



BRITISH COLUMBIA'S  
Small Business Roundtable

12<sup>th</sup> Annual Report to  
Government 2017/2018

# SMALL BUSINESS IS BIG BUSINESS

## GROWING ENTREPRENEURS:

Small businesses represent the backbone of B.C. communities and cross over all business sectors, from retail stores and doctors' offices to computer programming, and even the family farm.

### NUMBER OF SMALL BUSINESSES BY REGION, 2016

REGION	POP.	# OF SMALL BUSINESSES
Vancouver Island/Coast	784,006	67,770
Mainland/Southcoast	2,834,194	243,223
Thompson-Okanagan	539,747	44,320
Kootenay	148,770	14,405
Cariboo	156,140	11,924
North Coast + Nechako	97,649	6,129
Northeast	70,796	6,407
Unspecified		1,922
<b>British Columbia</b>	<b>4,631,302</b>	<b>396,100</b>

### KEY TRENDS:

- ▶ B.C. small business workers have one of the smallest wage gaps in the country, compared to large business workers
- ▶ **38%** of all business owners in B.C. are women, above the national average

### KEY GOVERNMENT INITIATIVES:

- ▶ **Indigenous Business Investment Council**  
[www.bcibic.ca](http://www.bcibic.ca)
- ▶ **BC Innovation Council**  
[www.bcic.ca](http://www.bcic.ca)
- ▶ **Junior Achievement BC**  
[www.jabc.ca](http://www.jabc.ca)
- ▶ **Small Business Resources**  
[www.gov.bc.ca/smallbusinessresources](http://www.gov.bc.ca/smallbusinessresources)
- ▶ **Indigenous Small Business Resources**  
[www.gov.bc.ca/IndigenousSmallBusinessResources](http://www.gov.bc.ca/IndigenousSmallBusinessResources)
- ▶ **Futurpreneur**  
[www.futurpreneur.ca/en](http://www.futurpreneur.ca/en)
- ▶ **Small Business BC**  
[www.smallbusinessbc.ca](http://www.smallbusinessbc.ca)
- ▶ **Women's Enterprise Centre**  
[www.womensenterprise.ca](http://www.womensenterprise.ca)
- ▶ **Community Futures**  
[www.communityfutures.ca](http://www.communityfutures.ca)
- ▶ **#BCTECH Strategy**  
[www.bctechstrategy.gov.bc.ca](http://www.bctechstrategy.gov.bc.ca)

## GROWING THE ECONOMY:

Fostering the growth and success of small business benefits all British Columbians through increased job creation, innovation and economic competitiveness.

### KEY STATS:

- ▶ **98%** of businesses in the province are small businesses
- ▶ **79%** are microbusinesses
- ▶ **396,100** total small businesses
- ▶ **51%** are self employed with no employees
- ▶ **83** small business/1000 ppl (average is 70)
- ▶ **34%** of GDP (above the Canadian avg. 32%)

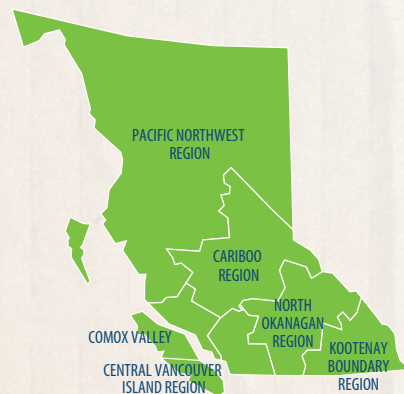
### KEY TRENDS:

- ▶ **Fastest growing sectors 2014–2016** (businesses added)  
Professional/Scientific/Technical: **+1,547**  
Specialty Trade Contractors: **+989**  
Ambulatory Health Care: **+760**

### KEY GOVERNMENT INITIATIVES:

- ▶ **Export Navigator**  
[www.britishcolumbia.ca/export/export-navigator](http://www.britishcolumbia.ca/export/export-navigator)

### EXPORT NAVIGATOR IS CURRENTLY AVAILABLE IN:



## GROWING PARTNERSHIPS:

By collaborating with government we will identify actions that we can take to promote growth, improving government services and regulations and increase economic competitiveness.

### MOBILE BUSINESS LICENCE AGREEMENTS



### KEY TRENDS:

- ▶ BizPal has service coverage in **130** community partners, **87.5%** of the provincial population.



The 2018 Open for Business Awards were presented at the Small Business BC Awards Gala held on February 23, 2018 at the Vancouver Convention Centre.

