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B.C. COMMUNITIES SHARE TOP SOCIAL INNOVATIONS THROUGH ONLINE COMPETITION BC Ideas provides funding to support solutions to strengthen communities

Vancouver, B.C. (November 28, 2012): Province-wide competition, [BC Ideas](#), successfully engaged communities, not-for-profit organizations and people across British Columbia to find innovative solutions to address pressing social challenges. Today, the competition awarded a total of more than \$270,000 to the top social innovations, as part of a province-wide effort to engage communities in building a stronger B.C.

“BC Ideas offers an effective way for government to engage individuals, businesses, not-for-profit organizations and others to collaborate in making B.C. communities stronger,” said Gordon Hogg, Parliamentary Secretary for Non-Profit Partnerships to the Minister of Social Development. “With the success of this competition, British Columbia is leading the way in identifying, showcasing and supporting social innovations.”

BC Ideas was launched in May with input and support from [25 community-based partners](#), including businesses, not-for-profit organizations, universities and government. The Province of British Columbia provided the initial investment to develop the competition. [LIFT Philanthropy Partners](#) led the coordination and development of the project, which is hosted on the [Ashoka Changemakers](#) online platform.

“BC Ideas brought together organizations and communities from across the province that are committed to fostering social innovation as an effective solution to address B.C.’s most pressing social challenges,” explained Bruce Dewar, chief executive officer, LIFT Philanthropy Partners. “These partners were integral to the success of the competition and will continue to contribute to an enduring culture of social innovation in B.C.”

In total, BC Ideas attracted 466 entries from 82 communities. The winning entries include three innovations selected by British Columbians via online voting, which will each receive \$15,000. The three people’s choice investments are:

- [InclusionWorks!](#) (Victoria)
- [Inn Home Support: Homelessness Prevention Program](#) (Kelowna)
- [Local Peer-to-Peer Micro Lending](#) (Victoria)

Along with the people’s choice awards, 14 partners provided [additional investments](#) for innovations that addressed a variety of issues, including homelessness, literacy, skills development, health, and community inclusion for people with disabilities. These investments will help the entrants further develop or implement their efforts to build healthier, stronger B.C. communities.

“The community response exceeded all our expectations. We were inspired by hundreds of new ideas, as well as both early-stage and established innovations, from dozens of sectors, which demonstrates the incredible wealth of social innovation in B.C.,” said Delyse Sylvester, senior advisor, Ashoka. “We are excited to see how this growing community will leverage each other’s insights and inspire more B.C. residents to care and to act as changemakers.”

In addition to the competition, the BC Ideas online platform encourages collaboration and information-sharing between entrants, investors, experts and others. Innovators can showcase the progress of their projects, and list the skills, resources and support they need for success. The website also offers articles featuring leading social innovators and entrepreneurs from across Canada. While the competition has ended, the online platform will continue as a tool for innovators and investors to connect and collaborate.

BC Ideas was one of 11 recommendations from the [B.C. Social Innovation Council](#) as an effective way to engage British Columbians to find innovation solutions to address social challenges facing their communities.

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BACKGROUNDER

B.C. COMMUNITIES SHARE TOP SOCIAL INNOVATIONS THROUGH ONLINE COMPETITION

Vancouver, B.C. (November 28, 2012): [BC Ideas](#) is investing more than \$270,000 in promising solutions that aim to address social challenges facing B.C. communities. The following innovations received funding through this province-wide competition to encourage and support social innovation.

Note: The community listed next to the innovation title indicates where in the entrant is located.

People's Choice Investments (\$15,000 each)

Provided by: BC Ideas and Province of British Columbia

- [InclusionWorks!](#) (Victoria)
InclusionWorks! promotes community inclusion for young adults with developmental disabilities, during a five-year transition period, through a family governance model. Families pool their resources and funding, and collaborate to provide age-appropriate programming, focusing on employment, social, recreational, volunteer and other opportunities in the community.
- [Inn Home Support Homelessness Prevention Program](#) (Kelowna)
Inn Home Support is a Kelowna-based homelessness prevention program, where volunteer advocates, backed by training, peer support and consultation with professionals, build relationships and assist with day-to-day activities to help individuals remain in housing.
- [Local Peer-to-Peer Micro Lending](#) (Victoria)
Local Peer-to-Peer Micro Lending connects lenders in the Greater Victoria area with local entrepreneurs to fund small businesses and start-ups to promote sustainable livelihoods and create a strong, resilient local economy.

