Companies announce innovation funding to help more young people graduate from high school

$500,000 to help Pathways to Education share new ideas, best practices for youth education

Winnipeg, MB, May 16, 2017. . . With a unique mix of academic, social, financial, and one-on-one supports for students, and a flexible framework that resonates with local needs, Pathways to Education Canada (Pathways) has been building a Graduation Nation for the past 15 years:

- Participation rates of more than 80% of the youth in Pathways communities
- Improved graduation rates – increasing by an average of 85%
- Increased number of youth going on to college or university – 74% of all Pathways students who graduated from high school while in the Pathways Program

Source: Pathways to Education Results Summary 2016

Today the award-winning program got a boost from longtime supporters Great-West Life, London Life and Canada Life when the companies announced a $500,000 commitment to the national Pathways Innovation Fund.

"As supporters of Pathways since 2003, we've seen that their approach works," said Stefan Kristjanson, President and Chief Operating Officer. "As the program operates in more communities, they have a great opportunity to draw from local successes to implement and share innovative ideas. As their Lead Innovation Sponsor, we're pleased to support Pathways' continued development."

The Innovation Fund is intended to help Pathways Program partners across Canada respond to opportunities for specific program improvements, accelerate the pace of learning at both the local and national level, and broaden public awareness through knowledge sharing.

"The Pathways Program is founded on social innovation and we must continuously innovate to support the needs of the diverse students and communities we serve," said Sue Gillespie, President & CEO, Pathways to Education Canada. "We are grateful to Great-West Life for their commitment to Canadian youth and to enabling Pathways to test ideas and develop solutions for tomorrow."

Pathways currently operates in 18 communities across Canada in Ontario, Quebec, Manitoba, Nova Scotia, British Columbia, and New Brunswick.

The organization intends to develop and test – over the next five years – as many as 30 different innovation initiatives across their national network.

To learn more about Pathways and many more organizations we support, download our [2016 Public Accountability Statement, *Commitment to well-being*](#).

About Great-West Life, London Life and Canada Life
Great-West Life, together with London Life and Canada Life, serves the financial security needs of more than 13 million people across Canada. Responsible and ethical management is an intrinsic value of the companies and is essential to long-term profitability and value creation. As an Imagine Caring Company supporting the principles of corporate citizenship and benchmarks for community investment established by Imagine Canada, the companies donate a minimum of one per cent of average pre-tax profits to non-profit, charitable and community organizations each year.

Learn more about the organization's approach to corporate social responsibility.

About Pathways to Education
Pathways to Education is a national, charitable organization working to make Canada a Graduation Nation. Partnering with dedicated organizations in low-income communities, Pathways supports youth to graduate from high school and achieve their full potential. Celebrating over 15 years of successful programming, our award-winning combination of academic, financial, social, and one-on-one supports continues to successfully break the cycle of poverty through the power of education.

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