



Innovation at work grant competition is open now

By Jesse Marchand

Do you have an idea that could help improve workplace health and safety? The Innovation at Work research grant can help you develop your idea into a solution that makes a difference in the workplace.

WorkSafeBC's Research Services department funds independent, scientifically valid research that provides insight into real issues faced by B.C. workplaces. Among these funding opportunities, [Innovation at Work](#) projects aim to solve specific problems for workplaces, putting the latest scientific knowledge to work.

Be part of the solution

Competitions for 2020 Innovation at Work grants are now open, and anyone can apply. In fact, you don't need to be an academic — all you need is an idea to help improve workplace health and safety.

"The diverse ideas and questions that come to us through the Innovation at Work program help us to understand emerging issues in occupational health and safety. We welcome proposals from any field, with a focus on workers and workplace health and safety," says Lori Guiton, Policy, Regulation, and Research

Division director at WorkSafeBC. "It's always exciting to see the outcomes of research collaborations and the innovations they drive."

Looking for inspiration?

Historically, Innovation at Work grants have covered a wide variety of topics on occupational health and safety. Here are some of the recipients from the 2019 grant:

- **Metal exposure assessment using exhaled breath condensates:** Dr. Bernadette Quemerais, associate professor in the Department of Medicine at the University of Alberta, is exploring a new method to assess whether breath samples can be used as a more accurate and less expensive way to assess metal exposure. The research could lead to recommendations on how to control exposure, and will assess the potential for using this methodology to evaluate exposure to other metals and chemicals, such as paint and solvents.
- **Energy-absorbing cab guards for log trucks:** Ron Corbeil, health and safety advisor with the Safety Advisory Foundation for Education and Research, is leading a project to evaluate cab guard designs

for log trucks, in order to develop a cost-effective design for retrofitting existing cab guard structures to improve safety.

- **Tailored sun-safety messages for outdoor workers:**

Cheryl Peters, occupational hygienist and epidemiologist at Alberta Health Services, is working with a team to develop a mobile app that features practical sun-safety messages for preventing skin cancer, heat stress, and eye damage to ensure outdoor workers and employers have easy access to key information. The researchers note there are 1.5 million outdoor workers in Canada, and over one third are in B.C., Alberta, and Saskatchewan. The project aims to fill a gap to tailor sun-safety messages for outdoor workers, a population that is particularly at risk for skin cancer.

- **Tradeswomen: Potential concerns of bullying, violence, and harassment:** Vicki Kristman, an associate professor at Lakehead University, is investigating how organizational climate and culture influence bullying and harassment for tradeswomen in B.C. and Alberta, to provide up-to-date knowledge

with a focus on mental health and gender. The study will explore whether organizational climate and culture influence bullying and harassment in the workplace, and resulting effects on mental health and well-being of tradeswomen.

Learn more

“We are seeing more and more uptake of research findings, and we are always looking for new ways to present research to our stakeholders,” says Deepani Weerapura, senior manager responsible for Research Services. “We’re proud to play a key role in fostering research capacity in Canada, and to support the development of a dynamic and diverse research community. We’re looking forward to seeing the innovative projects submitted to this competition.”

The application form for the Innovation at Work grant is due by 4 p.m. on February 14, 2020. Interested applicants can check out the [Innovation at Work section of worksafebc.com](#) for full details on how to apply. ☺

Safety on the agenda

Please note: Information and links that appear in this section are provided as a resource. Listings do not necessarily constitute an endorsement from WorkSafeBC.

Looking for health and safety inspiration? Check out these conferences and events across Canada. An up-to-date listing of our upcoming events can be found in the News & Events section calendar on [worksafebc.com](#).

CCO Conference

Building Better Builders

Southern Interior Construction Association

February 28, 2020 | Kelowna, B.C.

[ccoworkshop.ca](#)

Actsafes Entertainment Safety Conference

March 5–7, 2020 | Richmond, B.C.

[actsafeconference.ca](#)

Western Conference on Safety

Pacific Safety Center

April 6–7, 2020 | Vancouver, B.C.

[wcs.pacificsafetycenter.com](#)

2020 Petroleum Safety Conference

Energy Safety Canada

April 28–30, 2020 | Banff, Alberta

[energysafetycanada.com](#)

Day of Mourning

April 28, 2020 | Events across Canada

[dayofmourning.bc.ca](#)

Partners in Prevention 2020

Health and safety conference and trade show

April 28–29, 2020 | Mississauga, Ontario

[PartnersInPreventionConference.com](#)

Safety and Health Week

Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety

May 5–11, 2020 | Events across Canada

[naosh.org](#)

15th Annual Health Care Professional Conference

WorkSafeBC

May 8, 2020 | Vancouver, B.C.

[healthprofessionalconference.com](#) ☺