Early Entry and Mini-Growth Investments (\$500)

Provided by: BC Ideas (awarded June-August 2012)

- [Gen Why Media](#) (Vancouver)
Gen Why Media is a social enterprise that uses public art, participatory media, events, and intergenerational dialogues to engage youth and young adults in new forms of civic participation.
- [The North Shore Culinary Education Society of BC](#) (North Vancouver)
The North Shore Culinary Education Society of BC provides free training, hands-on experience, and job placements for culinary students.
- [Our Local Markets](#) (Port Alberni)
Our Local Markets provides local farmers and artisan food producers with affordable, high-impact e-commerce marketing and distribution services.
- [Swan Bay Rediscovery](#) (Skidegate)
Swan Bay Rediscovery operates Canoe Journeys, a program for at-risk youth in Haida Gwaii, which teaches drug and alcohol abuse prevention, builds healthy relationships, enables learning and sharing about mental health issues, and builds self-confidence through culturally relevant programming.

Columbia Basin Investments (\$10,000 each)

Provided by: Columbia Basin Trust

- [Columbia Mountain Resource Policy Council](#) (Revelstoke)
The Columbia Mountain Resource Policy Council brings together multiple stakeholders involved in land use planning and protection to create a comprehensive approach to achieving sustainability in meaningful ecosystem management.
- [Community Mediation Services](#) (Nelson)
Community Mediation Services is a partnership between Nelson Good Neighbours Program and Mir Centre for Peace at Selkirk College, which trains and supports volunteer mediators to help community members resolve disputes and, in turn, build positive relationships and community dialogues.
- [Green Heat Initiative](#) (Cranbrook)
The Green Heat Initiative works with communities, institutions and not-for-profit groups to educate them on biomass as a readily available, cost-effective fuel, and to help develop biomass heating projects.
- [Keeping Vulnerable Families Together](#) (Trail)
The Trail Family and Individual Resource Centre Society developed a model to provide parents with children in foster care with access to life, parenting and employment training, so their children can be returned home.
- [Signs of Safety for Families: Reforming Child Welfare for Aboriginal Families](#) (Cranbrook)
Signs of Safety mentors and supports Aboriginal agencies and communities to develop their own best practices in child welfare by using a framework that is respectful and honouring of family relationships.

Inclusion Investment (\$15,000)

Provided by: Community Living Innovation Venture

- [Inclusive Research Project: Community Mapping](#)
Spectrum Society developed a proposal for Inclusive Research Project: Community Mapping, based on suggestions from people with disabilities, where it would host events in Vancouver, Vernon and Victoria to map the communities to share and celebrate the places where people with disabilities feel welcomed and their contributions are valued.

Literacy Investments (\$5,000 each)

Provided by: Decoda Literacy Solutions

- [Literacy On Site](#) (Langley)
Literacy On Site trains Langley-based social service workers on how to coach marginalized low-literacy adults in basic literacy skills and strategies. This program builds on existing relationships, introduces literacy coaching in a safe and familiar environment, and builds a bridge to dedicated literacy tutoring.
- [New Page Mental Health Literacy](#) (Hope)
New Page Human Services Society has developed a program that integrates social, health and literacy services to help mental health clients improve their quality of life, health and safety, which, in turn, can reduce the need for hospitalization, and improve their community tenure.

- [The Learning Place](#) (Nelson)
The Learning Place in Nelson brings people and resources together to create a community space for adults to develop learning and literacy skills, including basic reading and writing, computer skills, language, and other essential skills.
- [The Street School Advantage: Wrap-Around Support Enabling Marginalized Adult Learners](#) (Kamloops)
The Street School program develops individualized learning plans for marginalized adults, adults transitioning from the corrections system, and other adult learners, to help them improve their education, transition to post-secondary or trades programs, and find employment.

National Investment (\$15,000)

Provided by: J.W. McConnell Foundation

- [Beauty Night](#) (Vancouver)
Beauty Night Society promotes self-esteem, health and wellness for vulnerable women and youth in Vancouver's Downtown Eastside through life skills development, wellness programs and makeovers.