### KEY TRENDS:

- ▶ The Open for Business Awards recognize municipal, First Nation and regional district governments undertaking initiatives and partnerships to reduce cost and complexity of doing business in British Columbia
- ▶ To level the playing field, the Roundtable has established 4 new categories for the 2018 Open for Business Awards: Large Community, Medium Community, Small Community and First Nations Community. Visit [www.sbbcaawards.ca/open-for-business](http://www.sbbcaawards.ca/open-for-business) to learn more.

## GROWING MARKETS:

- ▶ Small business exporters account for almost **42%** of all B.C. goods exports
- ▶ In 2015, about **\$15.8 billion** worth of goods were exported out of the country

### SMALL BUSINESS EXPORT DESTINATIONS

Export Destination	Share of Small Business Exporters
<b>USA</b>	<b>55%</b>
<b>Non-USA</b>	<b>26%</b>
<b>Both USA and Non-USA</b>	<b>19%</b>

### KEY STATS:

- ▶ **44%** of small business commodity exports were shipped to Asia and **42%** were shipped to the USA.

### KEY TRENDS:

- ▶ Between June 2014 and June 2016, the professional/scientific/technical sector and the high technology sector recorded the strongest growth

### KEY GOVERNMENT INITIATIVES:

- ▶ **Import-Export Guide**  
[www.gov.bc.ca/importexportguide](http://www.gov.bc.ca/importexportguide)
- ▶ **Canada-BC Agri-Innovation**  
[www.iafbc.ca/funding-opportunities/innovation](http://www.iafbc.ca/funding-opportunities/innovation)
- ▶ **Start-up In Residence**  
[www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/employment-business/business/business-government/startup-in-residence](http://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/employment-business/business/business-government/startup-in-residence)
- ▶ **Trade and Invest BC**  
[www.britishcolumbia.ca](http://www.britishcolumbia.ca)

## GROWING THE WORK FORCE:

- ▶ **Provide a head start** to hands-on learning in schools
- ▶ **A shift in education and training** to better match with jobs in demand
- ▶ **A stronger partnership** with industry and labour to deliver training and apprenticeships

### KEYS STATS:

- ▶ **54%** of private sector jobs are provided by small business, employing over **1 million** British Columbians
- ▶ **Nearly 1/3** of all wages in B.C. are paid by small businesses (#1 in Canada)

### KEY GOVERNMENT INITIATIVES:

- ▶ **Work BC**  
[www.workbc.ca](http://www.workbc.ca)
- ▶ **Industry Training Authority**  
[www.itabc.ca](http://www.itabc.ca)

## Contents

Who We Are	3
Message from the Honourable Bruce Ralston	4
Message from the Roundtable	5
Pillar 1: Human Resources and Education	6
Pillar 2: Overcoming Barriers to Success	8
Pillar 3: Economic Growth	10
Pillar 4: Small Business Issues	12
Moving Forward	14
Open for Business Awards	15
Key Small Business Resources	16



# Who We Are... small business owners and advocates for B.C.'s small business community



**Samantha Howard**  
Director, B.C.,  
Canadian Federation of  
Independent Business  
LANGFORD



**Ian Tostenson**  
President & CEO,  
British Columbia Restaurant  
and Food Services Association  
VANCOUVER



**Cybele Negris**  
CEO & Co-founder,  
Webnames.ca Inc.  
Vice-Chair,  
Small Business Roundtable  
VANCOUVER



**Robert (Bob)  
J. Redden**  
Partner & President,  
Environmental Dynamics Inc.  
PRINCE GEORGE



**Sue Adams**  
Managing Partner,  
Pemberton Valley  
Supermarket Ltd.  
WHISTLER



**Chief Judy Wilson**  
Chief,  
Neskonlith Indian Band  
CHASE



**Mark Startup**  
Vice President,  
Retail Council of Canada  
VANCOUVER



**MJ Whitmarsh**  
CEO,  
Whitmarsh Enterprises  
SOOKE



**John Cameron**  
Chief Executive Officer,  
ROCK SOLID Business  
Coaching Inc.  
LANGLEY



**Jill Doucette**  
Owner,  
Synergy Enterprises  
VICTORIA



**Val Litwin**  
President & CEO,  
B.C. Chamber of Commerce  
VANCOUVER



**Ashley Ramsay**  
Founder & CEO,  
Yeti Farm Creative  
KELOWNA



**Sean Surerus**  
Vice President,  
Surerus Pipeline Inc.  
FORT ST. JOHN



**Angie Barnard**  
Founder,  
The Network Hub  
NANAIMO



**Randy Richmond**  
Vice President & Partner,  
Spearhead.ca  
NELSON



**Ingrid Hope**  
Owner & President,  
Hall Printing  
TRAIL AND NELSON

**The Roundtable is here to help. For inquiries contact the [RoundtableSecretariat@gov.bc.ca](mailto:RoundtableSecretariat@gov.bc.ca) who will connect you with the Roundtable member in your area.**

