.

### Prize package:

- + \$15,000 seed funding
- + Lavery Lawyers credits
- + Spot in a local startup incubator matching funds

▶ Their pitch | [Social Media: @lasirnutrient\\_tech](#)

→  
**Meet the  
AquaHacking  
Challenge  
winners of  
2020**



**Lake  
Winnipeg**

**3**

**Typha Co,**  
Watershed Investment



**Team members** (all from University of Manitoba)

- **Alec Masse**, Chief Reputation Officer and Marketing
- **Julien Koga** - Product Development and Research Lead

**Solution**

Typha Co. is developing eco- packaging products that will compete economically with plastics while maintaining a high standard of environmental responsibility. The products will be made from fibres extracted from cattail plants, significant contributors to the eutrophication of Lake Winnipeg.

**Prize package:**

- + **\$10,000** seed funding
- + Lavery Lawyers credits
- + Spot in a local startup incubator matching funds

▶ Their pitch | [typhacompany.com](http://typhacompany.com)

**4**

**Water Secure**  
Drinking Water



**Team members** (all from University of Regina)

- **Arslan Azeem** - Business Analyst
- **Noor Tajik** - Operations & Communications Manager
- **Tinsae Alemu** - Water Quality Specialist

**Solution**

Water Secure is a series of localized testing hubs that affordably track water quality and upload the data to a live water map that can be used to raise public awareness, help governments identify and invest in infrastructure gaps, and increase the population health and water security of remote communities.

**Prize package:**

- + **\$2,500** seed funding
- + Spot in a local startup incubator matching funds

▶ Their pitch  
[watersecure.ca](http://watersecure.ca) | **Social Media:** @watersecurenet

**5**

**AbbaTek**  
Microplastics



**Team members**

- **Abdul-Latif Alhassan** - Policy & Partnerships (Memorial University of Newfoundland)
- **Ivo Arrey** - Research & Development (Memorial University of Newfoundland)
- **Sam Swanson** - Business & Marketing (University of Manitoba)

**Solution**

AbbaTek is developing CompoundConnect, a complete suite of software as a service (SaaS) package that will revolutionize microplastics research by leveraging state- of-the-art machine learning and artificial intelligence for researchers to quickly, accurately, and cost-effectively identify microplastics in Lake Winnipeg for improved water management and policy.

**Prize package:**

- + **\$2,500** seed funding
- + Spot in a local startup incubator matching funds

▶ Their pitch | **Social Media:** @abbatekgroup  
[abbatekgroup.com](http://abbatekgroup.com)

# Meet the AquaHacking Challenge Winners of 2020

Public choice award



## Clean Catch Baits Microplastics from Fishing Gear

**Team members** (all from Saint Mary's University)

- **Guillermo Villarreal De Lara** - President & CEO
- **Katherine van Zutphen** - Operations Manager
- **Robel Berhane** - Chief Financial Officer

### Solution

A 100% biodegradable, PVC-free soft-bait fishing lured for recreational fishing, developed through a unique organic biopolymer solution.

### Prize package:

- + \$20,000 seed funding
- + \$1,000 Audience Choice Award
- + Lavery Lawyers credits
- + Spot in a local startup incubator matching funds

“Wow. This feels incredible. All of us were pretty honored to just make it all to the Final. Now to be placed first — we are over the moon right now. I just think it’s a really good thing that the Atlantic Water Network and AquaHacking are bringing more recognition to the water issues that competition has focused on. The fact that we can take our business to the next level makes me very happy!”

- **Robel, Clean Catch Baits**

▶ Their pitch | [cleancatchbaits.com](http://cleancatchbaits.com)



Atlantic Canada



## Clarify Private Well Safety

**CLARIFY.**

**Team members**

- **Adam Fleiger** - Lead Web Developer
- **Alexandra Embree** - Director of Operations
- **Jonathan Kan** - Product Director
- **Liam Hartery** - Lead Mobile Developer

### Solution

Clarify is an online platform designed to make the water testing experience for well owners easy and affordable.

### Prize package:

- + \$15,000 seed funding
- + Lavery Lawyers credits
- + Spot in a local startup incubator matching funds

▶ Their pitch



→  
**Meet the  
AquaHacking  
Challenge  
winners of  
2020**



# 3



## Water Integrated Design and Empowerment (WIDE)

### Drinking Water in Rural and Indigenous Communities

**Team members** (all students and graduates from University of New Brunswick)

- **Sochima Nnama** - Technical and Business Development
- **Nathan McNally** - Technical Development
- **Grace McNally** - Brand Development
- **Mudiwa Mharapara** - Business Development and Community Outreach
- **Ben Veysey** - Technical Development
- **Lauren Martin** - Technical Development
- **Rachel Hudson** - Community Outreach
- **Patrick Palmer** - Community Outreach
- **Waseem Jawad** - Business Development

#### Solution

A containerized distillation water treatment system that integrates off-the-shelf, existing technologies to provide high quality trusted water to small rural and Indigenous communities in an accessible, sustainable, and culturally appropriate way.

