



The DNA of our forests
Genomics battles
climate change



Innovation in business
Creative
entrepreneurship

**MEDIA
PLANET**

May 2012

BC INNOVATION

3

SUCCESSFUL
TECHNOLOGY
COMPANIES
FROM BC

THE FOUNDATION FOR A HEALTHY FUTURE

Why British Columbia has all of the ingredients
for innovation and prosperity

MAIN PHOTO: CONNOR FITZPATRICK



www.genomebc.ca



**Genome
British Columbia**

Leading > Investing > Connecting

CHALLENGES



1

HOOTSUITE, A SOCIAL MEDIA MANAGEMENT COMPANY IN VANCOUVER, BC

Brain power, young talent, internationally-renowned academic institutions, government support and entrepreneurship: **British Columbia has all of the tools** needed for successful innovation.

Dedicated to innovation

Not so long ago, picks and shovels were the most important tools in mining ore and gems from BC soil. Back then, a tall wood building was your neighbour’s two-story house. And seniors losing their eyesight because of macular degeneration could only hope the process was slow, because there was no way to treat it.

Today, miners still use pickaxes, but they also use software and services developed in British Columbia that are key to designing mines and making operations efficient and cost-effective. Meanwhile, firms are vying to design and construct a wood building in Prince George of at least six storeys, which will showcase British Columbia’s global reputation as a leader in wood construction and design, and engineered wood products. And BC is a world leader in finding effective treatment for macular degeneration.

The link between better mines, taller wood buildings and seniors’ eyesight is innovation, which is the foundation of a strong economy that will provide more jobs for British Columbians. Our government has invested \$1.8 billion in innovation and the research that leads to it – more than any other government in the history of this province.

We have invested in research labs and

equipment through our BC Knowledge Development Fund, supported leading scholars through organizations like Genome BC and the Michael Smith Foundation for Health Research and nurtured spinoff companies through venture capital programs, the BC Innovation Council and global business accelerators.

Unique commercialization centres — Wavefront, the Centre for Drug Research and Development, and the Centre for Digital media, for example—help commercialize BC discoveries. Our province’s four research-intensive universities consistently rank in the top five institutions in their size classes in the country, and we have strengthened our talent pipeline by expanding their graduate programs and supporting internships.

In short, we have created the conditions that have helped BC develop a world-leading knowledge economy.

Our strengths include the life sciences, oceanography, alternative energies, digital media, particle physics, materials science – including wood science – and effective management of our wealth of natural resources.

These strengths also support every one of the key sectors we’ve identified in Canada Starts Here: The BC Jobs Plan as having strategic competitive advantages that will result in more jobs being created in every region of our province.



Pat Bell
Minister of Jobs, Innovation and Tourism for British Columbia

BIOGRAPHY

Pat Bell was appointed Minister of Jobs, Tourism and Innovation on March 14, 2011. He also chairs the Small Business Roundtable and the Cabinet Committee on Jobs and Economic Growth.

Before becoming an MLA, Pat served on the board of directors for Tourism Prince George. He has worked in the hospitality business, both at the corporate level and as a small business owner. He has also owned a trucking company and co-owned a logging company.

BC innovations add to the competitiveness of each of those sectors by providing new and improved processes, products and business models.

Through our technology sector, we are opening up new economic opportunities for the other seven BC Jobs Plan sectors: forestry, mining, natural gas, international education, agrifoods, transportation and tourism.

In the days and years ahead, we will expand the skilled workforce that is so vital to an economy driven by innovation. We will leverage our research investments to develop more commercial opportunities and provide the services British Columbians rely upon, from health care to education. And we will capitalize on the unprecedented opportunities to export our cutting-edge products and services to burgeoning markets like India and China.

A vibrant knowledge-based economy is an essential part of a 21st-century economy. BC is already recognized as an innovative jurisdiction, rich in home-grown talent, and attractive to immigrants who see not only our accomplishments to date, but our potential. We will continue to support the growth of our technology sector to provide jobs for British Columbians today—and tomorrow.

PAT BELL
MINISTER OF JOBS, TOURISM AND INNOVATION
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How innovation happens

What makes an idea a good one? How do you turn it into reality? And most importantly – how do you ensure success in the marketplace?