## Who We Are

The Small Business Roundtable is a government advisory board comprised of small business leaders that engage with government policy and program leads to provide meaningful advice that government can action. Our aim is to represent all sectors and regions of the province to represent the diversity of the small business sector and bring a strong collective “voice to government”. By meeting regularly to foster collaboration with government partners, industry leaders and stakeholders such as Junior Achievement BC and Aboriginal Tourism BC, we look to build critical momentum in programs and policies to deliver services that people and businesses can count on.

## What We Do

Our longstanding mandate, reflected in the organization of this report under the Four Pillars of the Roundtable, highlights what we have heard over the past year and our recommendations to support the current government’s efforts to strengthen the sector:

1. Human Resources and Education
2. Overcoming Barriers to Success
3. Economic Growth
4. Small Business Issues

## Our Activities

The Small Business Roundtable aims to meet quarterly to discuss issues of the day, focused on identification of small business opportunities and challenges. At these meetings the Roundtable applies a small business lens to ensure small business issues are fully considered when providing advice to government policies and programs. We value the contributions of our networks as we continue to CHAMPION small business interests in the province; ENGAGE in a dialogue with small businesses to identify key issues and opportunities; and ADVISE government and small business to help small businesses grow and succeed.

## Our Focus

One of our primary focus areas moving forward will be to support the emerging Small Business Task Force to ensure that we hear from a diverse range of small businesses in order to better understand what government can do to help strengthen the sector.

Previous consultations with small businesses have identified consistent themes that hamper small business success, such as:

- Lack of awareness of small business programs and initiatives;
- Access to capital;
- Access to skilled labour; and,
- Regulatory barriers to growth.

The Small Business Task Force will be established as a special initiative of the Roundtable and will launch consultations in late spring/summer to engage with small business owners across B.C. By seeking input on establishing or improving programs that meet actual needs of small business owners and the talent they employ, the task force will advise government on key priorities such as the high cost of living, innovation and the emerging economy, youth, entrepreneurship and fair wages.

The Small Business Task Force initiative will also endeavour to build on previous consultations and subsequent Roundtable recommendations to provide a more in-depth understanding of how each of these issues impacts small business growth. The Chair of the Task Force will ultimately provide recommendations to the Minister on potential actions government can take to help address these issues.

# Message from the Honourable Bruce Ralston Minister of Jobs, Trade and Technology



Small businesses are central to British Columbia's vibrant and growing economy. They play a critical role in our communities and create good job opportunities for people in every corner of the province. All together, B.C.'s small businesses contribute roughly one-third of total provincial GDP and export nearly \$16 billion in goods annually. More than one million British Columbians worked in small businesses in 2016 and employment in the sector grew faster than at any time in the past decade.

There is much to celebrate when it comes to small business in British Columbia. Your government wants to build on this momentum – our first priority is to tackle the challenges that still need to be addressed.

Many small business owners still find it expensive to run a business and the high cost of living in some areas can make finding and retaining workers difficult. While Premier John Horgan has made housing affordability a top priority for the upcoming February 2018 budget, action to help small business has already begun. Our government has reduced the small business tax rate by 20% – from 2.5% to 2.0% – and is establishing a Small Business Task Force to listen to the concerns of small business in order to better understand exactly what government can do to help further strengthen the sector in all regions.

Over the coming months, this task force will travel the province to seek innovative ideas on how to address specific issues that are having an impact on the cost of operating a small business and barriers to growth.

The small business sector is diverse, requiring engagement with a broad spectrum of owners and stakeholders to inform government policy direction and recommendations to build a strong, sustainable economy that works for everyone.

When Premier John Horgan appointed me Minister of Jobs, Trade and Technology, our government committed to continue to work with the BC Small Business Roundtable to hear directly from small business leaders representing a variety of sectors and regions. One of my first decisions as Chair of the Roundtable was to recognize that entrepreneurship should be celebrated along with the communities that support their growth and success. This is why we partnered with Small Business BC to host the Open for Business Awards, so that winning communities and small business award winners can be celebrated on the same stage.