#### Prize package:

- + \$10,000 seed funding
- + Lavery Lawyers credits
- + Spot in a local startup incubator matching funds

▶ Their pitch

# 4



## EXTech MIP

### Private Well Safety

**Team members** (both from Memorial University of Newfoundland)

- **Aliasghar Golbabanezhadazizi** - Chief Technology Officer
- **Fereshteh Shahhoseini** - Chief Executive Officer

#### Solution

A novel technology for easy onsite sampling of organic contaminants in well water using a field-deployable and inexpensive device.

#### Prize package:

- + \$2,500 seed funding
- + Spot in a local startup incubator matching funds

▶ Their pitch | [extechmip.ca](http://extechmip.ca)

# 5



## What the Well

### Private Well Safety

**Team members**

- **Samuel Coleman** - Lead Software Developer
- **Matthew Mizzi** - General Manager
- **Robert Afari** - Head of Operations (Saint Mary's University)
- **Anita Taylor** - Head of Data Science

#### Solution

A service to streamline the water analysis process using test kits and cloud analysis to reduce known barriers and increase well testing. Our solution will provide instant water analysis and treatment consultation.

#### Prize package:

- + \$2,500 seed funding
- + Spot in a local startup incubator matching funds

▶ Their pitch | [whatthewell.ca](http://whatthewell.ca)  
**Social Media:** @WhatTheWellca

## Social Media Engagement & The AquaHacking Podcast

### 2020 CAMPAIGN (January to November 2020)

#### Kudos to our growing social media communities

LinkedIn (+80%)  
Instagram (+44%)

**Total Reach: 480 624**

 21 272     372 600  
 62 514     24 233

**Virtual Live events (views): 7,291**

#### Canada Water Agency Webinars with Quebec Partners

450 participants  
201 views on Youtube

### THE AQUAHACKING PODCAST (January to November 2020)



Hosted by Aidan Mattrick, one of the original co-founders of AquaHacking, The AquaHacking Podcast explored freshwater issues through engaging conversations with experts from various organizations, and explored how new technologies are being used to address some of Canada's complex water issues.

Available on Spotify, Apple Podcast, Google Podcasts & Stitcher

- **6 episodes** featuring Naysan Saran from CANN Forecast (Winner AH'16), Jason Deglint from Blue Lion Labs (Winner AH'17), Bernadette Conant from Canadian Water Network, David Ullrich former Director of the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities Initiative & Nan-b de Gaspé Beaubien, co-chair of the de Gaspé Beaubien foundation and Aqua Forum.
- **Most popular episode:** Bad Blooms: The Dark Side of Algae featuring Jason Deglint from the Blue Lion.
- **266 downloads total to date**

# Media & Videos



A look back at the tech startup competition in Atlantic Canada



Winnipeg Team videos



Atlantic Canada Teams



Press release: Young Manitoban Innovators Win \$20,000 Seed Funding in National Competition to Save Lake Winnipeg



Press release: B.C. AquaHacking Challenge 2020 Winners Announced



Melissa Dick & Corinne Jackson “Harnessing young tech talent to address key water issues in BC Article in BCWWA WaterMark Magazine.



Melissa Dick & Kariann Aarup “Youth Leading Innovation” Article in Water Canada Magazine

[Check our news page](#)

Check out the **AquaHacking social media** and **Youtube channel** for more videos & content!



Click on the thumbnails to read, listen or watch.

