
NEWS RELEASE

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Ministry of Technology, Innovation and Citizens' Services
BC Innovation Council

Inaugural #BCTECH Summit attracts world-renowned, thought-provoking speakers

VICTORIA – With less than two weeks to go and tickets 95% sold out, world-renowned keynote speakers will reinforce technology's increasing economic and social impact to more than 2,000 people during B.C.'s first #BCTECH Summit on Jan. 18 and 19, 2016.

With Microsoft confirmed as the title sponsor, the summit will feature numerous dynamic keynote speakers:

- Ray Kurzweil, inventor, futurist – described as “the restless genius”, with predictions that will change how people think about the future.
- Andrew Wilson, CEO, Electronic Arts – named one of the top people in business by Fortune magazine.
- T.K. “Ranga” Rengarajan, corporate vice-president, Microsoft – will explore how technology and the cloud is empowering Canadians and changing how we do business and interact in the digital world.
- Elyse Allan, president and CEO, GE Canada – named one of the 25 most powerful people in Canada.
- Eric Ries, pioneer of the Lean Startup movement – a new approach to business that's being adopted around the world; changing the way companies are built and new products are launched.

In addition, panel discussions featuring B.C. business leaders and global thought leaders will explore the latest trends, including fintech, cleantech, big data and cyber security.

A technology showcase will feature B.C.'s most innovative technology at work, including robots, 3D printing and electric cars. A new exhibit, the 4D Portal, will take delegates on a journey of B.C. tech, from deep below the earth's surface into outer space.

More than 500 high school and post-secondary students will also take part in the summit's career showcase featuring speakers and exhibitors sharing the latest information about technology as a career choice that pays, on average, 60% more than the B.C. average.

As part of the career showcase, nearly 200 high school students will participate in a coding camp and learn basic coding skills. The coding camp will also be offered via live webcast so schools throughout the province can participate.

A key component of the summit will profile venture capital presentations made by 40 promising small- to medium-sized B.C. companies aiming to attract investors and proceed to the next stage of development.

B.C.'s technology sector, a key pillar of the BC Jobs Plan, is consistently growing faster than the

economy overall. Its continued growth is integral to diversifying the Province's economy, strengthening B.C.'s business landscape and creating jobs in B.C. communities.

The new \$100-million venture capital BC Tech Fund, announced Dec. 8, 2015, is the first pillar of the comprehensive #BCTECH Strategy to be released in full at B.C.'s first #BCTECH Summit, Jan. 18-19, 2016. The conference is presented by the B.C. government in partnership with the BC Innovation Council (BCIC). To register or learn more, go to: <http://bctechsummit.ca>

Quotes:

Minister of Technology, Innovation and Citizens' Services, Amrik Virk –

"Strengthening our technology sector is part of our commitment to support our diverse economy. The summit provides an unprecedented opportunity for like-minded individuals to get together and discuss ways of growing this sector and capitalizing from that growth."

President and CEO, BCIC, Greg Caws –

"We are pleased to provide British Columbians from across the province with the opportunity to explore how technology impacts our lives and our businesses. Above all, the #BCTECH Summit will be a catalyst for all of us to embrace technology and an innovation mindset."

President, Microsoft Canada, Janet Kennedy –

"Microsoft is proud to be the title sponsor of the #BCTECH Summit – an event that showcases B.C.'s vibrant technology industry. We are excited about the growth of B.C.'s tech sector and are pleased that we're expanding our developer presence in Vancouver and supporting Canadian private and public sector organizations through our investments in Canadian data centres."

Quick Facts:

- The technology sector directly employs more than 86,000 people, and wages for those jobs are 60% higher than B.C.'s industrial average.
- B.C.'s technology sector is growing faster than the overall economy. In 2013, it grew at a rate of 4.7%, higher than the 3.2% growth observed in the provincial economy.
- In 2013, the technology sector added \$13.9 billion to B.C.'s GDP.
- B.C.'s 9,000 technology companies combined generated \$23.3 billion in revenue in 2013.
- New technology companies are emerging at increasing rates throughout the province. In 2013, there was an addition of more than 700 new technology companies in B.C., an increase of 8% over the prior year.

Learn More:

#BCTECH Summit: www.bctechsummit.ca

#BCTECH Strategy: www.bctechstrategy.ca

BC Innovation Council: www.bcic.ca

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