The BC Small Business Roundtable has a record to be proud of and I look forward to our continued work with them to support the Small Business Task Force. With feedback from small businesses throughout the province, I am confident that they will bring forward meaningful recommendations that government can consider and implement to create good jobs and economic opportunity throughout British Columbia.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Bruce Ralston".

Bruce Ralston  
Minister Jobs, Trade and Technology

# Message from the Roundtable



On behalf of the Small Business Roundtable, I would like to congratulate and welcome the new government and our new Chair, the Honourable Bruce Ralston, Minister of Jobs, Trade and Technology.

Through the transition, the Roundtable continues to serve as the “voice” of the small business sector as our new government works to establish the Emerging Economy Task Force and the Small Business Task Force.

We look forward to continuing our collaborations with government and supporting the Small Business Task Force to address key issues and opportunities affecting small business owners, fostering government programs, making it easier for businesses to overcome barriers, including affordability.

Strengthening the rural economy and housing affordability are growing issues that need to be addressed by all levels of government in consultation with the business community. It is increasingly difficult for businesses to attract and retain a productive and talented workforce, when our most precious resource can't find suitable housing or have difficulty finding a job that can leverage their training while sustaining their household.

The Roundtable is encouraged by the new government's reduction to the Small Business Tax rate from 2.5% to 2.0%, and their focus on education. Youth and entrepreneurship are key to B.C.'s future prosperity. With the rise in AI (artificial intelligence), blockchain and new innovations, educators have a difficult job teaching children and preparing them for jobs of the future. The new curriculum requires the support of well-resourced teachers that are committed to helping develop our entrepreneurs and workforce of tomorrow.

We are also excited by the new Open for Business Awards format that was delivered in conjunction with the Small Business BC Awards on February 23, 2018. We believe in the importance of celebrating local and First Nation governments that are doing the right things to support

small businesses in their communities, as they serve as role models all other communities can aspire to.

The Roundtable is pleased to present the 12th Annual Report to Government highlighting our work from the past year, as presented under the Four Pillars. This report provides valuable insights into Roundtable priorities that have been addressed by government at our quarterly meetings. Our collective intent is to foster a progressive business climate that leads to the improved prosperity of all British Columbians.

Finally, our hearts go out to all who have been affected by the B.C. wildfires. We'd like to remind everyone that not only individuals and homes have been affected, but also small business owners and employees that depend on them for their livelihoods. We urge continued support for local business owners and acknowledge the support of government, wildfire staff, key agencies and the Red Cross as they rebuild.

*Cybele Negris* – Vice-Chair

## The Four Pillars of the Roundtable



# PILLAR 1:

## Human Resources and Education

Developing B.C.'s entrepreneurs, talent and labour pool to support small business growth.



*Bee Fresh was the winner of Junior Achievement BC's 2017 Celebrate Entrepreneurship Award that recognizes the student company that demonstrates the most innovation in their business*

## Growing the Technology Sector

### What We Have Heard

The Roundtable has confirmed that keeping talent continues to be a key challenge for growing tech companies.

*"Dominated by small and micro-companies (one to four employees), the technology sector accounts for 4.6% of B.C.'s workforce – larger than mining, oil and gas, and the forestry sectors combined."*

Ashley Ramsay, Roundtable Member

### Recommendations

**To Government:** Help growing companies develop and retain locally trained students.

**To Small Business:** Partner with government to share success stories on how computer coding, as part of the new high school curriculum, provides high school graduates with job-ready skills, making it easier to find local, well-paying jobs in the technology sector.

## Updated K-12 Curriculum to Foster Entrepreneurism

### What We Have Heard

Supporting students to learn about entrepreneurial development, build financial literacy and gain hands-on work experience is critical. B.C. students can take advantage of for-credit work experience that supports transitions to post-secondary and career.



## Recommendations

**To Government:** Government is encouraged to continue to engage with the small business community to educate potential employers about B.C. student work experience opportunities that will support student transitions to the world of work.

**To Small Business:** Small business owners can help by getting involved in building relationships, mentoring, and sharing their stories with students to encourage them to consider entrepreneurship as a career path. Small businesses are encouraged to nurture relationships with school districts and communities to help youth to become more successful.