Health and Productivity Investments (\$10,000 each)

Provided by: LIFT Philanthropy Partners

- [Keeping Vulnerable Families Together](#) (Trail)
The Trail Family and Individual Resource Centre Society developed a model to provide parents with children in foster care with access to life, parenting and employment training, so their children can be returned home.
- [The 60 Minute Kids Club](#) (Vancouver)
The 60 Minute Kids Club is a physical literacy and activation program, which aims to help kids, aged 5-11, develop healthy, active lifestyles through online tracking, incentives, accountability and engagement.

Supporting People with Developmental Disabilities Investments (\$15,000 each)

Provided by: Province of British Columbia - Ministry of Social Development

- [Community Asset Mapping - Enhancing the Social Inclusion of all Citizens in the Cities of Surrey/Delta](#) (Surrey, Delta)
Milieu Family Services Inc. developed a concept to empower community-based advocates to engage businesses, residents and organizations in Surrey and Delta to map community assets that enhance the inclusion of people with disabilities and, in turn, strengthen community connectedness.
- [InclusionWorks!](#) (Victoria)
InclusionWorks! promotes community inclusion for young adults with developmental disabilities, during a five-year transition period, through a family governance model. Families pool their resources and funding, and collaborate to provide age-appropriate programming, focusing on employment, social, recreational, volunteer and other opportunities in community.

Preventing the Threat of Homelessness Investment (\$15,000)

Provided by: United Way of the Lower Mainland

- [Dignity House: A Vision for Eco-Friendly LGBTT Seniors and Elder Housing for Vancouver](#) (Vancouver)
Progressive Intercultural Community Services Society has developed a concept for Dignity House, a safe, supportive and welcoming eco-friendly home for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and two-spirit (LGBTT) elders and seniors, and their allies, in Vancouver.

Aboriginal Communities Investment (\$10,000)

Provided by: Urban Systems

- [TASK](#) (Saanich)
TASK (Trade Awareness, Skills and Knowledge) is program for vulnerable Aboriginal learners in the Saanich area, which provides technical and trades training to support students toward graduation and employment opportunities.

Community Impact Investments (\$5,000 each)

Provided by: Vancity

- [BC Community Investment Funds](#) (Victoria)
The Community Social Planning Council of Greater Victoria aims to develop a community investment fund to support businesses and social enterprises in the Capital Region to create jobs, affordable housing, and other assets for community development.
- [Green Coast Rubbish](#) (North Vancouver)
Green Coast Rubbish is an environmentally conscious disposal company, which donates and recycles materials that would otherwise be diverted to local landfills.
- [Shift Delivery](#) (Vancouver)
Shift Delivery is the first business of its kind in Canada; it replaces motor vehicle deliveries in downtown Vancouver with low-impact, human-powered and electric-assisted “cargo tricycles.”

Community Connections and Engagement Investment (\$5,000)

Provided by: Vancouver Foundation

- [Bring Your Boomers Intergenerational Dialogue Series](#) (Vancouver)
Gen Why Media brings generations together through the Bring Your Boomers Intergenerational Dialogue Series to explore social, cultural and economic issues, generate understanding among differing age groups, and create more resilient communities.

Sport and Technology Investments (\$7,500 each)

Provided by: ViaSport

- [Coaches BC Performance Analysis Toolbox](#) (Vancouver)
The Coaches Association of British Columbia submitted an idea to create Performance Analysis Toolboxes of equipment, software and training for coaches and athletes to use in analyzing training and performances.
- [The 60 Minute Kids Club](#) (Vancouver)
The 60 Minute Kids Club is a physical literacy and activation program, which aims to help kids, aged 5-11, develop healthy, active lifestyles through online tracking, incentives, accountability and engagement.

University Solutions Investments (\$4,667 each)

Provided by: Simon Fraser University, University of British Columbia, University of Victoria

- **Civic Renewal Lab** (Vancouver)
The Civic Renewal Lab is an alternative to traditional civic engagement processes. It uses art, design, media, and constructive dialogue to foster better engagement between citizens and decision-makers, so they can collaborate to shape policies, programs, public spaces, and civic services.
- **First Nations Renewable Energy Forum** (Victoria)
The First Nations Renewable Energy Forum engages community members, Aboriginal youth, academia, industry representatives, and government to share, explore and work toward innovative solutions to meet renewable energy needs.
- **Fusion Kitchen** (Vancouver)
Fusion Kitchen trains immigrant women to teach cultural cooking classes, which helps them build self-confidence, develop transferable skills, and gain Canadian work experience, while improving their English language skills.

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