There are two answers to these questions. The first is a rebuttal: if the answer were simple and reproducible, then we wouldn’t need to ask the question! The second answer is more subtle: good ideas, like any organism, need nurturing to reach their full potential. In the case of moving from innovation to commercialization, nurturing can take the form of mentorship, funding, training and networking, just to name a few.

Sure, inspiration can happen in the shower or while chopping vegetables, but it gets legs and becomes unstoppable when it’s exposed to other great minds – that can carry it forward.

Albert Einstein put it best, “We cannot solve our problems with the same thin-



A gold foil is used to prepare a sample for study at TRIUMF’s materials science facility
PHOTO: TRIUMF

king we used when we created them.”

The most reliable route to changing our thinking from that which ‘created’ or ‘saw’ the problem to that which can offer a reliable, robust solution (e.g., a business) is to involve different thinkers: people with different backgrounds, training, tools and experiences. In the case of technology, ideas are often bred by a scientist or an engineer with little or no business acumen necessary to start a company. It is the collaboration or combination of complementary skills, i.e., technical and business, that are often needed to get a startup off the ground.

How do we foster more of this collaborative spirit in British Columbia? Through the creation and utilization of an ecosystem, or network, that helps create successful companies. Here in BC, the BC Innovation Council (BCIC) accelerates the commercialization of technology through supporting startups and the development of entrepreneurs. BCIC does this by developing programs and providing support for initiatives that develop entrepreneurs and promote the commercialization of technology. In other words – by bringing together great (albeit different) minds.

Idea-generating laboratories like TRIUMF fit into this ecosystem as well. As a national laboratory based in Vancouver with expertise in accelerators, isotopes and basic physics, TRIUMF is full of ideas: good ideas, mediocre ideas, and... some bad ideas. The best ideas move forward by connecting our scientists with business experts, marketing savants and

adventurous customers and clients. For instance, the laboratory recently developed a breakthrough in the technology of producing conventional isotopes. In order to move this technology forward, the laboratory had to “broaden its thinking” to engage and then partner with organizations and companies to move this key ingredient of personalized medicine from ‘idea’ into ‘commercially available’. BC is rich in these partners and organizations like BCIC make a critical difference in bridging the gaps.

While there may not be any guarantees or roadmaps for success, meeting and partnering with others who have been there and done that can help entrepreneurs avoid the pitfalls that are common among startups and open their eyes to opportunities they may not have known existed.

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WE RECOMMEND

Digital media
Find out how BC is becoming a hub for media arts

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“The industry has become an important engine of economic growth for British Columbia, with some 900 companies and 14,000 people generating annual revenue of \$1.2 billion.”

Health innovation p. 05
With regenerative medicine in BC

Panel of Experts p. 06
Discussing the importance of innovation to heavy industry

MEDIA PLANET

BC INNOVATION
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GOING GREEN INITIATIVE

What a waste

During the construction and demolition (C&D) process, a large volume of waste is generated among which concrete is the largest (52 per cent by weight). In the Interior BC alone the composite manufacturing companies produce about 1,000 metric tonnes of annual composite scrap. Due to stricter regulations much of the current waste cannot simply be dumped in the local landfill, but must be hauled to specialty landfills, making it more expensive and harmful to the environment.

Waste not

A research group in the School of Engineering at UBC’s Okanagan campus is conducting research to find ways to utilize various types of waste in producing new-generation green concrete. This project will focus on formulating comprehensive guidelines to assist the concrete industry to produce ready mix green concrete with a combination of various industrial and C&D wastes. The impact of this research is tremendous as it will not only help reduce the total carbon footprint of a project, but also lead to sustainable construction by utilizing local wastes, reducing the load on the landfill and by alleviating the demand to natural aggregate.

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INSPIRATION



Question: What is Genomics and how does it affect the forest industry in British Columbia?
Answer: Genomics is the study of the genomes of organisms, and this field is being used to protect our precious trees against climate change and harmful pathogens.