*“Given the importance of small business in every community, it is important that youth are given the opportunity to learn about entrepreneurship. Small business entrepreneurs are often the first employers for youth and can play a key role preparing youth for the future. The new K-12 curriculum focuses on developing competencies to build more transferable skills.”*

Mark Startup, Roundtable Member

## Youth Entrepreneurship

### What We Have Heard

We are inspired by the many success stories we’ve heard of how Junior Achievement BC’s business education programs are helping young entrepreneurs. Junior Achievement BC has been a catalyst in increasing the appeal

of entrepreneurship for youth through the Aboriginal Business Circles Pilot and the Celebrate Entrepreneurship Awards.

**Futurpreneur** is the only national non-profit organization providing financing, education, and mentorship to help young entrepreneurs launch and grow their business through their Rock My Business Plan and Thrive North Programs.

*“The Aboriginal Business Circles Pilot initiative is being delivered throughout the Province in partnership with Junior Achievement BC, Community Futures Development Corporation of the Central Interior First Nations and the Small Business Roundtable. The Pilot supports youth entrepreneurs and was inspired from the 2014 Aboriginal Small Business Meeting.”*

Chief Judy Wilson, Roundtable Member

## Recommendations

**To Government:** Work with agencies like Junior Achievement BC to provide input to the K-12 curriculum to include economic literacy so that youth are better prepared for entering the workforce. Provide Aboriginal Business Circle facilitators a forum to share how technology is inspiring students. Continue to support the Celebrate Entrepreneurship competition and award to inspire young people to build their business acumen.

**To Small Business:** Engage youth organizations like Junior Achievement BC and Futurpreneur to familiarize yourself with their programs, and sponsor a program or hire a student from the program.



Kamloops Friendship Centre - Youth  
Aboriginal Business Circles Pilot students

## PILLAR 1: Looking Forward

Potential areas of interest to explore by the Small Business Task Force include:

- Innovative training opportunities for the sector that bridge the rural/urban divide.
- Innovative opportunities to improve the availability of skilled labour with a particular emphasis on youth employment and newcomers.
- Help for small businesses to scale up their employee skill profiles.
- Work with agencies like Junior Achievement BC and Indigenous business leaders to build on the Aboriginal Business Circles Pilot using the findings from the Pilot’s completion report.

# PILLAR 2:

## Overcoming Barriers to Success

Making it easier for businesses to grow and provide workers with good jobs in all sectors and regions of B.C.



Co-owners David Placek and Dave Williams, of Daves' Bakery, Campbell River

## Small Business Lens & Resources

### What We Have Heard

Government applies a small business lens – primarily through the Regulatory Reform policy – to ensure that small business is considered in program and policy decisions.

### Recommendations

**To Government:** Continue to support cross-government engagement and policy development that considers the needs of small business. Continue supporting programs that help small business to comply with government regulations like the Mobile Business Licence program, BizPaL, and the Welcome Package for new business registrants.

**To Small Business:** Share your ideas about how to make it more affordable for small businesses to innovate, grow and create jobs with the Roundtable. Make sure you are aware of programs available to support you as you grow your business and share what you know with your business network by visiting the resource links on page 16 of this report.

Overcoming barriers to success must also include creating an environment of inclusiveness for all small business operators and embracing the changing business landscape.

# Indigenous Entrepreneurship

## What We Have Heard

A focus on entrepreneurship opportunities for Indigenous peoples represents a significant opportunity to build capacity and contribute to local, national and international economies in a sustainable manner. Indigenous owned and operated businesses are growing and succeeding in all sectors of the economy, from technology and agrifoods to forestry and Indigenous cultural tourism. The [Indigenous Small Business Resource handout](#) is a tool used by Indigenous small business owners and communities to build entrepreneurial capacity.

*“From thriving fisheries to international trade economies, the entrepreneurial spirit has existed in British Columbia’s Indigenous peoples for centuries, and is a way of life for our people.”*  
Chief Judy Wilson, Roundtable member

# Shared Economy Discussion

## What We Have Heard

Important discussions have taken place for the past several years to understand the complex issues relating to the shared economy. At the heart of these discussions is how the regulatory environment could be improved for businesses to address the demands of their community and desired service improvements. The shared economy is continuing to expand



and change the competitive landscape for some sectors dominated by small business. The Province should continue to take a lead role to ensure there is a level playing field for existing businesses facing competition from new shared economy businesses such as Uber and Airbnb.

## Recommendations

**To Government:** Look at the pros and cons of the shared economy to both business and citizens, and work with UBCM to examine taxation and bylaw impacts on a province-wide basis.

