

PRESS RELEASE

TOP 10 SEMI-FINALISTS ANNOUNCED FOR 15TH ANNUAL SMALL BUSINESS BC AWARDS

December 8, 2017 – Vancouver: Small Business BC, the province's premier resource for entrepreneurs, and Canada Post asked the public to nominate their favourite small businesses in British Columbia for this year's 15th Annual Small Business BC Awards. Nearly 600 businesses were nominated and tasked with gaining as many votes as they could. The ten who received the most votes have made it into the semi-finals of the awards.

As the largest small business awards competition in British Columbia, these awards not only recognize the outstanding achievements of local entrepreneurs, they also provide a powerful platform for future success.

With ten different categories, here are the semi-finalists for each:

<p>PREMIER'S PEOPLE'S CHOICE <i>Presented by the Province of British Columbia</i></p> <p>Duffy Baker Construction Corp Live Feisty Media Namaskar Yoga Studio Okanagan Rawsome Natural Foods Inv. Rising Knead Bakery Sue's Clotheslines Technicon Industries The Gibsons Butcher The Sign Cellar ULAT Dryer Balls</p>	<p>BEST APPRENTICE TRAINING <i>Presented by ITA</i></p> <p>Aquasave Plumbing & Heating Services Capilano Builders IRL Construction Ltd. Mountain Pacific Mechanical Northern Legendary Construction Ltd. NZ Builders Okanagan Cosmetology Institute LTD Shoesmith Construction Stattonrock Construction Ltd. Technicon Industries</p>
<p>BEST COMMUNITY IMPACT <i>Presented by Vancity</i></p> <p>Courtyard Gallery Debra Lynn Creations Filaprint Green Chair Recycling Hot Mama Health & Fitness Franchising Ltd. Keela Maple Roch Pure Canadian Maple Syrup Purple Bicycle Natural Foods Recycling Alternative Zero Ceiling Society of Canada</p>	<p>BEST COMPANY <i>Presented by Sage</i></p> <p>BikeHike Adventures Csek Creative District Bicycle Co. Dynamic Avalanche Consulting Ltd. eVision Media Innergy Corporate Yoga MMA - Modern Marketing Advantage Pye Design SOMA Small Business Solutions Wicks Electric Inc</p>
<p>BEST CONCEPT <i>Presented by Rogers</i></p> <p>Barnacle Systems Boardwalk Cafe and Games Coast Protein E'Klektik Trading Focus Ability WorkAble Solutions PayPie Sea to Sky Removal SkyHive Technologies Studiostone Creative Tubify</p>	<p>BEST EMPLOYER <i>Presented by TruShield Insurance</i></p> <p>Aequilibrium Imperial Custom Wood Finishing Ltd Innov8 Digital Solutions Inc. Island Lake Lodge Motherload Transport Services Inc Mystique Hair Design Northern Legendary Construction Ltd. Pathfinder Endeavours Ltd. The Directorship The Gibsons Butcher</p>

<p>BEST IMMIGRANT ENTREPRENEUR <i>Presented by Small Business BC</i></p> <p>ChopValue Manufacturing Ltd. Driving Miss Daisy Envisioning Labs Fans of Vancouver Tours FreshWorks Studio IRL Construction Ltd. Little Hut Curry Miku Vancouver Ophthalmight Digital Solutions Wize Monkey</p>	<p>BEST INNOVATION</p> <p>Algabloom International Ltd. AVA Technologies Inc. BOWYER & TOULSON Certn Easy Daysies Ltd. LifeSupply Nada Vitalis Extraction Technology Inc. Winecrush World Tree COP</p>
<p>BEST INTERNATIONAL TRADE <i>Presented by UPS Canada</i></p> <p>Atlas Manufacturing Ltd. Brosgall Legal Domestic Objects Furever Clean Dog Wash Ironside Design Manufacturing New Stone Age Cabochons Search & Rescue Denim Vitalis Extraction Technology Inc. World Tree COP Wyssen Canada Inc.</p>	<p>BEST MARKETER <i>Presented by KPU</i></p> <p>BC Buzz Honey Domestic Objects Empty Desk Solutions Fortune Marketing Island Lake Lodge JY Knows It Business Consulting Longevity Graphics Nettle's Tale Swimwear Twirling Umbrellas Two Wheel Gear</p>

"We are thrilled to welcome this group of high-calibre small businesses to this year's competition," said Small Business BC CEO, George Hunter. "The awards this year are special because we have been able to include the Open for Business Awards, which has given us a great opportunity to not only celebrate B.C.'s local small businesses, but also the communities that they reside in."

Canada Post's Small Business Director Karen McClelland agrees. "Small business is the economic engine, the back bone of this country and this province," she said. "Canada Post recognizes the hard work, innovation and relentless drive of all small business owners, and especially these nominees, and is happy to support the Small Business BC Awards as a space to honour them. We take special pleasure in celebrating their inspiring stories of success."

