

CONTINUING STUDIES

Continuing Studies
Simon Fraser University
Room 2300
515 West Hastings Street
Vancouver, BC Canada
V6B 5K3

September 2, 2014

Dear STARS AASHE committee,

As a city councillor for 16 years and now the Director of SFU's City Program for nearly a decade, I recognize the value of enabling citizens to have constructive conversations on complex and timely issues in order to connect with and to shape their communities. The SFU Public Square Community Summits provides just that kind of leadership and innovation in public dialogue on sustainability issues.

SFU's inaugural Community Summit, *Alone Together: Connecting in the City* was held in 2012, on the theme of isolation and disconnection in the urban environment; the 2013 Community Summit, *Charting BC's Economic Future*, explored the issues surrounding British Columbia's economic future; and the 2014 Summit in October is on *Innovation: The Shock of the Possible*, which includes a competition for innovative ideas to address sea-level rise in Metro Vancouver.

The 2012 Summit engaged over 10,000 community members; the 2013 Summit included 100 conversations convened throughout the province. Attendance in these Summits includes elected government, First Nations, civil society, public service, business and industry, crown corporations, faith communities, retirees, youth and academia. Each weeklong summit includes public-led dialogue sessions, facilitated community conversations, keynote speakers, roundtables, and musical and comedic presentations to attract and involve community members throughout the Lower Mainland and British Columbia.

Beyond enabling multi-sectoral dialogue on challenging topics, the SFU Public Square Community Summits are documented in order to support informed and continued discussion beyond the bounds of the Summits themselves. The content of the conversations fuelled by the Community Summits is captured as dialogue and roundtable reports, strategies and recommendations for decision makers, such as the Citizens' Agenda for BC's Economic Future and summaries of the region-specific research related to each Summit.

The SFU Public Square Community Summits are a clear example of how the institution is putting its vision to be the "leading engaged university" into

practice in the realm of sustainability, and sharing the results of this expertise within the lower Mainland and British Columbia.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'G.P.' with a stylized flourish.

Gordon Price
Director, City Program
Simon Fraser University