A continued focus on increasing awareness of the availability of small business tools and resources among Indigenous communities and business owners should be a key focus. It is important to continue to provide supports and resources for Indigenous businesses because when entrepreneurs succeed, communities benefit by strengthened local economies and improved services.

**To Small Businesses:** It’s important to provide your thoughts and feedback on the shared economy with the Small Business Roundtable. Any new business model on the

shared economy may significantly impact hospitality, dining, automotive, transportation, retail, consumer goods, media and entertainment sectors.

*“Through regional consultations we learned several municipalities are already taking steps to regulate businesses using the shared economy model – like Uber and Airbnb.”*

Cybele Negris, Roundtable Vice-Chair



# PILLAR 2: Looking Forward

Potential areas of interest to explore by the Small Business Task Force include:

- Identifying regulatory barriers that add to the cost of doing business.
- Canvas small businesses to determine the need for legislative protection, such as the *Franchises Act*.
- Identify further opportunities for government to help small businesses during emergencies or natural disasters.
- Understand the challenges of Indigenous entrepreneurs on reserve and off reserve.

# PILLAR 3:

## Economic Growth

Working together to build a strong, sustainable, innovative economy that works for everyone.

## Strengthening the Rural Economy

### What We Have Heard

Rural communities are finding it difficult to maintain essential infrastructure like sewers and roads when their tax base has disappeared after the closure of large local businesses, such as a lumber mill. New workplace trends are making it difficult for rural communities to compete for jobs, attract and retain business investment, and remain competitive. Rural communities need to find ways to retain and attract youth to supply the workforce needed for local businesses.

Launched in 2016, the Rural Dividend Program has provided over \$24 million to small (less than 25,000 population) rural communities to fund projects to assist them to reinvigorate and diversify the local economy. The resounding success of this program in its first year of operation demonstrates that communities are eager to leverage local talent to develop and deliver projects that reflect the needs of the community.

*“Making it easier for entrepreneurs to develop their businesses in rural areas will strengthen communities and make them more attractive for people to establish their roots. Access to essential services, transportation and high-speed internet are essential to business growth and competitiveness. Reliable high-speed internet opens up access to education, markets and boundless commerce opportunities for rural businesses.”*

Bob Redden, Roundtable member

## Recommendations

**To Government:** Support or design programs similar to the Rural Dividend Program to assist rural communities to reinvigorate and diversify their local economies. Use the upcoming Small Business Task Force process to grow insights, including expansion of broadband internet connectivity, that will encourage companies to innovate in rural communities.

**To Small Business:** Identify barriers that are making it difficult in the rural economy for citizens and business to access emerging economic opportunities and share them with the Small Business Roundtable. Learn more about the initiatives detailed in the Open for Business Awards Best Practices Guide and those funded by the Rural Dividend Fund that can be tailored by your local government to inspire entrepreneurs to reinvigorate and diversify local economies.

## Technology

### What We Have Heard

Growth in the technology sector is outpacing the rest of the provincial economy and providing higher-paying jobs for British Columbians. We don't have enough young people to fill current vacancies, or to provide for future growth. The Roundtable has also learned that access to capital, access to markets and customers including government continue to be key challenges for growing companies.

Rapid advancements in technology are profoundly changing how businesses operate, making it easier for firms in rural communities



to engage with customers, suppliers and partners through e-learning, virtual collaboration, and e-commerce.

New talent from other countries can help fill our current labour gap, provided the turnaround time on immigration visas is 90 days or less. Government should focus on entrepreneurial and technology training for youth to provide for the future.

The \$100-million BC Tech Fund, helps B.C. technology companies access the early stage venture capital they need to grow, keeping them in B.C. and helping to diversify the economy.

*“The technology sector is rapidly evolving and changing how we do business. The sector has grown by almost 30%, significantly outpacing the provincial economy, generating almost 10,000 new firms of which 95% are small businesses. The Roundtable will advocate for the provincial and federal governments to bring solutions to support small businesses that are impacted by evolving technology.”*

Angie Barnard, Roundtable member

### Recommendations

**To Government:** Continue to encourage the federal government to increase immigration levels for provincial nominees. This will improve processing times and allow the BC Provincial Nominee Program to be responsive to small businesses' need to attract international talent with in-demand skills.

Make it easier for technology entrepreneurs to do business with government by establishing a user-friendly registry for firms to market their products and services to government, and/or by creating an agency that helps technology companies navigate government's complex procurement process.