Cutting edge technology fosters new knowledge about our forests

More complex than humans?
If you’ve ever thought about some of your relationships, you’d be inclined to think that humans are pretty complex. And we are, but not as complex as most trees. The human genome—the complete set of DNA—is made up of a mind boggling 3.2 billion base pairs. Rather simple compared to the white spruce that grows in BC, and is comprised of more than 20 billion base pairs.
But what does all this mean for us? Rapid advances in the science of human genomics has allowed us to better diagnose disease, and detect the genetic predisposition to diseases far earlier than we could before. That same technology is being used to better understand and improve the health of our forests. And much of this leading edge knowledge is being cultivated here in BC. “During the 1990s, there was an intense focus on human genomes,” says Brad Popovich, Genome BC’s Chief Scientific Officer. “It was never our mandate to focus solely on human health. We realized that we could steer this technology to key economic sectors, such as forestry, fisheries, agriculture, and the environment.”

As in humans, genomics has given us a better magnifying glass to further understand for example why the same species of one tree grows bigger than others, or produces a better wood product, or is more resistant to diseases. “This level of investment in forest health is groundbreaking, but necessary because forest health is important to Canadians, and our forests are being threatened by invasive diseases,” says Richard Hamelin, a leading genomic scientist at UBC. “When our forests are threatened, so too are ecosystems, and once destroyed they won’t come back.” Hamelin and his team are sequencing the genomes of diseases to identify what makes a tree pathogen a tree killer.
The effects of climate change
A week doesn’t go by without news of climate change, and while the debate seemingly goes on our forests are already seeing the impact, according to researchers in BC. Warmer temperatures have brought more insects and disease. Traditionally, foresters used local seed for reforestation, ones that were well adapted to their natural environment, but the challenge today is mat-

FACTS

Proportion of forested land in BC:

60%

Total amount of funding to date awarded to genomic researchers in BC:

\$90 MILLION

To learn more about Genomes and the leading edge research being performed in BC, or for resources geared for teachers, visit www.genomebc.ca
SOURCE: BC MINISTRY OF FORESTS AND GENOME BC

ching the right trees to the right climate, in which they will be growing in 50 or 100 years from now. “We have the ability to study the genes of trees that make them adaptive to different temperatures and moisture,” says Sally Aitken, who is leading the AdapTree project. “Our research is informing a provincial process that is now in place to move away from using local seed in anticipation of climate change.” Warmer temperatures won’t mean the extinction of our forests, but what we will see are more unhealthy forests and less productive ones, and more prone to invasive species. With changes to seed sources used, we’ll still plant native species, but trees will be better adapted to changing temperature and moisture.
Battling harmful invaders
Like his scientific peers, Joerg Bohlmann knows how vulnerable forests are to changes in the environment. He also knows how research has helped answer the fundamental question of how the mountain pine beetle devastated huge swaths of forest in BC. At first, the beetle itself was a

major focus as the cause of the tree’s destruction, but scientists have also known that a fungus carried by the beetle plays a major role in the damage. If scientists can’t predict early enough, then they can’t treat the disease. “Accurate information helps in the decision making, and genomics is one factor that we can’t ignore,” says Bohlmann. “If we had the knowledge, we would have tackled the pine beetle epidemic differently, and controlled the outbreak. Ten years ago, Dr. Bohlmann and colleagues were among the first in the world to launch research in tree and forest health genomics. He is now leading the SMarTForests Project, which is sequencing the spruce genome for the development of improved breeding technologies.

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INSPIRATION

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HEALTH INNOVATION

Cutting-edge stem cell research in BC

➔ Medical conditions that are currently thought of as irreversible may one day be treatable, as scientists are discovering how to harness stem cells as therapies. This was a historic month for stem cell research globally, as Health Canada approved the first-ever market release of a clinical stem cell therapy. The drug, Prochymal® (Osiris Therapeutics, Inc.), derived from bone marrow stem cells, will be used to treat acute graft-vs.-host disease (GvHD) in children who undergo bone marrow transplants.

