



Indigenous Leadership Circle

A project by the Women in Leadership Foundation

March 2022

By Sxwpilemaát Siyám (Chief Leanne Joe) and Natasha Neufeld of the Indigenous Leadership Circle Team, with contributions by Women in Leadership Foundation and the Indigenous Women's Advisory Circle members



BUILDING A COMMUNITY OF LEADERSHIP

Founded in 2001, Women In Leadership Foundation (WIL) delivers inspirational programs that bring women together to collaborate in the development of their leadership skills & creates positive change in the future of women's leadership.

The Women in Leadership Foundation acknowledges that our head office operations are located within the traditional and unceded territory of the Okanagan Syilx people. We recognize, honour and respect the presence of all Indigenous people, past, present and future.

VALUES

Celebration - We are a dynamic group of people passionate about inspiring women to be their best and celebrating their unique talents and successes.

Relevant - We are dedicated to showcasing authentic female role models in a wide variety of sectors.

Collaborative - We bring individuals, companies and organizations together to create positive change.

Mentorship - We believe that we all can learn from, inspire and encourage each other through all stages of our lives.

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The Indigenous Leadership Circle Project

The Women in Leadership Foundation (WIL) has been awarded a contract with the Government of Canada, for a project called "The Indigenous Leadership Circle", which is a continuation of the work that the foundation has done over the last 20-years of engaging with the Indigenous communities on women's leadership.

The Indigenous Leadership Circle project is being led by a team of Indigenous and non-Indigenous women with the intent to explore the barriers and challenges Indigenous women in Senior Management and Board positions are facing in Corporate Canada.

Objectives of the Program:

- Increasing understanding and awareness of employers regarding Indigenous women's barriers in accessing senior management and board positions; and
- Potentially creating tools, providing research, resources and highlighting best practices.

Given that this was a very short contract with only 6 months to complete, the team intended to showcase best practices for stakeholders on how to address barriers and enable employers to engage more Indigenous women in leadership opportunities. We are passionate about being in service to Indigenous women by listening, hearing and providing these sectors the knowledge to target inequities in their practices so they may transform workspaces. However, we could not deliver on this specific aspect of the project as two of the team members faced a natural disaster in their community and were evacuated from their homes for an extended period of time and are still facing overwhelming odds to repair home and property. This report does identify these systemic and institutional barriers with some broad recommendations.

We valued the opportunity to collaborate with employers, educational institutions, and stakeholders to engage and grow Indigenous women's leadership.

The Indigenous Leadership Circle Team conducted research aimed at Professional Indigenous Women, Indigenous Women in the Education System and Employer & Industry Stakeholders and valued their input through a series of surveys, speaker series and webinars. The results from the findings through these spaces will be showcased at our Indigenous Leadership Virtual Forum, which was held on March 30, 2022.

The Project Team

Sxwpilemaát Siyám, aka Chief Leanne Joe - Project Lead

Natasha Neufeld - Project Team Member

Maureen McKinnon - Project Team Member

Julie John - Project Member

Maya Kanigan - Founder and CEO, Women in Leadership Foundation

David Mossman - Project Coordinator, Women in Leadership Foundation

Dana Crichton - Marketing & Communications Specialist, Women in Leadership Foundation

Acknowledgements

This work has been done for the people yet to be. Our children, grandchildren and future descendants, as they are our legacy. Therefore it is our responsibility to work towards a future in which they can flourish. This work is also for our ancestors, who have suffered, endured, been extremely resilient, and who continue to find ways to heal, forgive and thrive. This is also for the generations of today, so that they can continue to move through this reconciliation journey with hope, capacity and more knowledge.

Women in Leadership acknowledges the unceded and traditional territories of the 204 First Nations on whose territory British Columbia is located, and whose communities represent 30 language groups and close to 60 dialects. We acknowledge and recognize the diversity of Indigenous teachings, governance and lived experiences and that Indigenous peoples will have different interpretations and unique perspectives of this topic.

It was our honour to be led by our Indigenous Women's Advisory Circle, which included the following leaders:

- ★ Kwetásel'wet/Stepahnie Wood, Journalist at The Narwhal
- ★ Siamntaát/Sheryl Rivers, Founder/Lead Consultant, Rivers Consulting Solutions
- ★ Skiletilwut/Sarah Thomas, Manager of Indigenous and Coastal Communities, Clear Seas Centre for Responsible Marine Shipping
- ★ Leah Ballantyne, First Nations Health Authority, Board of Director
- ★ Danielle Levine, Director of Indigenous Initiatives, Chartered Professional Accountants of British Columbia
- ★ Candice Loring, Director of Business Development, Mitacs
- ★ Jessie Williams, Director of Business Development and Communications, New Relationships Trust

There are also many individuals who shared stories and experiences, connected us to others with knowledge, offered support and advice, reviewed documents, refined ideas, supplied information, provided resources, and brought heart to this work. Our deep gratitude goes out to all the participants in our engagement sessions, for your contributions to our process and for your dedication and commitment to the delivery of this project. We would like to thank the panellists who devoted time to engage in this process from the finance, technology, transport and communications sectors, as well as from National and Regional Indigenous entities and powerful Indigenous women from around turtle island.

