

News Release 2008-03-14:

Year-Round Voter-Funded Media at UBC

Vancouver – University of British Columbia students are expanding their “voter-funded media” (VFM) democratic reform experiment. Designed to make elected leaders of democracies and corporations more loyal to voters, VFM was first tested at UBC in January 2007. Students voted to award funds to competing media who covered Alma Mater Society (AMS) elections, interviewing candidates, comparing platforms, and making endorsements.

Finding that VFM gave voters greater insight for their decisions in January 2007 and January 2008 elections, AMS Council has approved a proposal to apply this system year-round. Thus media will compete for voter funding not only at election time, thus encouraging them to cover a full range of issues, including the performance of elected representatives.

Any individual, group or organization can enter the competition. The first contest period is open for entries from now through March 25, and offers an award pool of \$750. Voting will run from March 26 through April 30. See www.votermedia.org/ubc for details and the entry form.

The designer and sponsor of VFM, financial economist Mark Latham (www.votermedia.org/about-contact.html), said: “I hope this competition will support a diversity of insight on issues important to UBC students, including AMS voting decisions like the upcoming referenda (March 25-31).”

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