**AquaHacking  
Alumni Program**

**AquaHacking  
Alumni Program**

**AquaHacking  
Alumni Program**

**AquaHacking  
Alumni Program**

## What is the AquaHacking Alumni Program?

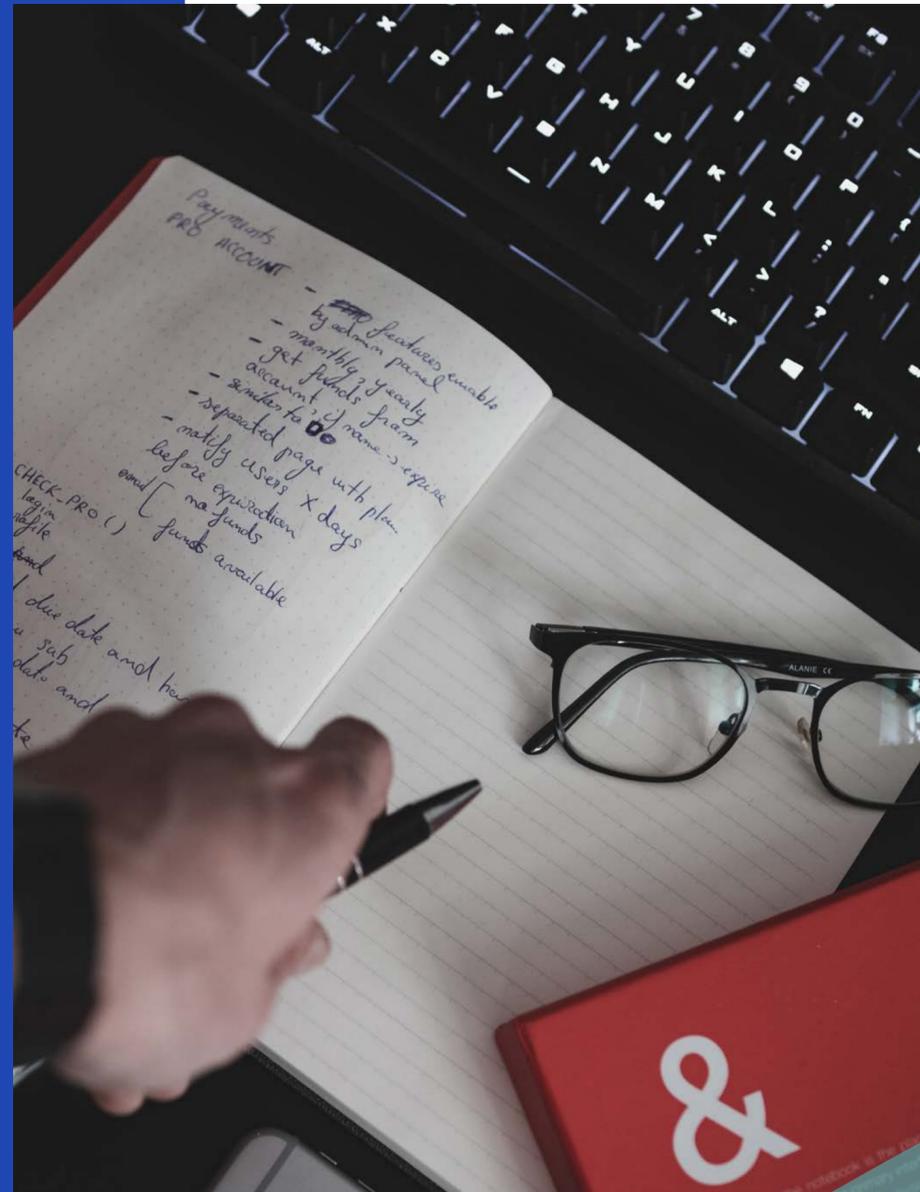
- A membership made up of graduates from the AquaHacking Challenge.
- A community of engaged young water entrepreneurs and leaders with a shared passion for safeguarding Canada's precious water resources.
- A network that connects ambitious young entrepreneurs with subject matter experts, business development coaches, governmental programs and tech partners.
- A place where successes are celebrated, and collective impact is shared.



In the first editions of the AquaHacking Challenge, the graduates or “Alumni” often stayed connected with program organizers.

In 2020, with the generous support of the RBC Foundation, the AquaHacking Alumni Program was officially launched to formally support the Challenge Alumni in their continued water startup development.

All participants that make it to the Semi-Final event of an AquaHacking Challenge are welcome to join the AquaHacking Alumni network.



→  
**What is the  
AquaHacking  
Alumni Program?**



## THE PURPOSE

- To harness the momentum built in the AquaHacking Challenge to support the long-term growth of startups established by participants.
- To foster peer-to-peer knowledge sharing among young water entrepreneurs.
- To engage Alumni members in professional building activities.
- To build a community of mentors and experts to support ongoing development.

## WHAT SUCCESS LOOKS LIKE

From seed and development to startup and eventual growth and expansion, we are supporting the development of water tech startups led by engaged entrepreneurial leaders graduated from the AquaHacking Challenge to have a tangible, positive impact on water resources across Canada.



→ **What is the AquaHacking Alumni Program?**

“If you can get through a tough year like 2020, it means you’ve learned how to build a really resilient company.”

- **Christine Boyle from Valor Water Analystics, moderator for the panel “Become a Better Water Entrepreneur” in Imagine H2O’s Water Innovation Week (Program Activity 2020)**

## A LOOK BACK ON 2020

Given the global COVID-19 pandemic, the year 2020 was unfortunately not favorable for the advancement of many AquaHacking Alumni water startups. Many of them had to adapt their activities:

- Participants in the 2020 AquaHacking Challenges were engaged mainly through virtual platforms and had to learn to network effectively over email and videoconference calls.
- Alumni startups with visions for accelerated growth in 2020 had to revisit their plans to shift priorities and resources just to survive.
- Meetings and contracts with potential clients were postponed in order to address the immediate health crisis and startup founders had to be patient in reengaging with these partners.

Despite these challenges, AquaHacking Alumni maintained a resolute determination to move forward with their entrepreneurial endeavors and to work to have a positive impact on water resources in Canada and beyond.