Lastly, we thank our funding partner, Employment and Social Development Canada through their Workplace Opportunities: Removing Barriers to Equity (WORBE) program. Without this funding, participation in the process, and ongoing support, we would not have created space for continuous dialogue, curiosity, hard and difficult conversations, and commitment to listening to the many Indigenous voices across the country.

Content Warning:

The following report covers topics including but not limited to colonial violence and workplace discrimination. The information and material presented here may trigger unpleasant feelings or thoughts for some. This content warning applies to the whole report. The KUU-US Crisis Line Society provides a First Nations and Indigenous-specific crisis line available 24 hours a day, seven days a week, toll-free anywhere in BC at 1-800-588-8717. There is also the national Indian Residential School Survivors and Family crisis line: 1-800-721-0066. The Indian Residential Schools Crisis Line is available 24-hours a day for anyone experiencing pain or distress as a result of his or her Residential school experience.



Photo by https://unsplash.com/@dijga_willy/10615410500998400
Photo by <https://unsplash.com/photos/feathers/10615410500998400>

Executive Summary

Before we dive into the specifics of this project, barriers facing Indigenous women in Senior Management and Board positions in various sectors and highlight the need to address the larger systemic and institutions creating them, we have to identify and share the truth about how we got here. Truth before Reconciliation is still very much required in Canada, as we tend to want to jump into action with solutions before knowing what the solutions are for. So to begin our journey in this report, we briefly discuss some background spaces, which include:

- The truth of Canada's relationship with its First Peoples of this land;
- The Truth and Reconciliation Commission report and its 94 calls to action, specifically #7 which is the "to eliminate educational and employment gaps between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Canadians" and its relationship to the work undertaken in this project;
- Matriarchy and its relevance to Indigenous women's role as leaders;
- The destruction of this matriarchal leadership through so many spaces since contact;
- Rematriation of Indigenous women's role as leaders;
- The critical importance of storytelling in all spaces; and
- Understanding the Indigenous women's experience in the workplace.

We then highlight the **Knowledge Sharing** undertaken throughout the project which included Wisdom Stories, Webinars within the Technology sector and with the Indigenous Women's Advisory Circle, Speaker Series live events that highlighted Indigenous women's stories within the education, executive leadership, communications, transport and finance sectors and the on-going inaugural Indigenous women's mentorship program.

Next, we highlight the **Knowledge Gathering** undertaken throughout the project, which included hearing the lived experiences of all of the Indigenous women we heard stories from, a targeted resources review of data already out there and four surveys geared towards Professional Indigenous Women Employees Survey, Indigenous Women in the Education System, Senior and Executive Leadership Survey and the Employer and Industry Stakeholders Survey.

We then share some space around our **Knowledge Review**, which highlights a list of what we know to be true for Indigenous women's on-going lived experiences in the workplace. This is not an exhaustive list that highlights the on-going barriers faced by Indigenous women in every sector/workplace:

- Racism
- Discrimination
- Microaggressions
- Unconscious Bias
- Unsafe in various ways
- Emotional tax
- Cultural tax
- Don't see themselves being reflected in many spaces
- Lack of support as they are typically the only Indigenous person in a space
- Having to leave parts of themselves out of the work environment to be palatable to the dominant environment

We then share our insights about what **we found**, which is continued education, skills, and training gaps for many Indigenous Peoples, historic and systemic discrimination towards Indigenous Peoples in the Canadian labour force, on-going issue of the lack of data regarding Indigenous Peoples, women and youth, and attraction, retention and advancement of Indigenous talent in all sectors.

We close this report with **What Next?** Where we highlight the need for education, meaningful engagement with Indigenous Peoples & women, inclusion, cultural awareness, safety, humility, and competence and overarching recommendations.

The time is now. Let us move into spaces of willingness to transform, so our children are witnesses to this work and gifted with a legacy of never needing to do this intense work. They are living a life of extreme uncertainty about humanity and its ability to change. Let us demonstrate the goodness in our hearts and minds and commit to the hard work. It is around us everyday, Let's amplify it in ways we have never dared to before. Let us be even stronger for them and the generations to come. Women in Leadership, the WiL Indigenous and Advisory members, and a line up of allies are already committed, just waiting on more allies to join us on the journey.

