

Cycling British Columbia - 2014 Pre-budget Consultation Written Submission

Attention:

Christine Lafrance, Clerk of the Standing Committee on Finance

Tel: 613-992-9753

E-mail: FINA@parl.gc.ca

Executive Summary

Cycling British Columbia is seeking Federal Government Support for a pilot program in British Columbia that will become a prototype for a world-class national cycling program from coast to coast aimed at introducing children and youth ages 7-14 to the lifelong sport of cycling, supporting them as they move from beginner to advanced levels; identifying and supporting those who will become our elite athletes; and, above all, providing the community organizers, coaches, and parents with the tools needed to run cohesive, efficient, and sustainable programs across the country.

Cycling BC is looking for \$350,000 in Federal funding in year one of this new initiative. In subsequent years we would require \$100,000 in annual funding to sustain new programming and maintain youth engagement levels.

Support for Cycling BC programs will help increase the participation of Canadians in healthy physical activity generally:

- - **curbing vaulting health care costs that in part result from diabetes and cardiovascular problems caused by inactivity;**
- - **bike tourism: promoting Canada as a bike-friendly place that attracts cyclists from elsewhere - a great economic driver; and**
- - **helping the environment by getting Canadians to accept cycling as an attractive means of transportation.**

[The Grand défi Pierre Lavoie](#) is a successful program in Quebec and a previous recipient of Federal funding which focuses on physical activity, healthy eating and perseverance at school. The iRide program provides a critical opportunity to bridge between many successful programs across the country – with our local iRide program and foundational physical literacy efforts providing a model for primary integration.

Schools, community groups and parents will be able to see real-time Cycling BC programs in operation across the province, share resources with each other, and track successes and challenges. Success metrics will be gathered and analyzed. These metrics will show not only the community increase in cycling activity but provide the data required to show broader benefits such as health improvements, environmental impact and improved economic activity.

We have ten years of delivering a proven curriculum to the children and youth of British Columbia. We have the passion of the teachers and parents who have been working too long in isolated 'silos' without access to coordinated resources. And now we have the vision of the iRide Youth Cycling Program brought online in a pilot program perfectly tailored for export and integration with other provincial programs across the country.

iRide Cycling BC Program

- Free to schools and community centers
- All equipment and gear included
- 4-session program led by nationally certified instructors (1 session in-classroom; 3 outside)
- Each session 45-60 minutes over one week, two weeks, or a month.
- Developmentally appropriate programming based on needs of students (Beginner, Intermediate, and Advanced)
- Whole and small group programming that's interactive, engaging and fun.
- Physical Education and Health and Career Education Prescribed Learning Outcomes met each session.
- Pre-session package includes a form with a volunteer request portion, a checklist letter, and waiver forms -- everything you need to make planning easy.

The iRide program delivers on three main purposes:

1. Inform

Increase knowledge about bike safety.

2. Integrate

Transfer the information learned to the hands-on practice of skill development and decision-making processes while riding a bike.

3. Inspire

Motivate and get children and youth excited about further developing their riding skills in a variety of cycling disciplines.

The iRide program is geared towards kids aged 7-14 primarily with extended modules for kids 14+ that help build the skills required to remain physically active for life.

Our Vision

We believe in a national school and community-based cycling program based on proven curriculum. We look to empower teachers, parents, and community organizers with the online tools and resources that will assist them in running successful programs, communicate with each other in real-time, and learn from each others' successes and challenges.

With a strong central online hub, our medal-winning and inspiring coaches and sport Ambassadors will have even greater reach to inspire young cyclists, whether it's about reaching skill levels that will allow them to make cycling a part of a life-long health focus, or reaching levels of mastery that may take them to the podium. Spreading the word about the health and social benefits of cycling will be much more effective with a national online hub that is eventually envisioned to unite all ten provinces and our territories, so that the young cyclist in Chetwynd, British Columbia has access to the same teaching tools and inspiring video resources as his or her counterpart in Cornerbrook, Newfoundland.

The Challenge

Cycling in Canada has not had the continuity and cohesion that other sports such as hockey have enjoyed. The curriculum exists, and it is world-class. The children are no less excited or motivated.

