

Rick Hansen Foundation Barrier Busting gets underway in celebration of Canada's 150th

15 projects approved to improve accessibility from coast to coast to coast.

February 16, 2017— The Rick Hansen Foundation is pleased to announce funding for 15 community Barrier Buster projects across Canada as part of Access4All, their *Canada 150 Signature Initiative*. These 15 projects are the first of an anticipated 50 grants that will represent a diverse cross-section of large and small communities across Canada. The first 15 winning projects span from Nanaimo, BC to Milford, Nova Scotia, all demonstrating a passion for local accessibility and a dedication to fostering an inclusive environment for members of their community. A full list of communities across Canada that have been awarded funding to date can be found [here](#).

“The Barrier Buster projects will help make significant improvements to local infrastructure all across Canada. I’m proud to welcome these communities to the Rick Hansen Foundation family. As they strive to improve their built environment with innovative and thoughtful solutions, they become part of the global movement for change,” says Rick Hansen, CEO of the Rick Hansen Foundation.

Launched in the fall of 2016, Access4All is aimed at improving the accessibility of public places, such as schools, libraries, parks and playgrounds. Access4All provides funding for Barrier Buster projects that improve physical infrastructure to increase accessibility, and also for community awareness-building events that will help to shed light on accessibility issues, and celebrate the communities’ achievements in making Canada more accessible and inclusive.

To date, the Rick Hansen Foundation has received over 200 applications from across the country, and the initial 15 approved projects are representative from coast to coast to coast, including five from BC, six from Ontario, three from the Prairies, and one Atlantic project. These Barrier Buster projects increase accessibility for a wide range of built environments, including improvements to schools, playgrounds, community churches, and city infrastructure.

“I have been a proud supporter of the Rick Hansen Foundation for years, and am thrilled to know a winning project has come from Calgary Centre,” says the Honourable Kent Hehr, Member of Parliament for Calgary Centre. “It is in the work of the Foundation, and the Barrier Buster program in particular, that helps ease accessibility issues for Canadians, prepares a community space to be available to all, and creates awareness for the needs of many Canadians.”

With funding support from the Government of Canada, this initiative will allow the Rick Hansen Foundation to grant \$1.7 million to schools and community groups, helping Canadians activate at least 50 large-scale “Barrier Buster” infrastructure improvement projects and awareness-building events in their communities. Additional generous supporters of Access4All include Today’s Parent, Boston Pizza, Canadian Tire Corporation, Scotiabank and Shaw Communications.

To date, there are 35 grants that have yet to be awarded, and applications to Access4All are open until March 31st. For more information, or to apply for a grant, visit www.rickhansen.com/Access4All.



About Access4All:

On this upcoming milestone of Canada's 150th anniversary of Confederation, the Rick Hansen Foundation is inviting schools and community groups to learn more about accessibility, identify barriers, and apply for grants of up to \$30,000 to undertake and celebrate accessibility infrastructure improvements in public places and spaces.

For more information on the Access4All program, please visit: www.rickhansen.com/Access4All

Canada's 150th is an opportunity to celebrate the values of our great country with pride: values such as inclusion, diversity, compassion and access for everyone. As we celebrate these values, it's also important that we create lasting impact. **Together, we can create an accessible Canada and leave a lasting legacy for our country's 150th.**

For more information on Canada 150, please visit: <http://canada.pch.gc.ca/eng/1468262573081>

About the Rick Hansen Foundation:

The Rick Hansen Foundation was established in 1988, following the completion of Rick Hansen's Man In Motion World Tour, to continue raising funds and awareness to create a world without barriers for people with disabilities. Over nearly 30 years, RHF has worked diligently to achieve real change through collaboration, partnerships and teamwork, inspired by Rick Hansen's original dream to liberate the amazing potential of people with disabilities. RHF breaks down barriers by changing attitudes, creating accessible spaces and inspiring an inclusive world.

MEDIA CONTACTS:

Jollean Willington
Publicist, Rick Hansen Foundation
778-296-1562 (work)
778-881-7792 (cell)
jwillington@rickhansen.com