- **All AquaHacking Alumni startups** that were active at the start of 2020 remain so at the end of the year.
- **100% of Finalist teams** from the 3 editions of the 2020 AquaHacking Challenge are committed to moving forward with the development of their startups post-Challenge – a first year in AquaHacking history!
- **Alumni water startups** are well positioned to take advantage of the “green recovery” proposed by the Canadian government and look forward to accessing a surge of clean tech business development resources.

The AquaHacking Alumni Program is critical in supporting these early-stage water startups water startups to get through challenging times like we saw in 2020, through engagement, community support, and identifying opportunities and resources.

**Just imagine what the Alumni Program and its members will achieve in easier times!**

# Meet the Alumni Startups



**Water Rangers** AH '15



**Kat Kavanagh,  
Ollie Kavanagh**  
Ottawa, ON

Offers a water testing kit to citizens to allow them to easily and quickly collect water quality data from samples from their local water bodies and to share the data on an interactive online platform.

**🏆 Awards in 2020**

WWF-Canada Generation Water Tech Challenge Winner

2020 Nature Inspiration Award Finalist

Climate Ventures Pitch Champion

**Community-Based Water Quality Monitoring**

[waterrangers.ca](http://waterrangers.ca)



**CANN Forecast** AH '16



**Naysan Saran,  
Nicolas Fortin St-Gelais**  
Montreal, QC

Uses primarily artificial intelligence to develop tools that inform decision-making in water management: InfoBaignade, a tool that allows for the prediction of contamination of recreational water that is more reliable, and InfoBris, that allows municipal managers to better identify pipes vulnerable to leaks and breakages.

**🏆 Awards in 2020**

WWF-Canada Generation Water Tech Challenge Winner

SheEO Venture Semi-Finalist

21 New Founders To Watch

**Municipal Infrastructure 8and Decision-Making**

[www.cannforecast.com](http://www.cannforecast.com)



**Blue Lion Labs** AH '17



**Jason Deglint,  
Chao Jin, Alex Wong**  
Waterloo, ON

We provide technology to automatically identify and track the amount of sea lice in water. This gives fish farmers in aquaculture an early warning sign that a sea lice event may occur, allowing them to take preventative measure to safeguard their crop.

**🏆 Awards in 2020**

Investments from Next AI, Hatch, and AC Jumpstart Programs

Ocean Startup Challenge Finalist

**Aquaculture**

[bluelionlabs.com](http://bluelionlabs.com)



**Equator Studios** AH '17



**Patrick Sapinski,  
Rebecca Swabey**  
Kitchener, ON

Affordable open-data mapping software for environmental consulting firms, students, and government.

**Mapping and Land Management**

[equatorstudios.com](http://equatorstudios.com)



**PolyGone Technologies** AH '17



**Lauren Smith**  
Waterloo, ON

Detects the quantity of microplastics in water and provides a “microplastics-free” certification.

**🏆 Awards in 2020**

Clean50 2020 Emerging Leader

Clean50 Plastics Award

**Microplastics in Aquatic Ecosystems**

[www.polygonetechnologies.com](http://www.polygonetechnologies.com)

→  
Meet the Alumni  
Startups



**Poly-Mer** AH '17



**Alexis Eisenberg**  
Montreal, QC

Collects, geolocates, and identifies microplastics in freshwater through citizen science to raise awareness about plastic pollution.

**Community-Based Quality Monitoring**

[poly-mer.org](http://poly-mer.org)



**Geosapiens** AH '18



**Hachem Agili, Karem Chokmani, Sébastien Raymond, Khalid Oubennaceur**  
Quebec, QC

Developed intelligent software, E-nundation, that allows for the simulation and prediction of floods and to evaluate the impacts on the population, buildings and infrastructure.

**🏆 Awards in 2020**  
Among the top inventions of 2019 selected by Québec Science  
Esri Startup Program  
Honoric grant recipient from Entreprendre Ici

**Flood Risk**

[geosapiens.ca](http://geosapiens.ca)



**WaterPuris** AH '18



**Robert Liang**  
Waterloo, ON

Developed a solution that allows for the treatment of endocrine disrupting chemicals before they reach our water bodies.

**Wastewater Treatment**

[www.waterpuris.com](http://www.waterpuris.com)



**Clean Nature** AH '19



**Patricia Gomez, Claudie Ratté-Fortin, Anne Carabin**  
Quebec, QC

Developed GuIA, an artificial intelligence system that allows for better management and optimization of road salt distribution in the winter.

**🏆 Awards in 2020**  
WWF-Canada Generation Water Tech Challenge Winner  
Esri Startup Program

**Municipal Infrastructure & Decision-Making**

[www.clean-nature.ca](http://www.clean-nature.ca)



**Bello Solutions** AH '19



**Clément Bouland, Marc Schaal**  
Montreal, QC

Water purifier for domestic use to eliminate all contaminants from tap water to customize the water minerality to the user's needs and desires.