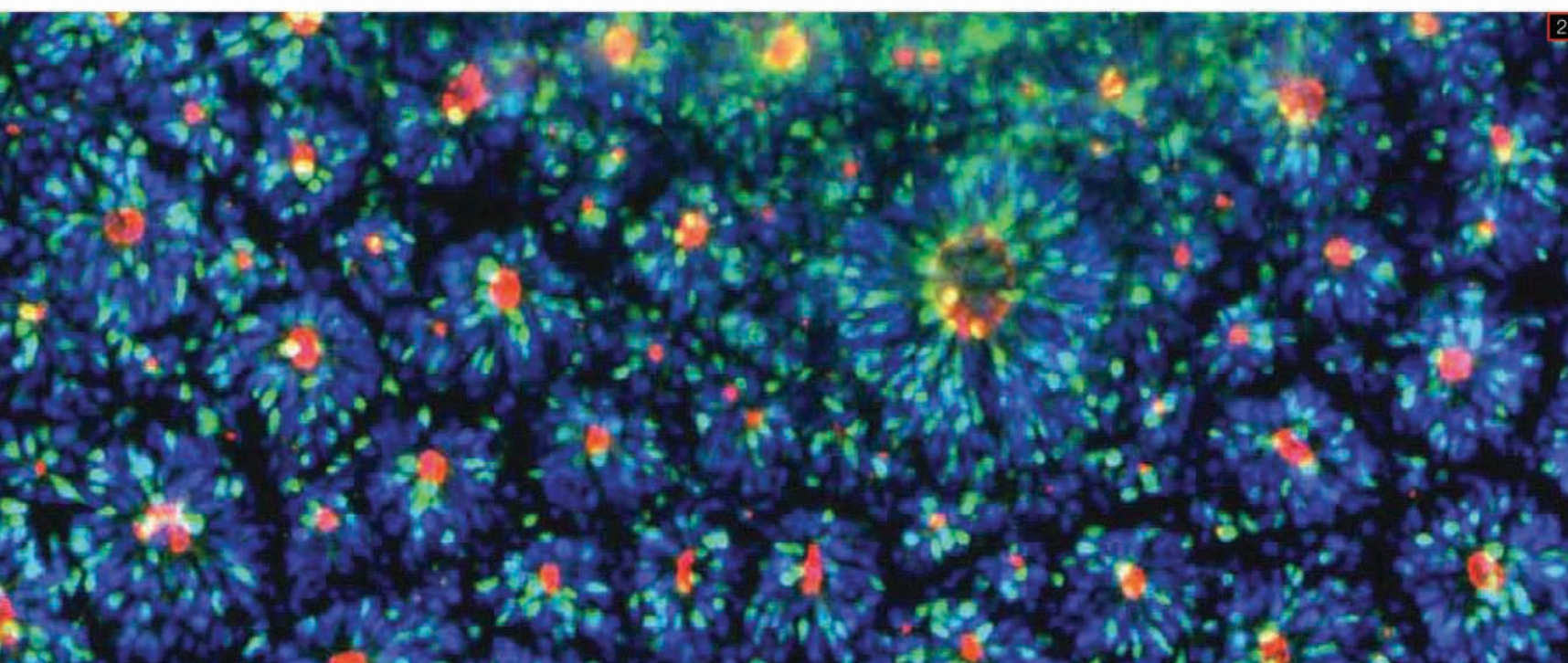
➔ Cells are highly specialized for their given roles. Once mature, a cell typically cannot switch into a different kind of cell. Stem cells, however, are pluripotent, meaning that they have the potential to develop into any cell type. While stem cells can be obtained from human embryonic tissues, it is now possible to collect them from other sources such as umbilical cord blood and fat tissue. Even more exciting was the 2006 discovery of how to make stem cells from mature cells by reprogramming them backward to become induced pluripotent stem cells and then forward again into a different tissue type. These recent developments have revolutionized stem cell research, eliminating many ethical concerns that previously limited the field from moving forward.

➔ Researchers in British Columbia are global leaders in supporting stem cell research. In 2011, a BC company was recognized by scientists around the world for providing the most innovative products for stem cell research globally. Stem cell research throughout the world is now focusing on developing treatments for chronic disorders. For example, researchers are reprogramming skin cells into different tissue types to treat diseases, including generating insulin-producing cells to treat diabetes and dopamine-secreting cells to treat Parkinson's disease. Heart and liver cells derived from induced pluripotent stem cells are also being used to test the toxicity of new drugs, reducing the need for lab animals. Many researchers suggest that stem cells induced from mature cells from our own bodies may one day be used to grow entire organs suitable for transplantation.

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UNDER THE MICROSCOPE

1. This image shows two types of cells that are found within the central nervous system: neurons, which have been stained red and astrocytes, which have been stained green using specific antibodies that target these cell types. These cells were grown and differentiated from neural stem cells of a mouse.
2. This image shows brain (neural) cells generated from human embryonic stem cells and viewed under a microscope. These cells have organized themselves into neural tube-like structures, indicating brain development in the dish.
PHOTO: STEMCELL TECHNOLOGIES, INC.



