

**IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**The Rick Hansen Foundation launches national Accessible Cities Award**

**November 2, 2016 (Vancouver, B.C.)** – The Rick Hansen Foundation today announced the launch of its inaugural Accessible Cities Award.

The Award allows municipalities from across Canada to demonstrate their efforts to increase universal access in the built environment. Winners of first, second and third place will be announced in late May of 2017.

By identifying Canada’s most accessible cities and their associated features, the Award will raise awareness of accessibility challenges in the built environment, generate a showcase of best practices, and help to measure progress towards a more accessible Canada.

The Award also provides an opportunity to highlight leaders in the creation of more accessible places and spaces for people with disabilities. These leaders include municipalities but also specific members of the building community with whom they work.

A unique feature of the Award is its Circle of Excellence. Along with their application, municipalities are invited to nominate up to five places or spaces in their municipality that exemplify best practices in universal access. Amongst all nominations, up to five winners will be inducted into the Circle of Excellence.

“When municipalities, and the building community make accessibility a priority, then universal access becomes the standard not the exception in design” said Rick Hansen, CEO of the Rick Hansen Foundation. “This Award will recognize the outstanding leaders of today for showcasing best practices, and inspire future leaders to continue finding solutions in addressing accessibility challenges in the built environment. Together, we can realize our goal of ensuring the places where we live, work and play are fully accessible for people with disabilities by 2050.”

A panel of judges representing the Rick Hansen Foundation, the building industry, and the disability community will evaluate all applications, including nominations for the Circle of Excellence.

Any Canadian municipality, regardless of population size, can apply and there is no application fee. The application form and information can be found at [rickhansen.com](http://rickhansen.com). Applications close March 3, 2017.

**About the Rick Hansen Foundation**

The Rick Hansen Foundation is dedicated to Rick Hansen's life-long goal of creating an inclusive world where people with disabilities are living to their full potential. Foundation programs are designed to increase awareness, change attitudes, and remove barriers in the built environment for people with disabilities.

**MEDIA CONTACT:**

Dawn Tse, Publicist  
Rick Hansen Foundation  
D: 778-296-1541  
M: 778-229-7532  
[dtse@rickhansen.com](mailto:dtse@rickhansen.com)