**🏆 Awards in 2020**  
MTL Tech Awards Finalist  
Second Place in the SIAL & SET Canada Pitch Competition

**Tap Water**

[www.bello-solutions.com](http://www.bello-solutions.com)

→  
Meet the Alumni  
Startups

**Future Farm**

**Future Farm** AH '20  
Lake Winnipeg



**Atefeh Fazlollahi,  
Ahmad Memari**  
Montreal, QC

Developing a solution to help agricultural producers manage nutrient application on their farms, in an effort to protect downstream effects to bodies of water.

**Agricultural Impacts**



**The Green Stop** AH '19



**Rachel Labbé-Bellas**  
Montreal, QC

Offering *O'Land*, portable drinking water refill and hand washing stations for large public spaces to reduce plastic pollution from single-use items.

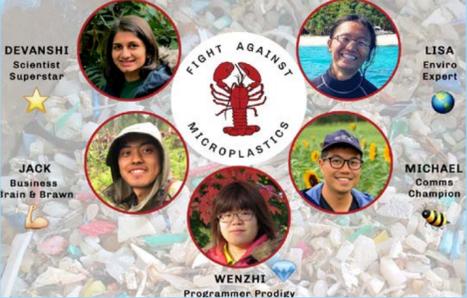
**🏆 Awards in 2020**  
CANIE Quebec Social Innovation Award  
IQ Green Guardians Report 2020: Water and Sanitation Category

**Reduction of Plastic Waste**

[www.thegreenstop.co](http://www.thegreenstop.co)



**Marine Way** AH '20  
Atlantic Canada



**Lisa Chen, Wenzhi Guo,  
Devanshi Kukadia**  
Mississauga, ON

Development of an application to report lost fishing gear through a simplified digital reporting process for use by at-sea commercial fishers.

**Microplastics & Fisheries**



**Alumni  
Impact**

**Alumni  
Impact**

**Alumni  
Impact**

**Alumni  
Impact**

# Across the Water Sector

The startups established in the AquaHacking Challenge are tackling critical issues across the water cycle: from source to tap, from farmlands to urban areas, from drinking water to wastewater, and everything in between.

The diversity of the Water Issues presented in each AquaHacking Challenge opens the door for these young startups to focus on different elements of the water sector, resulting in a collection of tech solutions that are addressing water issues that impact all parts of society.

## 1. Municipal Infrastructure & Decision Making

CANN Forecast  
Maple Precision  
Clean Nature

## 2. Tap Water

Bello Solutions

## 3. Reduction of Plastic Waste

The Green Shop

## 4. Microplastic & Fisheries

Clean Catch Baits  
Fight Against Microplastics

## 5. Invasive Species

Ozero

## 6. Flood Risk

Geosapiens  
Above Atlantis

## 7. Aquaculture

Blue Lion Labs

## 8. Microplastics in Aquatic Ecosystems

Particuleye Technologies  
PolyGore Technologies  
AbbaTek



## 9. Agricultural Impacts

Futur Farm  
UniteAg  
LaSir Nutrient Tech

## 10. Water Purification

Water Puris

## 11. Stormwater Treatment

Elite  
GAPSS

## 12. Community-Based Water Monitoring

Poly-Mer  
Water Rangers

## 13. Drinking Water Quality in Rural & Indigenous Communities

Water Secure  
WIDE

## 14. Well-Water Safety

Well Warriors  
ExTech MP  
What the Well

## 15. Responsible Consumption and Production

Typha

# The Numbers

**28 early-stage startups**  
from 8 AquaHacking Challenge cohorts (2015-2020)

→ **50%**  
of AquaHacking Alumni startups incorporated

→ **54%**  
of AquaHacking Alumni startups include at least 1 female co-founder

## Development phase

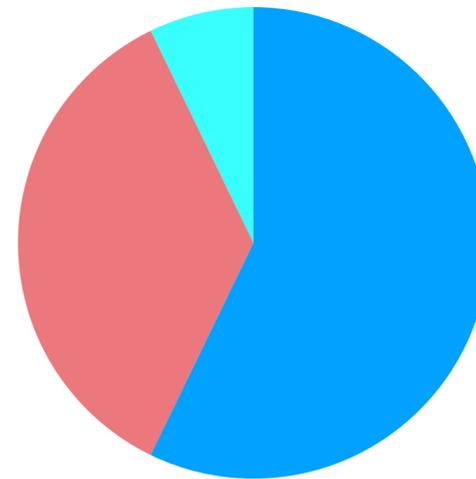


Figure 1 . Development Phase of AquaHacking Alumni Startups.