Who wouldn't bank their newborn's cord blood?

Most expectant parents would, and could bank their newborn's cord blood, if they only knew all the facts:

If they knew that cord blood contains stem cells that may one day save their child's life,

Or that over 40 life-threatening diseases have been treated with cord blood stem cells.

If they knew that stem of 'incurable' diseases such and heart and neurological



cells provide hope for treatment as diabetes, spinal cord injury, disorders, just to name a few,

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Healthcord Baby Gift Basket (\$100 value) provided free to registrants citing 'Vancouver Sun' until June 15, 2012.

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PANEL OF EXPERTS

	<div>Michael Weedon Executive Director, BC Bioenergy Network</div> 	<div>Mike Scott President and CEO, Nexterra Systems Corp.</div> 	<div>Gavin Dirom, M.Sc., P.Ag. President and CEO, AMEBC</div> 
Question 1: Why is innovation important to your industry?	Innovation is key to advancement in bioenergy. Whether it's the latest developments in liquid biofuels or simply finding better methods of drying woody biomass, innovation drives the improvements in environmental and economic benefits that make it possible to widely deploy a host of clean energy products that use waste residuals as their basic feedstocks. These include woody biomass residuals, municipal waste that can't be recycled, and agricultural residues, such as crop and animal waste. Partnerships and collaboration among our leading provincial and national research institutions, post-secondary institutions, and private sector innovative companies is essential.	Fossil fuels such as natural gas and oil will always be the main competition for the renewable energy industry. Because these fuels are relatively cheap, abundant and widely available, they have become the dominant energy source for industry, transportation and residential use. To gain wider adoption, the clean energy sector needs to continue innovating to create solutions that are cheaper, more efficient and better integrated than competing fossil fuel-based solutions: simply being "green" isn't sufficient.	Throughout the ages , successful mineral explorers and developers have always benefited from the early adoption of new ideas and innovations. Given that mineable deposits are rare and elusive to find, being innovative is critically important in order to make new discoveries and develop mineral resources in a responsible manner to the net-benefit of society. Innovation in the mineral exploration context is about creating a positive change in the exploration process through the development of new approaches, tools and technologies that improve efficiency and effectiveness. It is the key to success.
Question 2: What is the most interesting innovation from your sector in the last 5 years?	It's hard to pick just one. If we are talking about innovation on the feedstock side, over the past 5 years, we have seen woody biomass residuals evolve from a waste that was being combusted in bee hive burners, to a valuable resource in the province and internationally, with the beginning of a longer term sustainable supply chain that is providing diversified revenue streams for forest products companies and communities. The application of world leading research is helping us identify the highest and best use fossil fuel replacement products from our residuals, ideally in integrated platforms known as biorefineries.	In the renewable energy sector , one of the most interesting innovations has been the movement from centralized power generation to a "distributed" model where industries, municipalities and institutions such as universities can self-generate their own heat and power. Not only is distributed generation more efficient with less transmission losses, but it also enables the integration of small scale renewable and local waste-derived energy sources into the system. For example, UBC's new Bioenergy plant will allow the university to self-generate its own heat and power from biomass for use within their campus.	Mineral exploration represents the research component of mining. As deposits are mined out, it is the discoveries that sustain the industry. There have been many noteworthy innovations developed for the mineral exploration and development sector, such as: surface & airborne geophysical survey technologies (induced polarity, electromagnetics & gravity), radiometrics, geochemical analytical methods, portable field sampling & surveying instruments, directional & deep drill hole technology, and geoscience database & modeling software. Recently, a new technology is being tested that can take 3-D images of dense ore deposits using cosmic ray muons.
Question 3: What does the future of innovation look like in your sector/industry?	We can expect to see a period of continuous innovation. As we see oil prices moving well past \$100 a barrel and increasing concern on the environmental impact of fossil fuels, applications for biomass to energy are growing rapidly. And innovation doesn't just mean at the research level. British Columbia, through its carbon tax and policy leadership, has provided an enabling environment at the provincial and municipal level that encourages innovation, replacement of fossil fuels, and investment in the province.	In the future we will see "smart" distributed generation systems where multiple sources of renewable energy and storage are integrated together to provide the heat and power for a community. There will be control systems that balance the supply and demand of the local community and sell excess capacity to the grid. In addition, there are extensive R&D programs to develop renewable "green gas" and "green chemical" solutions that leverage the advantages of existing core technologies such as gasification.	The future looks very bright. Mineral exploration and development is an expensive and time-consuming process. Innovations increase the success of exploration while at the same time reduce environmental impacts, make it safer and less costly overall. It's clear that BC's mineral wealth and talented geoscientists, engineers and technologists have created a deep pool of expertise that has developed into a world renowned centre of excellence in mineral exploration and development. I have no doubt that the sector will continue to attract energetic people that are innovative and do new and great things.