Backgrounder

This section will touch on; the truth of Canada's relationship with its First Peoples, the Truth and Reconciliation Report, the Calls to Action and how Call to Action #8 speaks to our responsibilities and accountability in this project and report. We delve into understanding Matriarchy for Indigenous Peoples and the destruction of Matriarchy through colonization and the Indian Act specifically. Then we will highlight the significance and importance of story and storytelling, as this is the basis for the majority of the work done to compile learnings from Indigenous Women throughout Canada.

The Truth of Canada's Relationship with its First Peoples

When non-Indigenous people began arriving on turtle island, the relationship with the Indigenous Peoples, their lands and resources were respected. At the beginning of relationship building with Indigenous Peoples, there was lots of cooperation and support by the future settlers. More and more settlers began arriving to the new "found" land, and began their new lives together with the Indigenous Peoples. The settlers and their leaders recognized the Indigenous Peoples as independent nations with their own governments, laws and territories. These new settlers made agreements or treaties with them. These treaties explained how Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples were going to share the land and the water, the animals, and the plants. These treaties were very important because they were agreements between the Indigenous Peoples and the kings and queens of countries in Europe. They made these agreements with the Indigenous Peoples because they were here first, the land belonged to them as the First Peoples. They had their own governance over themselves, their territories and its resources. The treaties officially recognized their power and independence as nations. The European settlers understood they could not force their laws or way of life on the people who were here long before they ever arrived. They understood that the Indigenous People had rights.

Then, the Government of Canada was formed, and the Royal Proclamation became part of Canadian law. Before long, there were more Europeans than Indigenous Peoples, as these settlers brought diseases with them that the Indigenous Peoples had no immunity to. Also, the Government of Canada kept pushing the development of land towards western Canada, building a railway from Coast to Coast, purchasing land from the Hudson's Bay Co. and fighting directly with Métis, Cree and Blackfoot Nations in the prairies and killing more and more of them as they fought to protect their land and territorial resources. In the High Arctic, Inuit communities were moved to isolated, unfamiliar, and barren lands, often with very bad results. Again, as even more Europeans came to Canada, more land was needed for them to settle and make a living entrenched in their industrial and capitalist way of being. And each local Nation only wanted to protect what was theirs as the First Peoples of that land and territory, the government and the settlers began to view the Indigenous Peoples not as friends, but as a problem.

The Canadian Government started ignoring or changing their laws to make it easier for them to take the Indigenous Peoples land, through war, but mostly stealing it through the implementation of the Indian Act. Which instilled the notion of being civilized and christian into law, giving more power to settlers to define what this meant and use it to their advantage

to diminish the rights of the First Peoples and Nations across Canada. The creation of reservations was used to place Indigenous Peoples on the worst lands in their territories eliminating their ability to sustain themselves effectively, residential schools were used to make Indigenous Peoples assimilate into a civilized and christian way of living, control of Indigenous affairs removed the power of self-governance, Indigenous Peoples couldn't protect their rights either as they couldn't hire a lawyer, nor could they obtain a Post Secondary education and the list goes on and on. The devastating impacts on all Indigenous Peoples are too much to list and the compound and intergenerational impacts of colonization are still felt today.

Crown-Indigenous relations have always favoured white privilege. Indigenous Peoples are still governed by the Indian Act and many other acts, which perpetuates the ongoing oppression of self-determination, governance, and well-being of all Indigenous Peoples in Canada.

Truth and Reconciliation Commission and its 94 Calls to Action

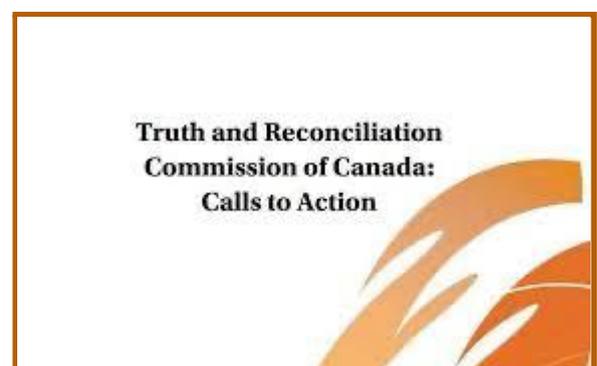
There were 140 federally run Indian Residential Schools which operated in Canada between 1831 and 1998. The last school closed only 23 years ago. Survivors advocated for recognition and reparations and demanded accountability for the lasting legacy of harms caused. These efforts culminated in:

- the [Indian Residential Schools Settlement Agreement](#),
- [apologies by the government](#),
- the establishment of the [Truth and Reconciliation Commission](#),
- the creation of the [National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation](#).

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission ran from 2008 to 2015 and provided those directly or indirectly affected by the legacy of the Indian Residential Schools policy with an opportunity to share their stories and experiences. The National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation has become the permanent archive for the statements, documents and other materials the Commission gathered, and its [library and collections](#) are the foundation for ongoing learning and research.

