

**Let's Talk Science receives federal government funding of \$12.5 million over five years to greatly expand its science education programs for Canadian youth**

*Investment allows Let's Talk Science to expose millions more Canadian youth to science, technology, engineering and math to build their skills for the changing economy*

**London, Ontario – May 21, 2015** – The Government of Canada today announced it is providing \$12.5 million in funding over five years to Let's Talk Science, a national, charitable education and outreach organization. The funding allows Let's Talk Science to undertake a transformative change that will kick start a significant expansion of its activities across Canada.

Through this expansion, Let's Talk Science will quadruple its reach, engaging an estimated 5 million more Canadian children and youth in its award-winning programs in science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) education over the next five years.

The funding announcement was made by the Honourable Ed Holder, Minister of State (Science and Technology) at a Let's Talk Science Challenge competition for Grade 6-8 students held at McMaster University in Hamilton, Ontario.

“For more than 20 years, Let's Talk Science has helped Canadian youth prepare for a world that is shaped by science and technology,” said Dr. Bonnie Schmidt, President and Founder of Let's Talk Science. “Now we will launch a bold national plan to bring our programs to millions more children, youth and educators in hundreds of communities across the country. With this new government support, we will work with our world-class volunteer network and education partners to support toddlers to teens in developing foundational skills that will serve them well regardless of their future career paths.”

Let's Talk Science is unique as the only national youth STEM outreach organization that offers a comprehensive suite of programs and resources to support both youth and educators from the early years through to Grade 12 as well as a focus on research.

“Engagement of youth in STEM is critical for Canada's future as it builds essential skills such as problem solving, communication, critical thinking and teamwork that help youth keep their career doors open so they can thrive in an increasingly complex world,” said Rick Dobson, Chair of the Board of Let's Talk Science. “We address key barriers to youth engagement by providing free access to outstanding programs, which we will make even better and more available thanks to this new funding from government and the continued support of our generous private-sector partners and donors.”

### **Impact of investment**

The transformative growth of Let's Talk Science over the next five years will result in increased youth participation in STEM, increased capacity of parents and educators to support a STEM-based economy, and more STEM graduates with stronger employability skills. Over the next five years, Let's Talk Science plans to:

- Impact 840,000 young children through the Let's Talk Science IdeaPark program.
- Engage teens with 1,325,000 interactions through the Let's Talk Science CurioCity program.
- Grow the Let's Talk Science Outreach sites from 41 to 48 universities and colleges all across Canada, increasing the number of youth reached to 1,503,000.
- Increase the number of volunteers annually from 3,500 to 5,000.

- Build the space-oriented Tomatosphere™ program, now under Let's Talk Science management, to reach more than 2,062,500 school-age children.

### **About Let's Talk Science**

Let's Talk Science is an award-winning, national, charitable organization focused on education and outreach to support youth development. The organization creates and delivers unique learning programs and services that engage children, youth and educators in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM). Let's Talk Science strives to prepare youth for their future careers and role as citizens in a rapidly changing world. Let's Talk Science was founded in London, Ontario in 1993. From its office located in London, it serves national audiences. For more information about Let's Talk Science, visit [www.letstalkscience.ca](http://www.letstalkscience.ca).

\*\*\*\*\*

### **For further information, contact:**

Maggie MacLellan  
Communications Officer  
Let's Talk Science  
519-474-4081 ext. 239  
(cell) 226-678-1433  
[maclellan@letstalkscience.ca](mailto:maclellan@letstalkscience.ca)