**To Small Business:** Develop strategies and infrastructure to support a distributed workforce that enables people to work remotely and closer to home.

Provide leadership to local Chambers, economic development organizations and municipalities to communicate compelling value propositions to attract business start-ups and relocations, and entice tech-savvy remote workers to relocate to their region.

## PILLAR 3: Looking Forward

Potential areas of interest to explore by the Small Business Task Force include:

- Opportunities to create better access to capital especially for rural communities.
- Procurement opportunities with government, especially for rural communities.
- Improve rural British Columbia's access to digital opportunities.
- Opportunities to provide further support for entrepreneurial and small business growth from all communities and backgrounds that face capacity issues.

# PILLAR 4:

## Small Business Issues

To understand the unique needs of small business owners in all regions and all sectors.



Robyn Yow, Co-owner of the Island Grand, Campbell River

## Fair Wages Commission

### What We Have Heard

The Roundtable is supportive of the Province's effort to chart a path that raises the minimum wage to the \$15 per hour level. However, the Roundtable believes these increases should be implemented in a balanced and predictable way, taking into account the potential negative impacts that we are confident can readily be mitigated.

*"Our consensus view is that it is time to take politics out of the decision-making and instead build holistic solutions that provide up-training and retraining of minimum wage earners to qualify for higher-paying jobs. By taking this approach we can help those who need it by assisting heads of households who support families as they move towards a living wage and beyond."*

Mark Startup, Roundtable member

### Recommendations

**To Government:** Consider linking wage increases to the CPI after \$15 is reached and provide a B.C. personal tax exemption up to a provincially calculated 'living wage' that puts more money in the pockets of low-income earners.

Continue to support the Canada-BC Jobs Grant to up-skill minimum wage earners to higher-level jobs. Where the employee is the head of a household, provide 100% of the cost to the employer rather than a 50/50 matching fund requirement.

**To Small Business:** Consider adopting new technology to reduce operating costs and increase productivity to offset the cost impact from higher wages.

## Reducing the Cost of Doing Business

### What We Have Heard

Businesses want to comply with PST but complexities make it challenging and B.C. companies are less competitive. Technology and manufacturing companies that export goods that require installation or maintenance services are frustrated that PST is putting them at a competitive disadvantage.

### Recommendations

**To Government:** Engage with the small business community on policy initiatives which may have tax implications.

**To Small Business:** Take advantage of the Scientific Research and Experimental Development Tax Credit program (SR&ED) to become an innovation leader in your industry.

*"Small business is critical to the economic wellness of our province. Ensuring our tax policies are competitive and tax collection is streamlined and simplified will help pave the way to a healthy economy."*

Sue Adams, Roundtable member

## Open for Business Awards Discussion

### What We Have Heard

The Open for Business Awards recognize and celebrate communities that have adopted business-friendly practices to support small businesses to grow and thrive. The Awards application process needs to be simple for communities to participate. Communities need to understand "what's in it for me" to be motivated to take the time and effort to create a submission and participate.

*"When small businesses prosper, they add social and economic value to the community. B.C. municipalities that support small business through business-friendly policies also prosper. The Open for Business Awards salutes the municipalities that support small business, and provides a platform for them to share their innovative ideas with peers."*

Ian Tostenson, Roundtable member

### Recommendations

**To Government:** Assist the Roundtable by encouraging MLAs to promote the Open for Business Awards and Small Business BC Awards to their constituents.

**To Small Business:** Nominate your community for an Open for Business Award.



District of Chetwynd recognizes new and enhanced businesses. Owner of Share the Sugar Ltd. Owner Karen Boos is presented with a Certificate of Congratulations.

## PILLAR 4: Looking Forward

Potential areas of interest to explore by the Small Business Task Force include:

- Opportunities to provide further support for entrepreneurial and small business growth from all communities and backgrounds that face structural barriers.
- Identify enhancements to existing programs, tools and resources.

## Moving Forward

### The Small Business Roundtable commits to:

- Continue to meet quarterly as a Roundtable and as required to identify small business opportunities and challenges and advocate for necessary changes.
- Support the Roundtable's special initiative, the Small Business Task Force, and identify barriers to success and opportunities to strengthen the sector.
- Continue to deliver the Open for Business Awards to showcase local governments that are making it easier to do business in B.C., and engage more vigorously with Indigenous leaders to provide a more inclusive framework for their communities to participate in future Open for Business Awards.
- Work with Indigenous business leaders to understand the challenges of Indigenous entrepreneurs on-reserve and off-reserve, and build on the successes of the Aboriginal Business Circles Pilot initiative.
- Explore opportunities to provide further supports for entrepreneurial and small business growth from all communities and backgrounds, especially for newcomers to Canada.