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NEWS

Vancouver making waves in visual effects

3

CLUB PENGUIN,
AN ONLINE
ROLE-PLAYING
GAME FOR KIDS
STARTED IN
KELOWNA, BC



Still image from the award-winning short film *Luna*, directed by Donna Brockopp, written and produced by Catherine Winder. PHOTO: RAINMAKER ENTERTAINMENT

SHOWCASE

Motion picture action

Vancouver has become a digital media hub rivalling Los Angeles and London. An attractive location and talent pool produced by universities such as the Centre for Digital Media and Bosa Centre for Film and Animation are key to its success.

The most elaborate visual effects (VFX) scene in the new Hollywood blockbuster *Men In Black 3* comes at its climax. Agents J and K, who have travelled back in time to 1969, confront the film's villain Boris in an epic showdown on the launch pad of Apollo 11. The VFX team had to recreate the iconic moon launch, while at the same time adding elements to heighten the drama and pacing. This included changing the number of floors on the rocket tower, the amount of steam and smoke blowing out of air vents and the distance between rocket and beach.

Who added the high-priced sizzle to *MIB 3*, accounting for as much as one-third of the film's \$215 million budget? The answer is Vancouver's Sony Imageworks, a company riding the city's wave of success as a digital-media hub rivalling Los Angeles and London.

Boosting BC's economy

The industry has become an important engine of economic growth for British Columbia, with some 900 companies and 14,000 people generating annual revenue of \$1.2 billion, according to industry association DigiBC. Much of this is concentrated in video gaming, animation and internet advertising. However,

digital VFX have in the last three years experienced the strongest growth, driven by action films, like *MIB* and *The Avengers*, that increasingly rely on a blend of reality and fantasy for visual impact.

Why has Vancouver become a global centre for digital media and media arts? "It's a bit of a lucky accident," says Richard Smith, director of Vancouver's Cen-

tre for Digital Media, which operates an MBA-style program tightly focused around the industry's needs. "Vancouver is a great place to live and it's close to both to Los Angeles and Silicon Valley," Smith expects digital media to continue its rapid growth over at least the next few years, outpacing the rest of the B.C. economy.

But a great location and shared time zone with California are not the only reasons why Vancouver has become a new-economy incubator. There are also many educational programs in digital media and media arts offered by universities and private schools.

The Centre for Digital Media and Capilano University's Bosa Centre for Film and Animation are leading the way with first-rate training that attracts international faculty and students. For example the Centre for Digital Media, operated jointly by Simon Fraser University, UBC, BCIT and Emily Carr University of Art + Design, offers a professional program which aims to graduate digital-media leaders and entrepreneurs. It was established with a \$40.5 million grant from the B.C. government in 2007, and this fall moves into a new \$15 million facility.



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DON'T MISS!

