
NEWS RELEASE

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Office of the Premier
Ministry of Advanced Education

PREMIER OPENS LEADING-EDGE DIGITAL MEDIA CENTRE

VANCOUVER – Premier Gordon Campbell officially opened the Centre for Digital Media today at the Great Northern Way Campus in Vancouver and announced Canada’s first Master’s Degree in Digital Media.

“The Centre for Digital Media will help to establish British Columbia as a global leader in the fast-growing digital media industry that has more than 1,000 companies and employs more than 15,000 people in British Columbia alone,” said Campbell. “It will provide the digital media sector with highly skilled labour, enabling B.C. to benefit further from the dynamic and ever-expanding interactive entertainment market.”

The Centre at Great Northern Way campus (GNWC) will be both a physical and virtual network of resources, programs and facilities that will fuel the innovation, development and commercialization of digital media products in Canada. The 10,000 square foot centre has space for 100 students and will be home to the Masters of Digital Media program.

The \$40.5 million in provincial funding for the Centre for Digital Media includes \$20 million for capital, a \$17-million endowment to provide future operating funding, and \$3.5 million in start-up costs.

The Masters of Digital Media program is a two-year graduate degree program that will offer students a team-based learning environment in close collaboration with industry partners. Students will be trained for a range of skills such as developing video game software and implementing computer graphics into film and television. September’s inaugural class of 21 students comes from around the world, including Canada, the U.S., India, Egypt and China.

B.C. has grown into one of the world’s largest centres for video game development, with more than 156 companies. The world market is expected to grow from about \$28 billion in 2005 to approximately \$42 billion in 2010.

“We’ll maintain Vancouver’s digital edge with this program, which is one of only a few in the world,” said Advanced Education Minister Murray Coell. “Post-secondary education is one of the keys to maintaining our competitive position in the global marketplace. It is why we’ve invested over \$11 billion in post-secondary education and increased operating grants by more than \$171 million.”

“This investment highlights B.C.’s rapid emergence as a global leader in technology,” said Economic Development Minister Colin Hansen. “Top innovators, decision-makers, and key players from technology companies will all be brought together with a focus on B.C.’s evolution and advancement.”

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“The launch of the centre is a result of an extraordinary collaboration between the provincial government, the new media industry and four academic partners,” said Dennis Pavlich, president of GNWC. “The degree will be credentialed by the University of British Columbia, Simon Fraser University, Emily Carr Institute of Art + Design, and the BC Institute of Technology. We look forward to continuing our strong partnership with the Province and hi-tech industry.”

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