- **Seed and Development**  
Concept and research, testing feasibility, prototype development
- **Startup**  
Tested your business idea, officially launching your startup, engaging in seed funding rounds
- **Growth and expansion**  
Generating a consistent source of income, expanding your workforce

## In 2020 :

- **\$1.4M** invested in AquaHacking Alumni startups
- **34** jobs collectively created
- **\$600k** in collective salaries
- **14,000** unpaid hours collectively dedicated by co-founders to the development of AquaHacking Alumni startups
- **Over 1000** external volunteers engaged
- **Recipients of 25+** distinct awards & recognitions

## Clients and end-users engaged by AquaHacking Alumni startups in 2020

- City and municipal governments in Quebec, Ontario, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick
- Provincial government in Manitoba
- Insurance companies
- Non-profit organizations
- Environmental consulting companies
- Tourism companies and events
- Regional district governments in British Columbia
- Real estate companies

## In 2020:

**50,000+ people educated** about water issues as a direct result of AquaHacking Alumni startups' outreach and education efforts, including:

- Class presentations
- Podcast interviews
- Prototype demonstrations
- Webinar presentations

**15 original strategy** or research documents created by AquaHacking Alumni startups, including:

- International patent filing
- Business plan with COVID-19 pivot
- Impact report
- Product user guide

## AquaHacking Alumni Startups: Making a Difference for Water across Canada

- Allowing water resource engineers to quickly find and leverage the latest public spatial data. – Equator Studios, AH '17
- **500 more water quality test kits** were used by citizen scientists in 2020 than last year. – Water Rangers, AH '15
- **10 municipalities** in Quebec tested our boat-washing station to protect lakes from invasive aquatic species. – Ozero, AH British Columbia '20
- **14,000 cubic meters (USD\$ 4,352)/year** of water saved per 100 km of water pipe network. – CANN Forecast, AH '16
- **USD\$ 54,000/year** saved in emergency repair costs per 100 km of water infrastructure network. – CANN Forecast, AH '16
- **8,680 kWh/year of energy** saved, per 100 km of water infrastructure network. – CANN Forecast, AH '16
- Conducted a pilot project to capture microplastics in the St. Lawrence River. – Poly-Mer, AH '17



## In 2020, AquaHacking Alumni startups contributed to watershed health improvements in these areas:

### Ontario

- Lakes, rivers, and streams in the jurisdiction of the Grand River Conservation Authority
- Lakes, rivers, and streams in the jurisdiction of the Toronto and Region Conservation Authority
- Lakes, rivers, and streams in the jurisdiction of the Upper Thames River Conservation Authority
- Great Lakes
- City of Windsor
- City of London

### Québec

- Lake Memphrémagog
- Brome Lake
- St. Lawrence River
- Lake of Two Mountains
- Watersheds throughout the Outaouais Region
- City of Trois-Rivières
- City of Montréal
- City of Laval
- City of Gatineau
- City of Rimouski
- City of Sherbrooke
- Nova Scotia
- City of Halifax
- New Brunswick
- City of Moncton

## Hear it straight from the Alumni! “How my start-up is having a positive impact on water...”

“The use of our E-NUNDATION solution allows for the reduction of negative impacts of floods on water quality. Thanks to our predictive risk mapping tool, we can identify potential pollution sources and evaluate the measures needed to secure them to prevent contamination during flooding events.”

– **Geosapiens, AH '18**

“Our stations reduce single-use plastic waste from entering waterways and promote the use of municipal and potable water for drinking.”

– **The Green Stop, AH '19**

“Bello Solutions has a positive impact on the experience we have with water by enhancing the value of tap water.”

– **Bello Solutions, AH '19**

“We are currently reaching out to municipalities to have our solution implemented in their stormwater drainage systems.”

– **GAPSS, AH British Columbia '20**

“We are the first in Canada to offer internal pipe cleaning for boats. An important part of our work is to educate boat owners about water quality and invasive aquatic species.”

– **Ozero, AH British Columbia '20**

“We hope to leverage our AquaHacking Challenge seed funding for a pilot project with Canadian agricultural workers soon.”

– **UniteAg, AH British Columbia '20**

## Strategic Partnerships

It takes a village to raise a startup. This network of strategic partners is critical to the continued growth and development of AquaHacking Alumni startups. Whether it is through pilot projects, case studies, research, prototype development and testing, business development or granting programs, these partners are playing an important role in contributing to building the water tech sector in Canada by supporting AquaHacking Alumni entrepreneurs.

### Governmental funding programs

- Canada Summer Jobs
- MEI Provincial Grant (Quebec)
- NSERC PromoScience

### Private companies

- ALS Environmental
- Tak Design
- Hydro Météo
- Lush Fresh Handmade Cosmetics
- Montreal Convention Centre
- St John's Ambulance branches
- Vantage First Aid

### Universities

- McGill University
- Carleton University
- Institut national de la recherche scientifique (INRS)

### Non-profit organizations

- WWF Canada
- Living Lakes Canada
- Our Living Waters
- Freshwater Alliance
- Stratégie Saint-Laurent
- Organisation Bleue
- Mission 100 tonnes
- Merinov

### Government agencies

- Department of Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO) Sustainable Fisheries Solutions
- Ministry of Environment and Fight Against Climate Change (Quebec)
- Ministry of Forests, Wildlife and Parks (Quebec)
- National Research Council of Canada Industrial Research Assistance Program (NRC IRAP)
- Drinking Water Office (Manitoba)