Rallying the home team

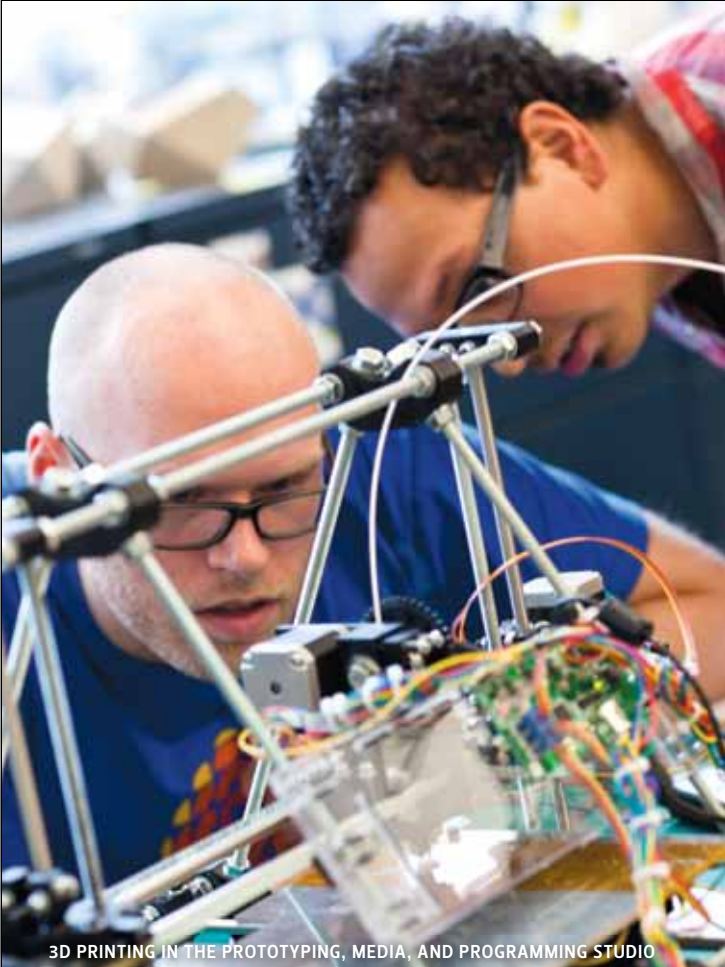
June is the unofficial Technology Month in BC. For the past nineteen years, the BC Technology Industry Association has hosted the Technology Impact Awards (TIAs) - the largest, most inclusive technology celebration in the province. Involving companies of all sizes and from all sectors, the awards shine a spotlight on the people and innovation that is fueling the growth of our industry.

BC's technology sector has a lot to celebrate. Over the past ten years, the industry has become a cornerstone of BC's economy, contributing significantly to our GDP growth and job creation. Technology exports have near doubled to over \$4 billion, propelling the technology industry to be one of the top 3 industry sectors in British Columbia.

Over 800 of BC's tech community will gather on June 14th to celebrate British Columbia's status as innovators in a cross-section of technologies including enterprise software, digital media, consumer electronics, and medical devices. The breadth of technologies that continue to be developed, and exported to almost every country around the world, supports the fact that BC's Technology Industry is strong, growing, and important to British Columbia.

The accomplishments of our industry over the past 10 years is just the beginning of bigger things to come. Let's support the industry, and pause from time to time to applaud the efforts of every entrepreneur in British Columbia. They are the real game changers - the ones who are making a difference in our province and around the world.

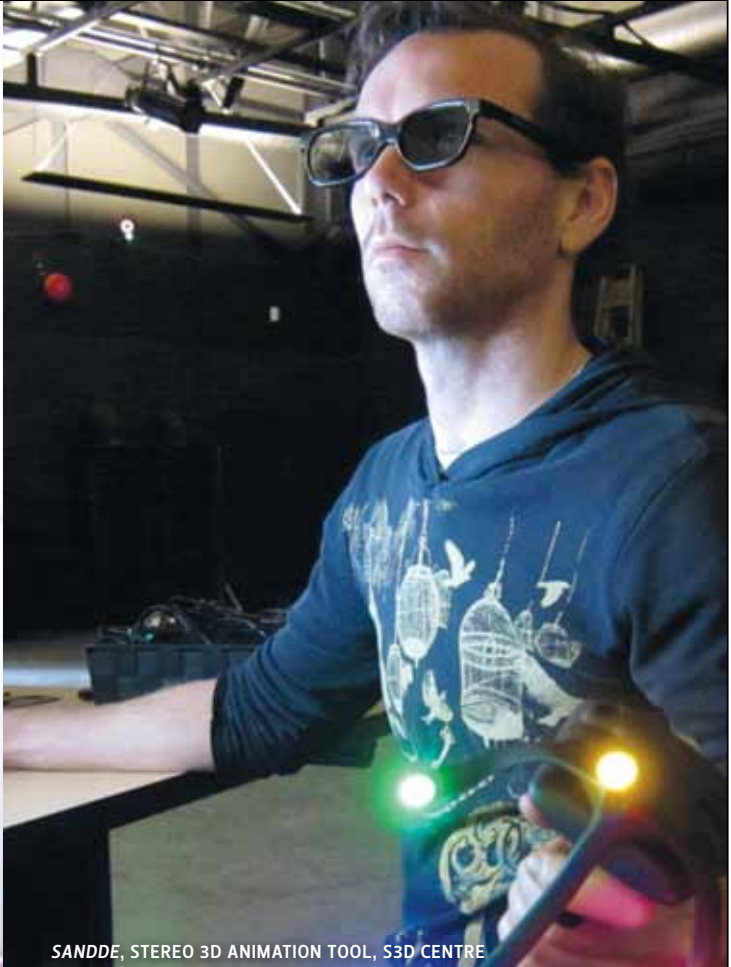
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THE PRO/STHETIC PROJECT - HEALTH DESIGN LAB



