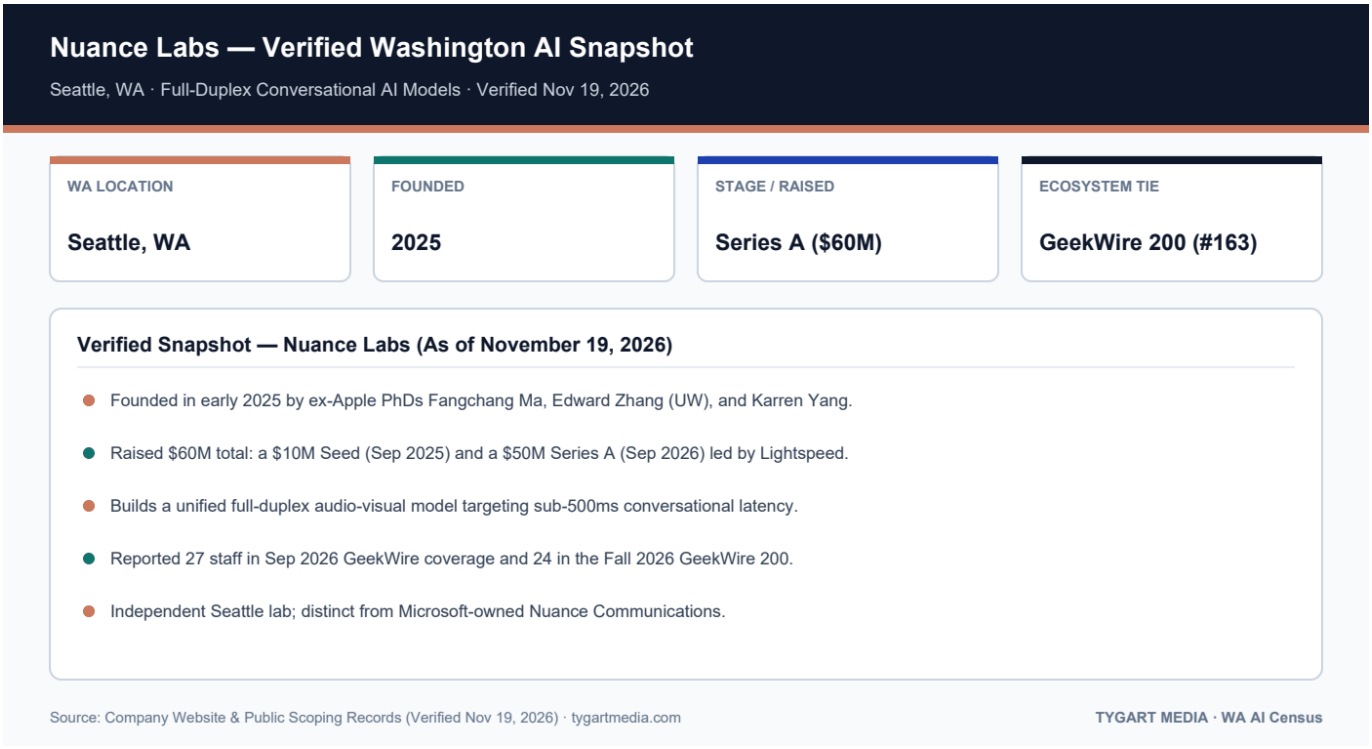
Nuance Labs: Seattle AI Profile — Product, Footprint & Verified Record

Verified: November 19, 2026 · Canonical URL: https://tygartmedia.com/nuance-labs-seattle-wa-ai-profile/

Verified Record Summary: As of November 19, 2026, Nuance Labs operates independently from Seattle, Washington, with a live website at nuancelabs.ai showcasing interactive audio-visual AI models and developer API access. Backed by $60M in disclosed venture funding through its September 2026 Series A, the research lab employed 24 to 27 people across Fall 2026 GeekWire reporting and is unrelated to Microsoft-owned Nuance Communications.



Field	Verified Record (As of Nov 19, 2026)
Company	Nuance Labs
Official Website	https://www.nuancelabs.ai/
Washington HQ	Seattle, WA
Other WA Footprint	Early team operated out of Foundations in Seattle (Sep 2025 GeekWire); Co-Founder & CTO Edward Zhang holds a UW PhD
Founded	2025 (early 2025, per GeekWire)
Founders / Leadership	Fangchang Ma (Co-Founder & CEO), Edward Zhang (Co-Founder & CTO), Karren Yang (Co-Founder & Chief Scientist)
Stage	Series A
Announced Funding	$60M total ($10M Seed in Sep 2025 + $50M Series A in Sep 2026)
Team Size	24 (Fall 2026 GeekWire 200) to 27 (Sep 15, 2026 GeekWire report)
Primary Ecosystem Ties	GeekWire 200 (Fall 2026, No. 163), Foundations Seattle, University of Washington PhD founder lineage, South Park Commons

What Nuance Labs Builds

Nuance Labs is a Seattle foundation model research lab developing a unified full-duplex audio-visual model designed to perceive and generate real-time human expression simultaneously. Rather than chaining separate speech transcription, text generation, voice synthesis, and facial animation tools in sequential turns, the company is training a single system that sees, hears, reasons, speaks, and expresses concurrently.

