

The Story:

A group of business leaders from across Muskoka have contributed to a fund that will see the first launch of a \$10,000 award to be earned by an individual with the best idea for a new Muskoka based business.

We believe this to be a **good news** "story" that will generate lots of interest and excitement for your viewers/readers and also one that will generate good follow-up opportunities for your operation.

Here is why:

Ultimately it will be a story about someone in Muskoka winning a \$10,000 award for the best new idea and/or business proposition originating in Muskoka.

1. Who will that entrepreneur be and what will the winning idea generate?
2. The "Founders Circle" is a story in itself...a group of business-oriented people who want to help in the development of a "Dragons Den" style concept, giving an opportunity for a Muskoka based entrepreneur with the best creative idea and/or plan for a successful business venture that may help or improve our local economy.

This dedicated group of business executives who came up with this idea and who have dedicated their time and effort in bringing this idea to fruition is another equally important part of the story. These are people who have vision, dedication and purpose working tirelessly as a driving force in bringing this unique concept as a "First in Muskoka".

The Founders Circle has been designated as a project of the Rotary Club of Gravenhurst. The proceeds from sponsors of the gala event to celebrate the finalists and winner will go to support the Founders Circle and is administered by the Rotary Club.

This is more than an opportunity...for the participants... and for Muskoka news coverage.... because it will be far reaching.

First pass results:

- 33 applicants responded with a 300 to 400 word document describing their innovative idea or plan. The top 10 were chosen to present to the "Dragons" based on:
 1. Sustaining jobs
 2. Growth potential
 3. Potential profit
 4. Demand for the product or service
 5. Benefit to Muskoka



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Final Selection process:

There will be a **“Pitch Day”** to be held at the **Gravenhurst Opera House on Tuesday, February 27th 2018, starting at 9:00 AM.**

There will be two camera crews on site; one will film the pitch of each applicant and Dragons on stage and another camera crew will be doing an exit interview to take place immediately following the individual pitch presentations. Each of the 10 finalists will be able to keep a video copy of their pitches and exit interviews for their own personal use in further promoting their idea/business proposition. The finalist videos will be available to view on www.muskokafounderscircle.com

The consolidation of the rankings will result in a group of 5 finalists of which 1 will be selected as the winner. This person(s) will be known to only one Founder (an accountant) who will ensure that the finalist is kept confidential. No one in the group of 5 will have any idea as to who will be the winner amongst them.



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The Big Day:

PMCN, (Parry Sound Muskoka Community Network) in association with “The Founders Circle”, will host a gala dinner and presentation event, at the J W Marriot, the Rosseau Muskoka Resort, starting at 7:00 PM on March 22nd, 2018.

PMCN will be announcing their 5 “Innovation Awards” of \$1,000 each, to five lucky recipients selected from 13 finalists across Parry Sound and Muskoka (see the videos at www.iawards.ca) which will be immediately followed by the announcement of the “Founders Choice Award” for \$10,000.

Planning for this event will styled as be a red carpet, first class, gold napkin event...an evening not to be missed!!

The Founders will be inviting the 5 finalists and their immediate family members, angel investors and business mentors to this gala event.

Short video clips that were produced from the footage taken at the Opera House during pitch day will be shown on screen prior to the awards for all to see at a preselected time, like the Academy Awards format.

It is anticipated that an air of excitement amongst the participants, their families and indeed the Founders will prevail throughout the dinner as to who the mystery finalist will be.

Tickets for this event will be made available at Scotiabank branches throughout the region for \$75.00. All other tickets are priced at \$100.00 each and will be available **on-line**.



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Media Release:

Celebrating Innovation

Two not-for-profit groups, the Parry Sound Muskoka Community Network (PMCN) and the Founders Circle, have recognized the need to support small business' innovation. They are joining forces to present the "Impact Awards" and a new "Founders Circle Award" at a gala dinner event at the J.W. Marriot Muskoka Resort in Minett, to be held on March 22, 2018.

Tickets for this event will be made available at Scotiabank branches throughout the region for \$75.00. All other tickets are priced at \$100.00 each and will be available **on-line**.

The Parry Sound Muskoka Community Network, which is funded by FedNor, will celebrate 13 finalists and present five, \$1000 Impact awards for innovation and a group of successful business community leaders, calling themselves the Founders Circle, will be celebrating five finalists and the winner will receive the "Founders Choice Award" for \$10,000 for the best idea or business that may provide economic benefit to Muskoka.

The five Impact Awards categories are for employee, customer, partner/supplier, competitor and public innovation.

The one Founders Choice Award criterion is for an idea or business plan that may lend itself to sustaining or promoting jobs, innovation, growth potential, potential profit and potential product or service demand.

There will be a "Founders Circle" applicant pitch day to be held at the Gravenhurst Opera House on Tuesday, February 27th 2018, starting at 9:00 AM.

This event will be open to the applicants, their immediate families and the media only.