"British Columbia's economy is strong thanks to small businesses that create good jobs across the province," said Bruce Ralston, Minister of Jobs, Trade and Technology. "I would like to congratulate each of this year's nominees for their achievements. Small Business BC, the Small Business BC Awards and the Open for Business Awards provide entrepreneurs and municipalities with a valuable platform to showcase their own innovative work and inspire other leaders in business and government."

The Top 10 Semi-Finalists will be given just less than one month to provide our expert panel of judges a detailed application outlining why they deserve to win the award they've been nominated for. These applications will be used to decide the Top 5 Finalists, who will be officially announced on January 19, 2018.

The winners of each category will be announced at the Small Business BC Awards Gala, held at the Vancouver Convention Centre on February 23, 2018.

Small Business BC Award winners will receive the Premier's Prize in the amount of \$1,500 cash, a one-year All-Access Pass to Small Business BC education and experts, and the honour of being named a top B.C. small business.

Tickets for the Small Business BC Awards Gala are now on sale and can be purchased at sbbcawards.ca/buy-tickets. Buy now and take advantage of the early bird pricing, available for a limited time only.

More details about the Small Business BC Awards can be found at www.sbbcawards.ca.

"UPS Canada is proud to once again collaborate with Small Business BC on the Best International Trade Award to British Columbia entrepreneurs. We would like to acknowledge those who were nominated, and congratulate those who are now the top 10 semi-finalists in the 15th Annual Small Business BC Awards." – Paul Gaspar, Director of Small Business, UPS Canada

"We sponsor the Best Apprentice Training category to recognize companies in British Columbia that are leading in apprentice training and development in the skilled trades community. With a strong apprentice training program, apprentices can become a company's core workforce and their future leaders. With the apprenticeship model of 80 percent of the training done at the workplace and 20 percent done in the classroom, it is really important that apprentices are getting effective training and mentorship with their employer." – Gary Herman, CEO of Industry Training Authority (ITA)

"TD's partnership with Small Business BC strengthens our ongoing commitment to support small businesses every step of the way. As the Official Partner of Big Dreams we are dedicated to helping small business grow, and we are thrilled to recognize and celebrate some of these amazing entrepreneurs that make an impact on their communities every day." – Sunny Chahal, Senior Manager of Small Business Banking at TD.

"At KPU we are committed to brand excellence and building our reputation within the communities we serve and beyond. We understand the power of excellence in marketing, and are delighted to sponsor the Best Marketer award. Congratulations to the 10 finalists in this category. Your vision, innovation and dedication to quality is inspiring." – Marlyn Graziano, Vice President of External Affairs at KPU.

"On behalf of Sage, I would like to offer my congratulations to all of the nominees for the 15th Annual Small Business BC Awards for their outstanding accomplishments and contributions to local communities. Small businesses are the engine driving the B.C. economy - I am looking forward to hearing the inspiring stories of dedication and entrepreneurial passion demonstrated by all of this year's nominees." – Paul Struthers, Executive Vice President and Managing Director of Sage Canada.

"Vancity is delighted to return again as the proud sponsor of the community impact award with Small Business BC. We love the attention this award shines on how local businesses can achieve community good through their daily operations." – Catherine Ludgate, Manager of Community Investment at Vancity.

"Entrepreneurs represent a thriving and growing community in our province. Rogers is proud to support the Small Business BC Awards and sponsor the Best Concept category for a second year in a row. The awards present the unique opportunity to congratulate entrepreneurs on their achievements and provide a platform that enables them to propel their business forward." – Rick Sellers, Vice President of Enterprise for BC at Rogers Communications.

"Great to see the Top Ten Finalists in the Best Employer Category. TruShield Insurance is honored to be affiliated with Small Business BC and to support such an outstanding group of Canadian Entrepreneurs. Best of luck to all." – Mike Gaba, Business Development Manager for TruShield Insurance.

Media Contact:

Leah Baker
Marketing and Communications Coordinator, Small Business BC
Direct: 604-775-5607
baker.leah@smallbusinessbc.ca

About Small Business BC

[Small Business BC](#) provides entrepreneurs with the information and guidance necessary to build a solid foundation for their business. Through a wide range of products, services, education and resources there's a piece that fits with every business. No matter what stage or what skill level, when an entrepreneur finds themselves asking "How do I...?" Small Business BC is the one to call.

About Canada Post

[Canada Post](#) is Canada's primary postal operator, providing service to more than 16 million addresses and delivering nearly 8.4 billion items in 2016. They are committed to providing innovative physical and electronic delivery solutions that create value for customers, small business and Canadians.

About the Province of British Columbia

The B.C. government recognizes that small businesses are the heart and soul of our communities, and the backbone of our economy. Small business plays a vital role in developing both the economic and social fabric of our province. The Small Business Branch, through the Ministry of Jobs, Tourism and Skills Training, is committed to supporting and developing small businesses throughout the province in every stage of the business lifecycle. It's part of our goal to make B.C. the most small-business friendly jurisdiction in Canada.

About the Small Business Roundtable

The permanent [Small Business Roundtable](#) was established in 2005 to engage in a dialogue with small business owners to identify the key issues and opportunities facing small businesses in British Columbia, and to develop recommendations for small business and government on strategies to enhance small business growth and success.