The Commission [released its final report](#) detailing [94 Calls to Action](#). The [National Day for Truth and Reconciliation](#) is a direct response to Call to Action 80, which called for a federal statutory day of commemoration.

This report is to support the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada Call to Action #7: “to eliminate educational and employment gaps between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Canadians.”¹



¹ Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada. 2015. Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada: Calls to Action.

Matriarchy



The renewal and regeneration of original ancestral teachings of Indigenous peoples, Nations and communities in leadership and governance are critical for achieving wellness, self-determination, and sustainable futures for their children and families.

Women were the leaders in communities and influenced nation building. They are the mothers, wives, grandmothers, sisters, and aunts. As life-bringers to humanity, their sacredness was not lost to Indigenous Peoples. Their greatness comes from this creation and a place of leadership from being the life giver of each generation born into the communities and Nations. Women lead from a space of their very breath, which encapsulates compassion, forgiveness, awareness, empathy, strength, resilience, pain, sacrifice, tears, joy, love, giving, and so much more. In matriarchal societies, if there was any unequal power to be had, it was had by the women because they would hold the positions of clan mothers and they were the ones that made all the major decisions. So they had more say in many of the key areas of communities and Nations.

They influenced so many things in our families and communities; governance, leadership, decision making, child rearing, language, balance, well-being, sustenance, teaching, etc. They didn't do it alone, they had their male counterparts alongside them throughout the generations, to hunt, fish, gather, create, make, protect, and provide the other half of the foundation of their lives, alongside the multi-generations in each family. A community is not a community without women nor men, nor children nor Elders. It is the whole of it that makes it so, through their connection to land through language, spirituality, and culture.

Values were the basis of stories, songs, dances, teachings, etc. The core of our people is from these values and the women embodied these values every day. Thus, transformative well-being is at the heart of every Indigenous woman, rebuilding their families, communities and Nations for a new way of being.

Destruction of Matriarchy

As settlers arrived in what is now North America, they brought with them a foreign patriarchal European value system. European settlers imposed their own frameworks of understanding onto Indigenous social systems, which had particular ramifications for Indigenous women.² The paternalistic views and values of settlers drastically impacted matriarchal systems within First Nations and was worsened by the racism and discrimination laid out in the Indian Act towards Indigenous women. This on-going destruction still exists today, which is supported by what is being shared in this report. Some may not see it as destruction, but it is definitely about holding onto patriarchal and white spaces of privilege from dominant society's way of being and very limited participation by minorities as they are often still placed within the space of otherness.

Indian Act Gendered Discrimination

It is absolutely imperative to understand the ways in which these patriarchal ideologies and white privilege have been retained to the present day. This ongoing discrimination continues to be reinforced through various means, perhaps most notably through the Indian Act. This Federal Government policy and legislation impacted the traditional roles and rights of Indigenous women in various and deeply impactful ways, and the Indian Act is only one of such policies. The Indian Act remains a central destructive feature in the lives of Indigenous women, and is essential to understanding the current and historical socio-political situation in what is Canada today. Changes have been forced upon the federal government to adapt the Indian Act because Indigenous Women have won battles in the Supreme Court of Canada to make this possible. Without their enduring resistance, strength, and determination, many things would not have changed in government policies and legislation.

For example, we would not have Bill C-31 nor Bill C-3 or Bill S-3, which all give Indigenous women identity and rights, which the Federal Government has no desire to change on their own accord. It was the power of matriarchs to fight the Government of Canada and win these court battles to change the legislation, which continues to be the government's stance on almost all things concerning Indigenous Peoples in Canada. Indigenous Peoples are constantly fighting governments over land, inherent rights, sovereignty, self-determination, self-government, and on various other issues. As more and more Indigenous women regain their voice, fight for their rights, hold their ground, speak their truths, share their stories, heal, grow, learn, etc. the greater the possibility for true matriarchian.

Imagine how much better this work and all things will be when more and more Indigenous matriarchs have autonomy, agency, and power once again. Not power over men or others, but transformative power, which grows from respect for self and equality with others, in all their diversity of identity, experience, and ability.

Rematriation

Rematriation is a call to bring back matriarchy in Indigenous communities to rebuild and decolonize the foundation of Indigenous community life. Building on matriarchal foundations

² https://indigenousfoundations.arts.ubc.ca/marginalization_of_aboriginal_women/

calls upon a history in which our matriarchal systems not only existed but were practiced as essential aspects of our cultures; in some cases, this was just a few generations ago. Our cultures have survived largely due to the strength of Indigenous women, who continue to lead today, despite not receiving credit or support.