But to date the community is fragmented across the province and individual schools and community groups are 'siloed' from each other. Programs are successfully implemented, successful at the time, but without ongoing support, many of these programs suffer from a high level of participation drop-off.

Individual schools and community groups are currently unable to easily access Cycling BC resources – valuable tools like online scheduling, program curriculum, coaching, and peer support. With no centralized hub to keep communities engaged, the programs often fail to have the momentum and continuity forward that is needed for children and youth to engage fully in the opportunities that cycling can bring them over many years and many levels of mastery.

For Cycling BC, the challenge is finding a way to successfully foster the growth of cycling at the earliest stages of youth development in the schools, while at the same time providing funders and sponsors with the data that will prove the impact of their investment.

With the support of the Federal Government, Cycling BC wants to take supported steps in creating this legitimacy and sustaining the legacy of youth cycling in Canada.

The Solution

The iRide Online Community Hub will be composed of on the ground cycling education programs, a web platform, mobile application, and web-based video series aimed at becoming an invaluable resource and programming 'toolbox' for the Phase 1 target group of teachers, parents, and program volunteers and organizers.

- On the ground programming across the province
- A web-based structure that enrolls, tracks, logs, and incentivizes.
- Instant access to curriculum-based resources that can be utilized by community clubs, schools, and parents across BC and Canada
- A mobile application that allows teachers, parents, and organizers to track and log activities.

The web 'hub' will become the focal point for all province-wide activities under the iRide Youth Cycling Program initiative. Parents, clubs, and schools can access information about current programs in their communities. They can schedule, organize, and host events to support ongoing activities. With integration between the web hub, the mobile extension, and users' Facebook, Instagram, and other social networks, the iRide hub will become a lively central clearinghouse for information and excitement about the sport.

Cycling BC is fortunate to have Dr. Stephen Berg as the School and Youth Manager of the organization and he will bring the credibility and curriculum-based legitimacy to the iRide hub. An Assistant Professor in the Faculty of Education at the University of British Columbia, Dr. Berg has conducted workshops around the world and has co-authored three books in the area of children's physical activity and health promotion.

In the past, Dr. Berg has consulted to the hockey community and was an advisor for the NGO, Right to Play. He co-authored the Bicycle Resource Program Guide to Ride through Physical and Health Education Canada. This comprehensive resource provides a series of outcome-based, sequential lesson plans for teachers and program leaders on bike safety and hands-on learning and serves as the foundation for the iRide Youth Cycling Program.

The iRide Program utilizes an active, hands-on approach to learning that takes into consideration that children and youth grow and develop at different times and stages. Auditory, visual, tactical, and kinesthetic learning styles are integrated into the program, and the results are nothing short of inspiring. Kids who have never been on a bike before, find a new-found physical competency. Others are introduced to what will become a life-long passion. And still others may find this the first step on the road to Olympic podiums. With iRide, all levels and interests are incorporated from the outset. With the iRide Online Community Hub, these interests and activities can now be tracked, and program outcomes more accurately assessed.

About Cycling BC

Cycling BC is the provincial governing body for the sport of cycling in British Columbia. It represents the disciplines of road, track, cyclo-cross, mountain bike, and BMX. It is the leader in children and youth schools programming across the province.

As an organization, Cycling BC understands that to sustain grassroots development, it needs to be able to encourage and support the development of a centralized community online, just as it has provided a successful network of coaches and leaders in the sport offline.

Armed with a proven curriculum and programming model now available online, and supported by new web and mobile tools for the first time, the iRide Youth Cycling Initiative will achieve the following:

- Support Cycling BC's schools programs across British Columbia and build a pilot program for a national approach
- Centralize all programming and make it easy for community groups, educators, and parents to access the same valuable curriculum, no matter where they are situated geographically
- Showcase success stories of youth who are involved in cycling and are enjoying the health and social benefits
- Support Cycling BC's high performance youth cycling development goals
- Create a measurable marketing resource capable of delivering substantial business intelligence to the organization, allowing Cycling BC to continue to earn significant sponsorship and support