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NEWS RELEASE

Art, creativity and engineering unite!

Cultural leaders kick off Calgary's largest arts and engineering festival with miniature robots and an off-road racing car

Calgary's culture, business, education and engineering leaders are officially announcing an ambitious new festival today designed to involve the city in a large-scale initiative at the crossroads of creativity and engineering.

The event, called Beakerhead, will bring together the arts and engineering sectors to build, compete and exhibit interactive works of art, spectacle and entertainment during an annual week-long international happening every fall. The event will preview as part of the Stampede's Centennial and will officially launch as a stand-alone event from September 11 to 15, 2013.

"Beakerhead is an opportunity for all of us, and such a great idea in city built on creativity and engineering," says Jennifer Martin, president of TELUS Spark, and one of the organizations supporting this project.

The University of Calgary's Schulich School of Engineering, Mount Royal University, SAIT Polytechnic, TELUS Spark, Glenbow Museum and Calgary's major arts organizations are collaborating on the initiative, which will be a city-wide, inclusive and hands-on event that will pair two of Calgary's strongest sectors into a dense schedule of events. The five days will include both public activities and events and ticketed performances, throughout the city.

"Think of it as turning the whole city into a massively entertaining laboratory for five days," says Jay Ingram, special correspondent for Discovery Channel and one of the event co-founders.

The initiative's first funding sponsors include the Suncor Energy Foundation and the City of Calgary's Council's Strategic Initiatives Fund. Other early champions include the Alberta Ministry of Tourism, Parks and Recreation and the Calgary Stampede.

"This city is original, energetic, courageous and home to invention," says Beakerhead co-founder Mary Anne Moser. "Let's bring out that character to the world and the world to Calgary."

The kick-off event is sponsored by the Association of Professional Engineers, Geologists and Geophysicists of Alberta (APEGGA).

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NOTES TO EDITORS**Collaborators to date**

- Mount Royal University
- University of Calgary
- Southern Alberta Institute of Technology (SAIT)
- TELUS Spark (the new science centre)
- APEGGA
- Alberta Ballet
- Architects for Humanity
- Calgary Animated Objects Society
- Calgary Philharmonic Orchestra
- Calgary Municipal Land Corporation
- Calgary Stampede
- Canadian Federation of Engineering Students
- Digital Alberta
- Endeavour Arts
- Engineers Canada
- Engineers Without Borders
- EPCOR CENTRE for Performing Arts
- Green Fools Theatre
- National Music Centre
- High Performance Rodeo
- Protospace
- Quickdraw Animation Society
- Solarbotics
- Theatre Junction
- Victoria Park Business Revitalization Zone
- Webber Academy
- WorleyParsons Calgary

In addition, Beakerhead is supported by the association that licenses Alberta's professional engineers.

"On behalf of the more than 60,000 members of The Association of Professional Engineers, Geologists and Geophysicists of Alberta, it is our pleasure to sponsor and endorse Beakerhead as a principal supporter," says Jim Smith, PEng, president of APEGGA.

History

Conversations about a festival of this scale and scope, at the crossroads of creativity and engineering, began in 2008. The Business Case was commissioned in 2009, and stakeholder meetings held through 2009 and 2010. In 2011, the first funding was received and the opportunity presented to preview at the Calgary Stampede. In the same year, Beakerhead Society was established as a not-for-profit with a mandate to coordinate an annual international event each September in Calgary. The fall event will be supported by year-round community and educational programming. The event is shaped to be a major tourism event that brings Calgary culture to a world stage and the world to Calgary. However, at the same time, it has two strong equally important social mandates. One is to engage Calgarians in creating a broadly inclusive cultural event that supports creativity, sustainability and community. The second is to inspire young people to pursue careers that involve science, technology, engineering and math – and this includes careers in the cultural sector as well as business and engineering.

Economic Impact

The Alberta Ministry of Tourism, Parks and Recreation funded an Economic Impact Analysis in 2011, which shows that Beakerhead is expected to generate several hundred jobs and over \$20 million in revenue to the province within three years of start up. A downloadable copy of the Economic Impact Analysis is available at www.beakerhead.org.