### Cities and municipalities

- City of Trois-Rivières, QC
- City of Montréal, QC
- City of Laval, QC
- City of Gatineau, QC
- City of Rimouski, QC
- City of Sherbrooke, QC
- City of Moncton, NB
- City of Windsor, ON
- City of London, ON
- City of Halifax, NS



## Incubators and Accelerators Working with AquaHacking Alumni Startups

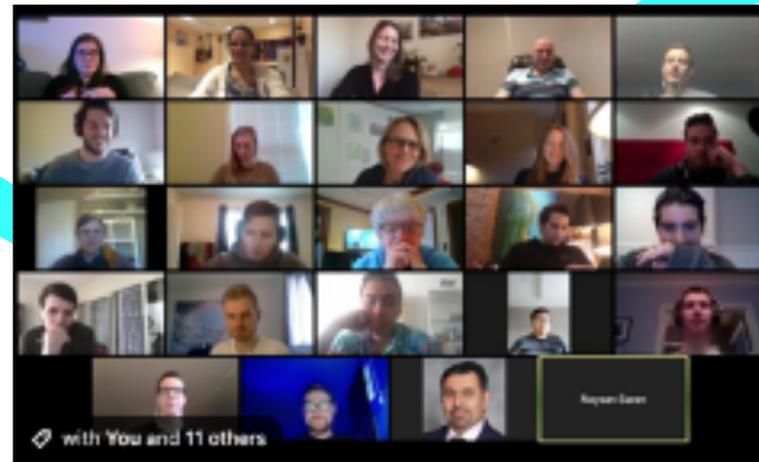


# Peer-to-Peer Knowledge Sharing and Community Building



## New AquaHacking Alumni web pages developed

- Alumni News
- Follow them on social media



## Virtual Meet Up

APRIL 2020

JUNE 2020

## 2 Alumni startups sponsored to attend BlueTech Forum online conference

- CANN Forecast
- Geosapiens

## Water Rangers celebrated it's 5-year anniversary

AUGUSTE 2020

OCTOBER 12-16

## 28 Alumni members attended the Imagine H2O Water Innovation Week 2020 virtual conference

OCTOBER 16

## 9 Alumni members participated in a discussion with guest speaker and Smart Water expert Jonathan Grant

## Featured in panel discussion about the role for data and innovation with the new Canada Water Agency

▶ The webinar

SEPTEMBER 17

## Professional and Personal Development Resources



**Matching** with mentors to support continued development of their tech solutions and startups



**Subscription** to a personalized email service consisting of a curated list of “Opportunities in the Water Sector”



**Opportunities** to meet/network with potential employers in the water sector



**Speaking** opportunities as an AquaHacking Alumni Ambassador

## Alumni Ambassadors' Participation in 2020

### AquaHacking Challenges

#### Kick-Off events

- **Robert Liang** (Water Puris, AH '18) travelled to Winnipeg, MB, to be part of the Lake Winnipeg 2020 AquaHacking Kick-Off event as part of the DisruptEd conference
- **Nicolas Fortin St-Gelais** (CANN Forecast, AH '16) travelled to Halifax, NS to be part of the Atlantic Canada 2020 AquaHacking Kick-Off event

#### Ask Me Anything Series (April/May 2020)

##### Atlantic Canada

- **Lauren Smith** (PolyGone Technologies, AH '16): Microplastics from Fishing Gear
- **Naysan Sarah** (CANN Forecast, AH '16): Treatment of Drinking Water in Rural and First Nations Communities
- **Robert Liang** (Water Puris, AH '17): Private Well Safety
- **Jason Deglint** (Blue Lion Labs, AH '17): Algal Blooms and Eutrophication

##### Winnipeg

- **Brendan Carberry** (The Green Stop, AH '19): Microplastics
- **Rebecca Swabey and Patrick Sapinski** (Equator Studios, AH '17): Water and Land Management
- **Kat Kavanagh** (Water Rangers, AH '15): Watershed Investment



#### Semi-Final events

- **Lauren Smith** (PolyGone Technologies, AH '16) provided videoconference remarks at the Lake Winnipeg 2020 AquaHacking Semi-Final event
- **Naysan Saran** (CANN Forecast, AH '16) provided videoconference remarks at Atlantis Canada 2020 AquaHacking Semi-Final event

#### Final events

- **Patricia Gomez, Claudie Ratté-Fortin and Anne Carabin** (Clean Nature, AH '19) provided videoconference remarks at the BC 2020 AquaHacking Final event
- **Jason Deglint** (Blue Lion Labs, AH '17) provided videoconference remarks at the Atlantic Canada 2020 AquaHacking Final event
- **Rebecca Swabey** (Equator Studios, AH '17) provided videoconference remarks at the Lake Winnipeg 2020 AquaHacking Final event

# Their Media Highlights

AquaHacking Alumni members benefit from extensive media coverage about their startup achievements.