Stories and Storytelling

Why stories and storytelling? As Indigenous people, we are an oral society so we use language as our foundation of teaching and learning. Telling stories, sharing songs, ceremony and protocols were the basis of sharing one's knowledge. One cannot learn without hearing these stories over and over again, in different settings and in different ways, by different people in ones' life. Teachings in stories, songs, ceremony, etc. can be garnered from them in unique ways each time it was shared or reinforced in a specific setting.

Also, not every story was an actual story, in the modern way that we know stories; with a beginning, middle and end. The same with a song, each can be used for different occasions, purposes, and sometimes only shared by specific families or within certain spaces. Our dances and protocols within our ceremonies are used to tell stories, teachings and learnings for the families witnessing the work being done. The purpose of storytelling is multi-use, with many layers and sometimes great complexities or simple truths. Hearing them over and over again is how we master them and then share them ourselves.



[Image Credit-Coyote Food Stories](#)

Origin Stories

Stories carry knowledge from our ancestors into the present day.

In the stories told by different Indigenous peoples across BC, Wild Woman of the Woods, Sinklip, or Raven create the world, or change it into the world known to human beings. Over

the centuries, we have told these stories, sung them, carved them, painted them, and brought them to life through objects and dance.

Today, origin stories are told in homes, schools and cultural centres. Artists, writers and actors interpret them for Aboriginal communities and the world.

Our stories are also innately embedded within spirituality, the supernatural and in holistic ways, not generally found in modern society. They are not compartmentalized into categories, other than origin and non-origin stories, in most Nations.

Sxwpilemaát Siyám (Chief Leanne Joe)

Our stories describe transformations of our world; they tell how Raven stole the light from a house near the Pacific Coast and spilled it over the earth. They recount Kiviuk's journeys along the Arctic shore, and Jipijkam's sudden appearances on the East Coast. Sinklip or Coyote plays a major role in all stories of the Okanagan People and how many animals, beings and transformers like Coyote, provided our teachings through these stories. Through the centuries, these stories have preserved the teachings of how each society defined the nature of the world. Stories described the characters of animals and human beings, and showed the relationship between them that has sustained human life. There is so much wealth in each story, song sharing, dance, etc...

"Our stories were us, what we knew, where we came from and where we were going. They were told to remind us of our responsibility, to instruct, and to entertain. There were stories of the Creation, our travels, our laws. There were legends of hard-fought battles, funny anecdotes - some from the smokehouse, some from the trickster - and there were scary stories to remind us of danger, spiritual and otherwise. Stories were our life and they still are."

Larry Hill, Seneca

Stories are not innately solutions oriented but provide space to ponder, be curious, ask questions, glean more information, etc. to move towards a solution(s). Hence, not all stories may not always be 'stories' per se, but they are sharing with a meaning, intentionality and sometimes with the same under tones, and with the intent of the above.

"Indigenous women lead. They lead in business, government, communities and families. They are entrepreneurs, executives, students, volunteers, advocates and mentors. They solve challenging problems and they break barriers. Sometimes, Indigenous women do all of this at once. And, often, they do it alone."³

[Indigenous Women's Leadership Summit](https://www.iwls.ca/)

³ "Indigenous Women's Leadership Summit," Indigenous women lead, <https://www.iwls.ca/>.

Understanding Indigenous women's experience in the workforce

Canada has a history of genocide, as well as an ongoing history of colonialism, racism and discord with the First Peoples of this land. All of which has led to inequities in many facets of life for Indigenous Peoples across what is known as Canada today. In the workplace, Indigenous Peoples are underrepresented, suffer a wage gap, and often experience isolation because of a lack of Indigenous role models at senior/executive and board levels within almost every Canadian Corporate sector. Data demonstrates that Indigenous women suffer more in these areas. Additionally, they are regularly surrounded by managers, colleagues, and senior executives who do not truly understand their history and cultures or the burdens they carry. They carry the burden of an emotional and cultural tax for many of their organizations as they are typically the sole and part of a handful of Indigenous Peoples within them.

What most Canadian leaders lack throughout corporate Canada is the knowledge of Indigenous matriarchy throughout all Canadian Indigenous communities. The wisdom, teachings and stature Indigenous women hold within their families and their Nations. This is not about power dynamics between the sexes. It's about equal influence on the governance, decision making, leadership, sharing of knowledge and teachings within families, communities and Nations. The role of Indigenous Women is being in service to their people first and foremost, their culture, ancestral responsibilities, and the reciprocal relationships with all things. They share accountability to all these things with the patriarchs of their families, communities and Nations.

We respect the need to possibly know more about and the effects of Colonization, genocide, residential schools, Indian Day Schools, 60s scoop, on-going removal of Indigenous children from their homes, racism, discrimination and oppression of Indigenous Peoples through the Indian Act, Federal policies, and poor crown-Indigenous relations, and so much more. But this is an arduously long story that can be learnt on your own with some time and commitment. There are many resources out there, including in person and online learning programs, books, residential school information, reports, and so many tools for non-Indigenous Peoples to educate themselves. We have provided 'Recommended Resources' in Appendix B to get you started, but this is not a comprehensive or exhaustive list.

