



## CITY OF VANCOUVER FUNDS STREET MESSAGING SYSTEM FOR HOMELESS ACTION WEEK



Thanks to a grant awarded to The Vancouver Community Network (VCN) from the City of Vancouver, we will be hosting **'Snack and Chat' sessions on the Street Messaging System (SMS) from October 12 – 15<sup>th</sup>**.

These sessions will be an opportunity to further communications and outreach in the sector through sharing lessons learned from the beta-testing and feasibility study conducted with the SMS since its launch in September 2014.

We believe sharing input with leading professionals in the service field will help to overcome challenges faced by outreach workers. We will also share front-line experiences and develop ways to improve the SMS.

If you are a social service provider and would like to participate in the event, please contact us for more details at [coordinator@vcn.bc.ca](mailto:coordinator@vcn.bc.ca).

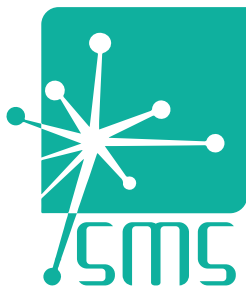
## TELUS COMMUNITY GRANT AWARDED TO ADVANCE SMS

**Telus has awarded VCN funds to code the Street Messaging System platform!** Telus will work with VCN to make the free and easy messaging system available across Metro Vancouver.

The Telus Community Giving Grant funds projects with the goal of improving the lives of youth and their communities through the power of technology.

The system is quickly moving from the beta-phase to potentially global impact: a vision both the City of Vancouver and Telus share.

## NEW! REGISTER TO USE THE SMS BY TEXTING



The Street Messaging System (SMS) delivers vital information via text messaging to your mobile about missing persons, food services, emergency shelter availability, health and wellness alerts, job and training opportunities.

VCN has created a new way to register. **Simply text 778-819-6826, enter year of birth and gender.** SMS is an efficient way to connect those who are street-involved and disadvantaged to services they need most. After this, you will receive texts that are 140 characters or less straight to your mobile. If you enter your e-mail address, you will receive these alerts to your e-mail account.

## LEASE A REFURBISHED LAPTOP

**VCN is leasing laptops for \$25/year plus tax.** The laptop will have a dual core CPU, 2GB RAM, 80GB hard drive and a 15.4" screen. Windows 7 is installed. **Supply is limited.**

Please note that setup is not included. Ask for a quote for setup, backup, and any other additional services. Call 778-724-0826 for more information or fill out the form at <http://www2.vcn.bc.ca/vcn-laptop-lease-request-form/>.

## VCN ATTENDS VANCOUVER START UP WEEK



**VCN attended Vancouver's Startup Week held from September 21 – September 27, 2015.** Startup week offered an array of workshops with opportunities to learn the skills, resources and knowledge to overcome difficult obstacles within Vancouver's tech sector.

The event was an opportunity for VCN to connect with entrepreneurs, international investors, corporate partners, some of Vancouver's hottest tech companies and techies to share their stories, what they've learned from their business or project, and their successes or failures. BC's newest companies competed for cash and other prizes from BC Innovation Council – New Ventures Competition.

## DONATE

VCN focuses our efforts on youth, the disadvantaged in the Downtown Eastside, and seniors, pushing for digital inclusion and social justice. **VCN appreciates any donation amount, big or small, to help us continue our work in the community:** <http://www2.vcn.bc.ca/get-involved/donate/>

## RAISE YOUR VOICE AND VOTE FOR OUR DIGITAL FUTURE



For the 2015 Federal Election, Open Media launched a campaign to create a participatory process and empower the voices of everyday internet users to advance Canada's digital future.

The platform's key digital rights' pillars include privacy, access, and free expression. The campaign aims to form a crowdsourced plan called "Canada's Digital Future Platform."



The organization writes:

*"This election let's not do politics as usual – let's reimagine our democracy and create a more policy-centric rather than partisan party-centric electoral system."*

Sign the Digital Future Pledge at [OurDigitalFuture.ca](http://OurDigitalFuture.ca) and visit their website at [openmedia.org](http://openmedia.org) for updates on party platforms regarding digital policies!

## FEDERAL ELECTION AND BILL C-51

With the federal election approaching on 19<sup>th</sup> October 2015, **it is important now more than ever to recognize the privacy rights of the Canadian people, and strong accountability and oversight for surveillance practices.**

Bill C-51 is the Conservatives' anti-terror legislation granting greater powers to police authority in order to protect Canada from terrorists. Concerns about this bill include loss of privacy, limitations to freedom of expression and a lack of sufficient oversight, which could lead to unlawful measures.

In June 2015, the Senate passed Bill-51 by 44-28, despite massive opposition from hundreds of thousands of Canadians and the country's top privacy experts. The NDP voted against Bill C-51 while the Liberal party supported it; however, Justin Trudeau stated that he would fix the flaws if the Liberals win the coming election.

For more information on BILL C-51 and how you can add your voice to the growing campaign to repeal Bill C-51, visit: <https://killc51.ca/?src=blg>

## HOUSING AND HOMELESSNESS

Ever since **Canada's federal government stopped investing in affordable housing, the problem of homelessness has been getting worse.** The Canadian Observatory on Homelessness/The Homeless Hub states that, "...over 235,000 Canadians experience homelessness in a year." In a prosperous country with a strong commitment to social justice, the existence of homelessness, poverty, and hardship is unacceptable.

According to The Homeless Hub, if the federal government invests \$106.00 per Canadian annually, which works out to \$0.88 per person weekly, we will see an end to chronic homelessness and will be able help others on the verge of becoming homeless.

The Homeless Hub has posted the [Housing and Homelessness Election Guide 2015](#). This guide sets out recommendations on ending homelessness and presents each party's platform on how it meets (or doesn't meet) these recommendations.