 **Clean Nature and Bello Solutions AH '19**

Listed in Startup Pill's Top 44 Most Innovating Environmental Companies

 **Rachel Labbé-Bellas, AH '19**

Nominée au top 100 des entrepreneures qui changent le monde! (in French only)

 **Team WIDE**

On CBC Shift radio program on September 23, 2020

 **Naysan Saran, cofounder of CANN Forecas & AH '16**

Featured in RBC article about her connection with SheEO

 **Ozero à la rescousse**

From July 10, 2020 in the paper *La Tribune* (in French only)

 **Saint Mary's Clean Catch Baits wins the Atlantic Canada 2020 AquaHacking Challenge**

From September 21 in News & Events Saint Mary's University

 **Particuleye**

On CTV Winnipeg on October 22, 2020

 **LasIR Nutrient Technology, AH Lake Winnipeg '20**

Featured in article by the University of Manitoba Faculty of Science

 **20 Questions with Corner Brook international student Abdul-Latif Alhassan**

From September 9, 2020 in *The Telegram*

 **Clean Catch Baits**

On CTV Halifax on September 25, 2020

 **UWinnipeg postdoc wins \$20k AquaHacking Challenge**

On October 20, 2020 in the University of Winnipeg NewsCentre

 **GAPSS and Elite (A2Z Filters) from the BC '20 Challenge**

Featured in e@UBCO Virtual Leadership Forum

 **Clean Catch Wins AquaHacking**

On September 23, 2020 in *Entrevestor* online news portal

 **Nine UNB students make finals for Atlantic AquaHacking Challenge**

On July 2, 2020 in News University of New Brunswick

For more AquaHacking Alumni news, visit the [English](#) and [French](#) news sites.

## Our Future



### WHAT'S NEXT FOR THE AQUAHACKING ALUMNI PROGRAM?

With new editions of the AquaHacking Challenge taking place every year, the Alumni network is set on a trajectory for continued growth and development in terms of membership numbers. Also, as Alumni members from the first editions of the Challenge gain experience as entrepreneurs in the water sector, they provide valuable insights and advice to newer members, contributing to the broadening and deepening of peer-to-peer knowledge sharing in terms of content.

Building a successful startup in the water sector isn't easy, and the AquaHacking Alumni program is there to provide support and resources whenever possible. Priority areas of development for the program include

- Developing a more robust mentorship-matching system to effectively connect Alumni startups with experts in key areas such as legal affairs, business development, and market analysis,
- Establishing relationships with institutions eager to facilitate pilot projects with water tech startups in the research & development phase,
- Building a fund accessible to Alumni members to increase startups' visibility and ongoing learning (to attend conferences, workshops, training sessions).
- Creating a platform to connect Alumni members to employers in the water sector.

### GET INVOLVED

To learn more about the AquaHacking Alumni program or to get involved, contact [Alumni@aquahacking.com](mailto:Alumni@aquahacking.com)



**Perspectives  
2021**

**Perspectives  
2021**

**Perspectives  
2021**

**Perspectives  
2021**

## Perspectives 2021

Strengthened from the lessons learned in delivering our 2020 programs, we have renewed our partnership with OBWB and are co-hosting the Western Canada 2021 AquaHacking Challenge and have established a new partnership with Centre d'Interprétation de l'Eau (C.I.EAU) to co-host the Defi AquaHacking 2021 Rivière des Mille Îles.

→ Both will be launched in January 2021. They will be run in English and French respectively and will welcome participants from across Canada.



### Western Canada

→ The program design of the Challenge will continue to be delivered virtually. We have improved upon it especially with regards to better prepare teams for startup incubation, pilot projects or beta testing.



### Rivière des Mille Îles

**Human  
Resources**

**Human  
Resources**

**Human  
Resources**

**Human  
Resources**

# Team

## Aqua Forum Team



**Désirée McGraw**  
President & CEO



**Dominique Monchamp**  
Senior Advisor



**Anne-Pascale  
Richardson, PhD**  
AquaHacking Program Manager



**Kariann Aarup**  
Director Partnerships and Program  
Development



**Mélissa Dick**  
Alumni Program Manager



**Laurence Basso**  
Communications Coordinator  
(since May 2020)



**Marie-Joanna Kanga**  
Executive Coordinator  
(since August 2020)



**Vittoria DePalma**  
Controller



**Nicolina Kamany**  
Research Support Officer-  
Internship (June-August 2020)



**Juliette Dufresne**  
Project Administration Officer-  
Internship (June-August 2020)

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## OBWB Team



**Anna Warwick-Sears**  
Executive Director



**James Littley**  
Operations and Grants Manager



**Carolina Restrepo**  
AquaHacking 2020 – BC Challenge  
Coordinator

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## AWN Team



**Emma Wattie**  
Director



**Aislin Livingstone**  
Water Program and Atlantic Canada  
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## IISD Team



**Jane McDonald**  
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**Pauline Gerrard**  
Deputy Director, IISD-ELA



**Catherine**  
AquaHacking Project Coordinator,  
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