*The Honourable Bruce Ralston Minister of Jobs, Trade and Technology and Roundtable Vice Chair, Cybele Negriz*



*Small Business Roundtable quarterly meeting in Vancouver, December 2017*





# OPEN *for* BUSINESS Awards

## Open for Business Awards

The winners for 2018 are:



### Large Community Award: City of Campbell River



Economic Development Officer Rose Klukas & CAO Deborah Sargent

"Since the day my partners and I started our business back in 2015 we have seen unending support from the city, aiding and guiding us to success... We even witness cheerleading and encouragement for our business to this day. As an entrepreneur in Campbell River I rest in knowing that my tax dollars are being well used for ingenuity and the development of my business and community." *Matthew Fox, Owner/ Operator, Beach Fire Brewing Company LTD*



### Small Community Award: District of Chetwynd



Economic Development Officer Ellen McAvany & Councillor Rochelle Galbraith

"From the moment we engaged with the District on the idea it has been a smooth and collaborative process... As a direct result of the Districts open for business attitude, we were able to get our project from concept to completion within a very short time frame." *Mike Ridley COO, Workforce Accommodations Black Diamond Group*



### Medium Community Award: City of Kimberley



Mayor Don McCormick

"As the owner of several businesses in Kimberley's downtown area I can attest to the value of the (Investment Incentive) program. Several ventures I have been involved in have taken advantage of the tax relief offered... This assistance has been particularly helpful in the start-up phase of several businesses where there is uncertainty in the early years. While the municipality is temporarily forgoing tax revenue, the incentive is real and it has created momentum in the downtown that is rapidly changing the commercial vitality for the better." *Cam Dodd, Owner, Overtime Beer Works, Pedal and Tap*



### First Nations Award: Nisga'a Lisims Government



Bonita Young-Mercer, Manager of the NLG Terrace Office & Art Mercer, SBBC Board Member

"The Nisga'a Lisims Government is committed to developing a tourism based economy as part of an overall economic development strategy. With the expected raise in the number of visitors coming in for the hot spring experience, there is more opportunity for our people to develop entrepreneurial based businesses to serve the demands of the tourist." *Bertram Mercer, Economic Development Officer*

### Special acknowledgement to the finalists for 2018:

#### Large Community:

- Penticton
- Prince George

#### Medium Community:

- Cranbrook
- Salmon Arm

#### Small Community:

- Lumby

# Key Small Business Resources

## Resources to identify and develop talent



[www.workbc.ca](http://www.workbc.ca)



[www.british-columbia.jacan.org](http://www.british-columbia.jacan.org)



[www.rockmybusinessplan.ca](http://www.rockmybusinessplan.ca)



[www.womensenterprise.ca](http://www.womensenterprise.ca)



[www.itabc.ca](http://www.itabc.ca)

## Resources that make it easier to do business



[www.smallbusinessbc.ca](http://www.smallbusinessbc.ca)



Business starts here

[www.bcbizpal.ca](http://www.bcbizpal.ca)



[www.bceid.ca](http://www.bceid.ca)



BC INNOVATION COUNCIL

[www.bccic.ca](http://www.bccic.ca)

## Key online portals to the Roundtable and Government



[sbbcawards.ca/open](http://sbbcawards.ca/open)



BRITISH COLUMBIA'S  
Small Business Roundtable

[smallbusinessroundtable.ca](http://smallbusinessroundtable.ca)



@SBRoundtableBC



[www.communityfutures.ca](http://www.communityfutures.ca)



British Columbia's  
Small Business Resources

**Small Business Resources**



BC Tech Summit, Vancouver



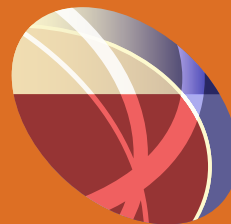
Junior Achievement BC - Innovation Jam Student event



Team Bee Fresh, 2017 Winner of the Celebrate Entrepreneurship Award



Team Bee Fresh in action



BRITISH COLUMBIA'S  
Small Business Roundtable

[www.smallbusinessroundtable.ca](http://www.smallbusinessroundtable.ca)