All of which leads us to the space created by the Women in Leadership Foundation to embark on a journey with Indigenous Women to lead a project about them and for them.

The Indigenous Leadership Circle Project

From October 2021 to March 2022, the Women in Leadership's Indigenous Leadership Circle team conducted nation-wide surveys, Speaker Series (live events) and educational webinars and presented their recommendations at the Indigenous Women's Forum held on March 30, 2022. The purpose of this work was to gather understanding from the Financial, Technology, Transport and Communications sectors and more importantly, Indigenous women and youth about their experiences. Hear their stories about their journeys through

the post secondary education system, career development and advancement and words of wisdom for the upcoming matriarchs across Canada.

It was intended that the learnings obtained through the work on this project would provide insights for industry leaders and their sectors to bear witness to an Indigenous Women's relationship to themselves, each other, their families, communities, Nations, and the workforce. This is how Indigenous People do 'work' in their ceremonies, through storytelling, deep listening, witnessing the work, and sharing what they saw and learnt by being present to the work. The Indigenous women (and non-Indigenous) led team and Indigenous women's Advisory Circle intentionally grounded the project work in an Indigenous worldview, with a matriarchal lens, and created safe space for other Indigenous women from across Canada to engage in the project.

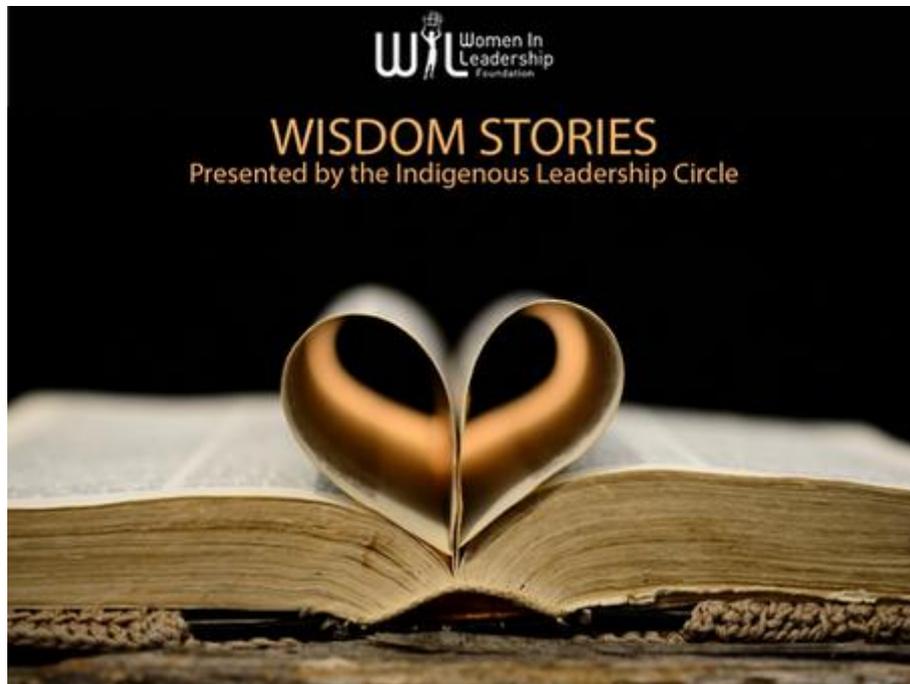
The team conducted the following national surveys:

- Sector employers in Finance, Communications, Transport and Technology industries,
- Indigenous Women in Senior Management/Executive Level and Board positions within the same sectors,
- Indigenous women in Post-Secondary Educational Institutions,
- Senior Managers (non-Indigenous or Indigenous) in the same sectors.

The last survey was added as there were challenges getting sector employers to participate in the survey. However, it was also challenging to get Senior Managers to participate. Because of these challenges, the team was not able to generate any Sharing Circles about data obtained in the surveys for the four sectors. A quick pivot brought about the five Speaker Series focussing on Indigenous Women in Education, Executive Leadership, Communications, Transport and Finance sectors and webinars that focused on the technology sector. The team also gathered Wisdom Stories from Indigenous women all over Canada and filmed some of these stories to share widely amongst our matriarchal, Women in Leadership and sector networks.