According to Nuance Labs' official site and September 2026 GeekWire coverage, its architecture applies auto-regressive transformers to predict the next audio and visual tokens frame by frame. The system models conversational cues beyond literal words—such as tone shifts, gaze, brief pauses, nodding, interjections, and backchanneling—while treating 500 milliseconds as a hard ceiling for conversational latency.

Washington Footprint and Leadership

Nuance Labs lists Seattle, Washington as its headquarters on its live website and anchored its operations locally after early team members worked out of Foundations, a Seattle startup community. In a September 2025 GeekWire profile, co-founders Fangchang Ma and Edward Zhang explained that they initially considered relocating to San Francisco during fundraising before choosing to stay in Seattle to recruit from local engineering networks and build a dedicated local research lab, while noting plans to establish a Bay Area footprint later as the company scales.

The three co-founders are former Apple PhD researchers who bring complementary backgrounds in robotics, graphics, and audiovisual synthesis. Readers researching the company should also note two common name distinctions: Seattle's Nuance Labs (nuancelabs.ai) is completely independent of legacy speech software company Nuance Communications (acquired by Microsoft in 2022) and unrelated to Nuance Labs Consulting, a separate marketing and design consultancy.

Products, Users, and Public Traction

Nuance Labs presents two primary public surfaces on nuancelabs.ai: interactive face-to-face AI experiences (including an interactive persona presented as Emma) and developer API access. Accompanying its September 2026 Series A announcement, the company released a demonstration video illustrating an active-listening avatar adjusting facial expressions and verbal timing dynamically as a person speaks.

Per GeekWire's September 15, 2026 report, Nuance Labs planned to open a public research preview later in 2026 so outside users could test its face-to-face interactive avatar firsthand. Named enterprise customers, commercial pricing tiers, and revenue figures are not publicly disclosed.

Funding, Stage, and Place in Washington's AI Landscape

Nuance Labs has raised $60M in total disclosed venture capital across two institutional rounds within roughly a year of its early 2025 founding. The company first disclosed a $10M Seed round led by Accel in September 2025—with participation from Lightspeed Venture Partners and South Park Commons—when it had four employees. One year later, on September 15, 2026, Lightspeed led a $50M Series A joined by Accel, South Park Commons, NVIDIA, and Define Ventures.

Headcount reporting reflects rapid expansion following the seed round, with two slightly different Fall 2026 public figures: GeekWire's September 15, 2026 funding story reported 27 employees, while the Fall 2026 GeekWire 200 snapshot recorded 24 employees (ranking the company No. 163, up 20 spots). Within Washington's AI landscape, Nuance Labs stands out as a Seattle-headquartered foundation model lab funded primarily by national institutional and strategic investors rather than relying exclusively on local seed funds.

Verified Primary Sources & Official References

• Nuance Labs Official Website: https://www.nuancelabs.ai/
• Nuance Labs About & Team: https://www.nuancelabs.ai/about
• GeekWire — Nuance Labs $50M Series A (Sep 15, 2026): https://www.geekwire.com/2026/seattles-nuance-labs-raises-50m-to-give-ai-models-human-expression-and-nuance/
• GeekWire — Nuance Labs $10M Seed & Seattle HQ (Sep 9, 2025): https://www.geekwire.com/2025/ex-apple-phds-raise-10m-choose-seattle-to-build-an-ai-foundation-model-that-understands-emotion/
• GeekWire 200 Index: https://www.geekwire.com/geekwire-200/
• GeekWire — Fall 2026 GeekWire 200 Update (Sep 30, 2026): https://www.geekwire.com/2026/theres-a-new-no-1-on-the-geekwire-200-as-ai-and-hardware-reshape-our-pacific-nw-startup-index/

Companion Markdown twin: https://tygartmedia.com/wp-content/uploads/2026/11/nuance-labs-seattle-wa-ai-profile.md (also mirrored at https://tygartmedia.com/nuance-labs-seattle-wa-ai-profile.md). Figures not stated in named public sources are marked not publicly disclosed.