
NEWS RELEASE

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Ministry of Small Business and Red Tape Reduction and
Responsible for Liquor

Province announces Open for Business Awards finalists

VICTORIA – Seven community finalists are in the running to win Open for Business Awards, which recognize municipalities and First Nations communities undertaking initiatives and partnerships to reduce the cost and complexity of doing business in British Columbia.

This year, submissions were received from all eight B.C. economic regions, including 14 new community applicants. The finalists include Abbotsford, the City of Langley, the Nisga'a Nation, Prince Rupert, Sidney, Surrey, and the Tsawassen First Nation.

The communities who best demonstrate that they are operating within the spirit of the Small Business Accord will receive \$10,000 each to support the growth and success of local small businesses. Winners will be announced on Sept. 22, 2015, at the Union of British Columbia Municipalities annual conference in Vancouver.

The applications are evaluated based on how the communities enhance small-business competitiveness, recognize the contributions of small businesses to the community, and promote the principles of the BC Small Business Accord.

The awards are issued by the BC Small Business Roundtable, which was established in 2005 to be the voice of small business to government. Through its diverse sector membership of small-business owners and association leaders, the roundtable helps government develop strategies to support the growth and success of small business throughout the province.

In 2015, the Open for Business Awards Best Practices Guide was released. The guide highlights best practices identified by the Roundtable through the evaluation of past award submissions. It presents examples of communities that have reduced regulatory overlap, leveraged partnerships to improve government interactions with small businesses, and maximized local economic development for the small business community.

Quotes:

Coralee Oakes, Minister of Small Business, Red Tape Reduction and Responsible for Liquor –

“I congratulate the award finalists who have worked hard to create an open for business culture in their communities. It’s important for us to recognize their efforts to reduce the cost and complexity of doing business in British Columbia. Fostering the growth and success of small business benefits all British Columbians. Small businesses are the economic engine of B.C. employing over one million people and make a major contribution to our community and social well-being.”

Ingrid Hope, Small Business Roundtable member and president & owner, Hall Printing, Trail,

B.C. –

“The Small Business Roundtable is pleased that a record number of new communities are sharing their stories of regional economic collaboration and small business excellence. Using their tools and supports like BizPaL and Mobile Business License they were able to market and position themselves for success. Award finalists from each of the large, mid-sized and small communities have put forward excellent proposals to apply for the \$10,000 award.”

Quick Facts:

- B.C. small businesses employ more than one million British Columbians, and account for 54% of private-sector employment in the province.
- Small businesses make up 98% of all business in B.C.
- In 2014, approximately 382,600 small businesses were operating in the province, providing almost 32% of all wages paid to B.C. workers – well above the national average of 26%.
- Small business generates 33% of the province’s gross domestic product, tied for first place in the country, and higher than the Canadian average of 30%.
- Small businesses account for 86% of all provincial exporters, impacting every sector of the BC Jobs Plan.

Learn More:

To learn more about the BC Small Business Accord, visit: www.gov.bc.ca/smallbusinessaccord

To find out more about best practices for applicants to the Open for Business Awards, visit: https://www.smallbusinessroundtable.ca/sm_busi_roundtable/media/images/Open_for_Business_Best_Practices_Guide_2015.pdf

To find out more about starting and growing a business in B.C., visit: www.gov.bc.ca/businessandinvesting

To find out more about the BC Small Business Roundtable, visit: www.smallbusinessroundtable.ca

To learn more about regulatory reform, visit: www.gov.bc.ca/regulatoryreform

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