

Southern Interior Development Initiative Trust (SIDIT)

The TRU School of Trades & Technology Transitions office is thrilled to advise students accepted into SD73/TRU Hosted Foundation Trades classes for 2008, 2009, and 2010, that their non-tuition fees payable to the Registrar's office (TRU Ancillary, Student Union and U-Pass fees) will be covered by the SIDIT bursaries described in the press release below. This is a savings of approximately \$115 per month. Your School District will be covering the TRU tuition fees for your Foundation program. Students and their families are responsible for paying program costs such as safety equipment, books, transportation / housing. Additional SIDIT bursaries may be available to assist with the cost of text books but must be applied for on-line and are need-based.

Students in Southern Interior to share \$ 6.94 million



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Students from communities across the Southern Interior of B.C., entering a wide range of trades, technology and academic programs at four institutions will have access to \$6.94 million in support over the next three years, as the result of the single largest donation for student awards in the history of Thompson Rivers University, [Okanagan College](#), [Selkirk College](#) and [College of the Rockies](#).

The announcement was made today at Thompson Rivers University in Kamloops by Jim Thomson, Chair of the [Southern Interior Development Initiative Trust](#) (SIDIT) and Soren Harbel, VP, Innovation Development of [BC Innovation Council](#) (BCIC).

The total package includes a \$2.4 million fund for Post-Secondary Trades and Technology Awards, a \$1.5 million fund for Secondary School Awards, along with a \$3.04 million fund supporting research, innovation and entrepreneurship to be jointly funded by SIDIT and BCIC, who have contributed \$ 1.52 million each.

"Experts have been warning us about the future shortage of a skilled workforce for over 40 years," Thomson told the crowd of enthusiastic students, faculty and senior executives at TRU in Kamloops and at Okanagan College in Kelowna, Selkirk College in Nelson, and the College of the Rockies in Cranbrook via videoconference.

"That future is here now and the reality is that there are few industries or businesses today whose capacity is not being restricted or limited due to a shortage of skilled people. This is an investment in the future well being of our region much the same as a business invests in plant and equipment or R&D. Education is expensive but in contrast to the alternative it is cheap, or in other words, this is a good investment."

The BCIC programs will support students, faculty, post-secondary institutions, industry organizations and companies involved in the areas of technology innovation, research, development and commercialization. This will be a major step in addressing key actions identified in the Province of British Columbia's Research and Innovation Strategy.

"The Council is excited to be joining forces with SIDIT to promote innovation and commercialization in the Southern Interior," said Harbel. "The potential and talent is strong in this region, laying the ground work for great opportunities to strengthen B.C.'s knowledge economy and business growth."

"With these contributions from SIDIT, TRU can offer a student assistance program that will provide trades and technology students opportunities for inquiry and innovation that will not only transform industry but also transform the lives of those involved," said Dr. Roger Barnsley TRU President and Vice-Chancellor.

"College of the Rockies is extremely pleased to further assist students in the East Kootenay region through these awards from the Trust," noted Dr. Nick Rubidge, president and CEO. "Encouraging our youth to begin or to continue their post-secondary education is a wise investment in the economic development of the Southern Interior."

"SIDIT is pleased to be able to work with the BC Innovation Council, TRU, Okanagan College, the College of the Rockies and Selkirk College to deliver a diverse range of education awards," says SIDIT CEO, Ron Baker. "With a strong focus on trades and technology, sciences, engineering entrepreneurship and innovation SIDIT's investment in education will have a major effect in attracting students into programs key to the economic success of the Southern Interior."