Knowledge Sharing

Wisdom Stories

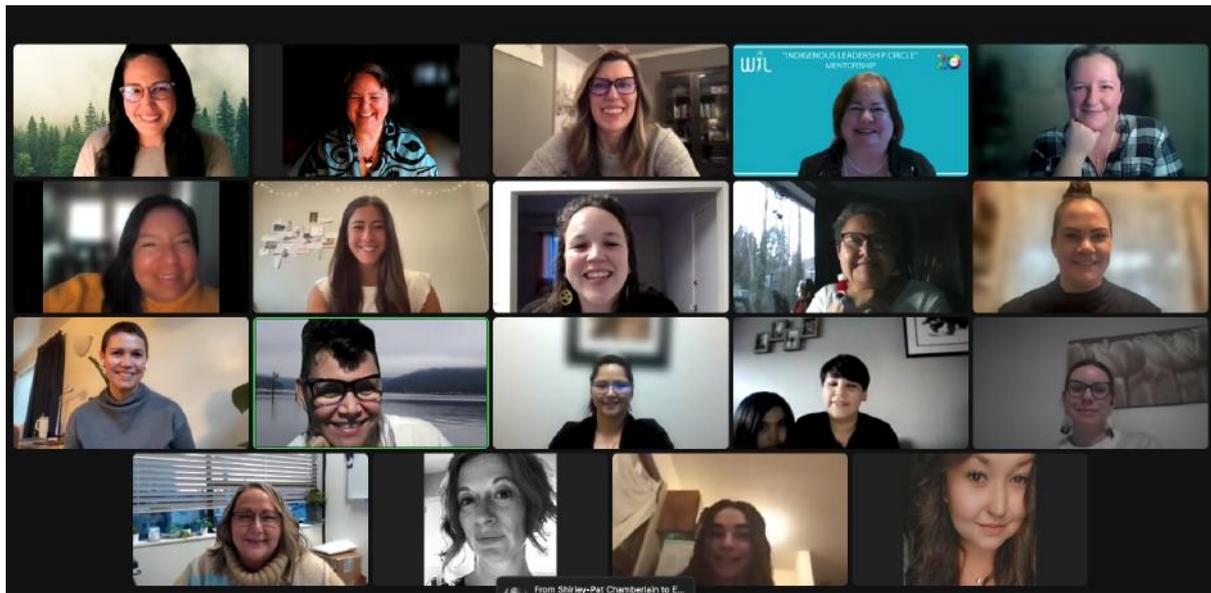


The Wisdom Stories are the Indigenous Leadership Circle project's take on WIL's President and Founder, Maya Kanigan's "Power 5 Interview." In the Wisdom Stories, we asked Indigenous women leaders to share their biography and picture and answer the following questions:

- What is matriarchy to you?
- How did you get to where you are? What is your foundation?
- Who or what is/was your inspiration?
- What words of wisdom do you have for your sector/industry?
- What is your vision for the next generation?
- What words of wisdom do you have for the next generations?

The purpose of these Wisdom Stories is to highlight powerful Indigenous women who are leaders not only within their professional life but in their families, communities and Nations. Indigenous peoples ways of being and doing is based in stories, as we shared at the beginning and these matriarchs carry their wisdom from their culture, land, ancestral knowledge, values they hold, respecting their responsibilities to themselves, their children, grandchildren and legacy they are leaving for all of the generations coming up behind them. Thus, sharing their wisdom through story is a natural fit for this project and for all of the people who would read, be inspired, learn and share them. All of these [Wisdom Stories](#) can be found on the Women in Leadership website, within the blog section.

Indigenous Women's Mentorship Program



Women in Leadership Foundation is immensely proud of their award-winning Mentorship Program with over 2,000 graduates. Their 5 month program matches emerging women leaders with mentors to build confidence and develop leadership skills. However, there are few Indigenous Women who have participated in this program to date. WiL has taken the opportunity to launch into a program dedicated directly to Indigenous women.

Through this project, WiL is excited to announce the launch of our inaugural Indigenous Women Mentorship Program with our first cohort of eleven mentor partnerships with twenty two Indigenous Women. There is so much interest and demand for an Indigenous mentorship program, that we had enough applications for a secondary cohort and there is more interest from outside entities to co-create community based mentorship programs. The Indigenous Women's Mentorship program runs in collaboration with WiL's annual mentorship program.

Indigenous Mentorship Program Overview

- February – June, 2022 virtual mentorship
- Mentors and mentees are required to meet a minimum of one meeting per month for one to two (1-2) hours
- WiL Mentorship Committee will check-in monthly with mentors and mentees
- Opening ceremony February 24, 2022 & closing ceremony June 16, 2022
- Professional development and networking events throughout the program, some specifically just for the Indigenous Cohort
- Complimentary access to the Indigenous Women Forum – March 30, 2022
- Complimentary access to the Diversity & Inclusion Leadership Forum & Career Fair – June 2, 2022
- A specific LinkedIn group for the cohort
- Certificate upon completion
- Networking with an amazing group of professional women from diverse industries

Mentorship Program Program details:

