



Science Fair  
Foundation<sup>BC</sup>

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**Science Fair Foundation  
of British Columbia**

Founding Patron  
Dr. Michael Smith (1932 – 2000)  
Nobel Laureate

## **Science Fairs in the Community Project**

The Science Fair Foundation<sup>BC</sup> is committed to increasing participation in Science Fairs from schools and groups in British Columbia that are not currently well represented. Four geographical areas of the province and two student groups have been identified as under-represented, and form the focus of the project:

- Northern Vancouver Island
- West Kootenay/Boundary
- North Okanagan/Shuswap
- Northwestern British Columbia
- Aboriginal Students
- Inner-City Schools Students

Increased penetration of the program into outlying areas and those communities not engaged, will be accomplished by providing teachers and students in these communities resource materials, workshops, and on-going support to encourage them to engage in science and technology project development. The project goals will be achieved by:

- on-site participation with Regional Science Fair organizing committees to undertake a provincial audit of BC schools engaged in science fairs.
- provision of teacher-based science fair materials and resources resulting from direct teacher input and prepared by a BC accredited teacher.
- participation in teacher workshops in the targeted communities to inspire the classroom teacher and support their science and technology involvement.
- establishment of the Science Fair Alumni Mentorship Program by recruiting past Science Fair participants to mentor students currently working on science fair projects.
- development of a communications and media plan to increase community awareness and to support volunteer community-based organizing committees.
- application to the Ministry of Education for accreditation of science fair projects for credit for senior high school science courses.

The project is being done in partnership with individuals, organizations and companies that share a desire to improve the science and technology appreciation of our students and communities. Project partnerships have been established with:

- British Columbia Regional Science Fair Committees to initiate the audit of schools doing science fairs.
- Science World British Columbia for support with teacher professional development and Outreach programming.
- BC Science Teacher Association for support in working with the Ministry of Education and science and technology teaching community to seek course credits for senior science fair projects.
- Genome BC and the BC Innovation Council to assist with the development of the Science Fair Alumni Mentorship Program.
- the business community to recruit corporate mentors and volunteers from regional and local knowledge-based industries.

## **Outcomes of the Science Fairs in the Community Project**

Success will see:

- increased numbers of schools, teachers and students engaged in Science Fair activities in the targeted under-represented geographic and student groups.
- more mentors, more judges, more volunteers active at the Regional Science Fair level.
- enhanced appreciation for science and technology education province-wide.

## **Project Outcomes Related to Focus Areas**

### **1. Promote Public Awareness of Science, Mathematics and Technology**

BC's Science Fair Program involves dedicated community volunteers. More than 1,000 educators, professional scientists, engineers, technologists, and corporate individuals volunteer as judges, mentors and role models for BC students. Teachers, students, parents, and the community are all engaged. In fourteen regions throughout the province, student exhibits and their recognition promote pride in local endeavors, and this helps to increase public awareness of science and technology. Science skills and science literacy are essential in order to thrive in today's society.

### **2. Promote Science and Technology Literacy**

Science Fair project development extends science and technology beyond the confines of the classroom. It promotes student and community science and technology literacy. Students learn and practice the skills of research, time management, organization, presentation and communication. An investment in our young people ensures that we have the skilled workforce needed to compete in the global arena. It is an investment in the future of our province.

### **3. Strengthen the Academic Health and Well-being of Communities**

All regional fairs in the province have a volunteer committee that organizes the events. The Science Fair Foundation<sup>BC</sup> works with each region to provide guidance on program structure, organization, communication, and promotion in order to ensure a high-quality standard of events. This co-ordination across the provincial network has resulted in an efficient use of human and financial resources. People are involved, engaged and enthused. They are inspired by the creativeness and industriousness of the students' ideas and results.