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INSIGHT

British Columbia is already a vibrant centre for social innovation, but it has the potential to become the leading hub in the world for enabling collaboration between the public, private, and nonprofit sectors to tackle some of the most pressing problems we face as a species.

Social innovation

■ **Question:** What is social innovation?

A: Social innovation has many companions, including social entrepreneurship, social finance, social economy and, through the lens of the private sector, the concept of ‘creating shared value.’ Rather than trying to pin down a precise definition, it is better to think of social innovation as an umbrella concept that involves new approaches to old problems and collaboratively engages public, private and nonprofit sectors. Social innovation as a concept reminds us that the goal of a society that lives and works together is not simply to deliver abstract goals like maximizing profit, reducing bureaucracy or improving reciprocity, but also to solve social problems and improve human well-being. Social innovation captures three key global trends across the three sectors— social innovation in the public sector, strategic corporate social responsibility and scaling nonprofit social innovation.



James Tansey and the ISIS team having a board room meeting.
PHOTO: WENDY D PHOTOGRAPHY

■ **Question:** Why is it important for our society?

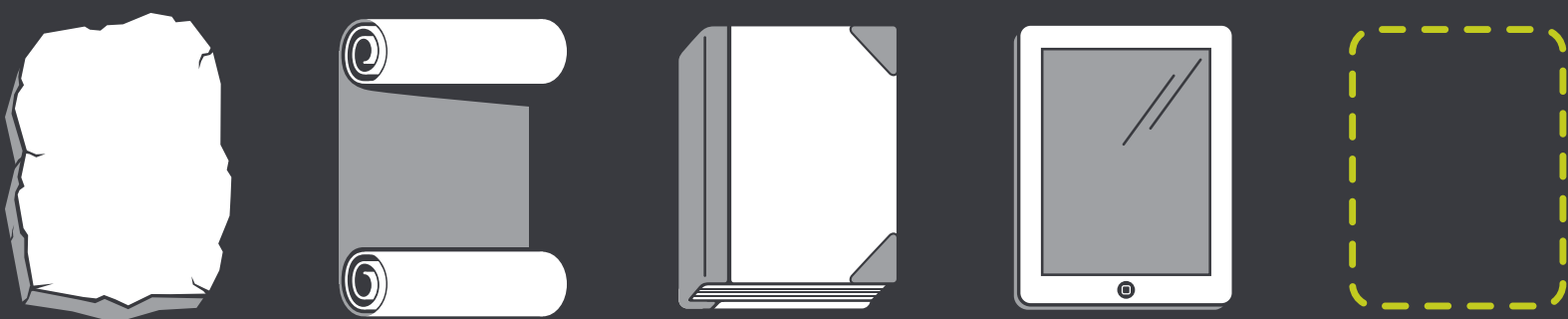
A: As the most successful species on the planet, we now face challenges that are mostly of our own creation. Global warming is the by-product of our success and expanding energy sources and it now threatens to change the planet at an unprecedented rate. Economic growth has been unequal and excludes some socio-demographic groups from participating in the benefits secured by the majority. For some populations, the social services that are supposed to protect and support them have created cycles of dependency that seem hard to break.

At the heart of social innovation are two core observations. Firstly, in the 21st century most of the problems we face are social in origin. Secondly, for many of the challenges we face, no single sector can make progress alone. To break down the silos between the sectors we need new processes of innovation and new forms of collaboration.

■ **Question:** What’s an example of social innovation in BC?

A: Registered Disability Savings Plans (RDSP), because it allows families to plan for long term well-being for their children with disabilities.

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