

## The Ontario Science Centre recognizes youth who use science and technology to make the world a better place

### *Nominations now open for the 2016 Weston Youth Innovation Award*

**TORONTO (November 24, 2015)** – Calling all Canadian innovators between the ages of 14 and 18! The Ontario Science Centre wants to recognize you for making the world a better place through science and technology. Nominations are now open for the prestigious *Weston Youth Innovation Award*. Now in its eighth year, the annual award recognizes and supports young Canadians who apply science and technology creatively with the goal of making a positive difference locally or even globally.

“As an important contributor to the province’s innovation ecosystem, the Ontario Science Centre is proud to encourage young Canadians in this area,” said Catherine Paisley, Ontario Science Centre Vice-President, Science Education. “The *Weston Youth Innovation Award* is a prestigious honour that provides a platform for these talented young innovators to showcase their work to the broader public, to not just tell their story but also to inspire others.”

Alex Deans, an 18-year-old from Windsor, ON, was awarded the *Weston Youth Innovation Award* in 2015 for creating the iAid, a navigation device for the visually impaired. “The best part of science is using it to make other people’s lives better,” said Deans. “It’s an honour to have my efforts recognized by the Ontario Science Centre. This award will allow me to further develop the iAid and ensure it’s available for those who would most benefit from it.”

“The quality of the candidates over the last eight years has been truly inspiring,” said Sabrina Greupner, the Ontario Science Centre’s Manager of the Weston Family Innovation Centre and Cisco Science Fellow for Innovative Learning Technologies. “The innovative ideas and creative work of these young Canadians point to a future where science and technology will continue to make many positive contributions to society.”

Open to all Canadians aged 14 to 18, this year’s recipient will receive a \$2,000 prize, travel expenses to attend the award ceremony in Toronto and an Ontario Science Centre membership. In addition, the recipient will be featured in a video animation by the Science Centre’s award-winning graphics team that will be broadcast online and in the Weston Family Innovation Centre, the news hub of the Science Centre where more than one million visitors are welcomed each year.

Do you know an innovative youth who might qualify for the *Weston Youth Innovation Award*? Please contact [wya@OntarioScienceCentre.ca](mailto:wya@OntarioScienceCentre.ca).

Youth are invited to put their names forward, and teachers and community leaders are asked to encourage potential candidates to apply.

Nominations must be received by Friday, March 4, 2016. An external jury will make a selection in April 2016 and the winner will be announced on the website by June 3, 2016.

Detailed information about the *Weston Youth Innovation Award* and past winners can be found at [www.OntarioScienceCentre.ca/innovationaward](http://www.OntarioScienceCentre.ca/innovationaward).

The *Weston Youth Innovation Award* was established in 2008 to encourage and recognize young Canadian innovators and was named in recognition of The W. Garfield Weston Foundation's \$15 million lead gift to the Ontario Science Centre's Agents of Change initiative. This national award builds on the Foundation's longstanding tradition of support to educational initiatives for Canadian youth.

- 30 -

### **About the Ontario Science Centre**

The Ontario Science Centre has welcomed more than 50 million visitors since it opened in 1969, implementing an interactive approach adopted by science centres around the world. Today, the Science Centre is a leader in free-choice science learning and a key player in Ontario's innovation ecosystem, offering lifelong learning through hands-on, engaging experiences. It is a prime venue for public dialogue about science, technology and society. The Ontario Science Centre is an agency of the Government of Ontario funded in part by the Ontario Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport. As a publicly assisted organization, the Science Centre relies on generous individuals, corporations and foundations who share a commitment to science and education for additional operating support. For more information about the Ontario Science Centre, please visit [www.OntarioScienceCentre.ca](http://www.OntarioScienceCentre.ca)

### **About The W. Garfield Weston Foundation**

The W. Garfield Weston Foundation is a private Canadian family foundation, established in the 1950s by Willard Garfield Weston and his wife Reta. In 1924 Garfield inherited his father's company and during his life established baking and retail businesses throughout Canada and in many parts of the world. The founders believed that as the funds are generated through the hard work and success of these Canadian companies, grants should be given in Canada for the benefit of Canadians. For three generations, The W. Garfield Weston Foundation has maintained a family tradition of supporting charitable organizations across Canada. Today the Foundation directs the majority of its funds to projects in the fields of land conservation, education, and scientific research in Canada's North. In addition, it provides funds to further Canada's research in neuroscience.

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