

Media release

Rio Tinto partners with UNBC to support students and research

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The University of Northern British Columbia and Rio Tinto are forming a partnership to support students and grow the capacity for education and research in the region.

Rio Tinto will provide \$450,000 over the next three years towards programs at the University that promote their mutual interests and values. The focus will be on research and analysis of the socio-economic state within the Nechako Watershed region, initiatives in common interest areas such as the environment, and experiential learning opportunities for UNBC students. This is expected to include involving students in hands-on research programs, as well as internships and co-operative placements with Rio Tinto across a range of disciplines.

The partnership was announced last night at the British Columbia Natural Resources Forum in Prince George to hundreds of delegates who have gathered to learn about the latest trends and opportunities in the sector.

Rio Tinto BC Works operation director for power and services Andrew Czornohalan said “This partnership will build on Rio Tinto’s long standing support for the UNBC, which includes being one of the initial funders of the Northern Medical Programs Trust that provides support to medical students in the North. We share UNBC’s commitment to advancing education and research in the region, which plays an important role in ensuring BC Works stays at the forefront of the aluminum industry with a highly skilled workforce and the latest technologies. By developing relationships between researchers, educators and businesses like ours, we are encouraging a culture of innovation in our organizations and communities across the region.”

Dr Geoff Payne, UNBC’s Vice-President Research and Graduate Programs said “As one of Canada’s leading small universities, UNBC brings our research, teaching and learning expertise to a wide range of issues that communities are grappling with around the world. From water security, climate change and health care, to resource management, food security, and ecosystem management, all of these issues can be studied in depth in a unique environment right at our doorstep in northern B.C., providing an opportunity for this partnership to create local solutions that will have a global impact.”

Note to editors

Rio Tinto has been operating in British Columbia for close to 65 years. Our investment to modernise the Kitimat smelter is helping to provide a strong future of economic development in northern British Columbia. With industry leading technology and four generations of employee expertise, as well as our clean hydropower facility at Kemano and the Nechako Reservoir, the Kitimat smelter produces aluminium with one of the lowest carbon footprints in the world.

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