<p>Opening Ceremony Tuesday, February 24, 2022 Description: Introduction to WIL, WIL Mentorship Committee, WIL Mentorship Program Agenda, Networking. Mandatory for all mentors and mentees to attend.</p>	<p>Mentor Training Session Thursday, January 27, 2022 Recording Available Description: Speaker line-up and discussions regarding mentoring topics, tips & best practices. Recommended for all mentors to review.</p>	<p>Career Development Webinar #1 Thursday, February 3, 2022 Recording Available Description: What's Next?!? Goal Setting Made Fun & Easy!</p>
<p>Goal Setting Workshop, with support and ideas towards: - Creating you BIG Life Vision - Follow Your Dream, Clarity - Mapping Out Life Plans - Accountability - Recommitting to Goals Recommended for all mentors and mentees to review.</p>	<p>Mentee Training Session Tuesday, March 1, 2022 Description: Speaker line-up and discussions regarding how to get the most out of your mentorship journey. Heard from two mentorship pairs. Mandatory for all mentees and recommended for mentors to attend.</p>	<p>Career Development Webinar #2 (Indigenous Mentorship Program participants only) Wednesday, March 9, 2022 Description: Fireside Chat with Professional Indigenous Women sharing real world work experiences. Recommended for all mentors and mentees to attend.</p>
<p>Career Development Webinar #3 Tuesday, March 22, 2022 Description: Taking Charge of your Leadership Journey. Recommended for all mentors and mentees to attend.</p>	<p>Indigenous Women Leadership Forum Thursday, March 30th, 2022 Description: Full day of amazing speakers. Recommended for all mentors and mentees to attend.</p>	<p>Networking Event Wednesday, April 13, 2022 Description: Networking event with 2022 mentorship cohort of mentors and mentees. Recommended for all mentors and mentees to attend.</p>
<p>Career Development Webinar #4 Thursday, April 14, 2022 Description: Corporate Culture. Recommended for all mentors and mentees to attend.</p>	<p>Career Development Webinar #5 Thursday, May 5, 2022 Description: Negotiating Salaries – New Job & Promotions Panel discussion, 3 Speakers, Q & A. Recommended for all mentors and mentees to attend.</p>	<p>Diversity & Inclusion Leadership Forum Thursday, June 2, 2022 Description: Full day of amazing speakers and virtual career fair. Recommended for all mentors and mentees to attend.</p>
<p>Career Development Webinar #6 (Indigenous Mentorship Program participants only) May 2022 - TBC</p>	<p>Career Development Webinar #7 (Indigenous Mentorship Program Participants only) Late May/early June - TBC</p>	<p>Closing Ceremony Thursday, June 16, 2022 Description: Final Closing Ceremony for the Mentorship Program, Networking. Mandatory for all mentors and mentees to attend.</p>

What is the impact of mentoring?

In general, for the mentees, it is linked to improved academic, social, and economic prospects and increased knowledge. For the mentors, the relationship can build leadership and management skills, expand a mentor's professional network, and provide an empowering opportunity to give back to the community. The relationship is based on trust, confidentiality, mutual respect, safe space for conversation and sensitivity. This can be a life changing experience! The success of this program will be shared after the program ends. We know that this is a learning opportunity and lessons learned will be incorporated in further Indigenous Women's mentorship programs in the future.

Webinars

The Indigenous Leadership Circle project hosted 5 separate recorded webinars over the course of the project. These webinars are being produced by an Indigenous woman videographer for release in April 2022. The webinar was like a virtual fireside chat with all of these professional Indigenous women's stories and lived experiences.

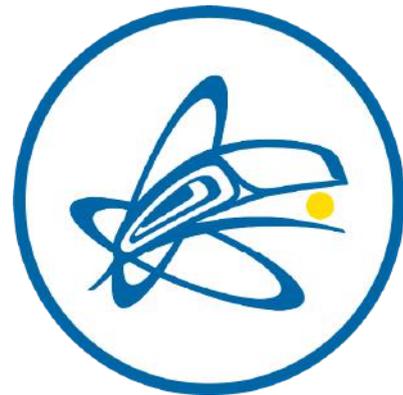
WiL's Indigenous Women's Advisory Circle webinar

This webinar was a private session just with the Indigenous Circle team members and most of the Advisory Circle project members. Our conversation was moderated by our youngest Advisory Circle member, Stephanie Wood, who led the sharing about the following:

- A central theme of this conversation is the idea of walking in two worlds at work - what are some of the first thoughts or feelings that come to you when thinking about that concept? We've talked about the cultural tax Indigenous people pay at work. Can you explain what that is and how you've had to pay that tax in your own professional life?
- What has walking in two worlds looked like for you in your work?
- If you were speaking to the younger you just at the start of your career, what would you want to tell them that you've learned about existing in the corporate world?
- Story of overcoming structural challenges at your workplace?
- How do we bring matriarchy into historically patriarchal, capitalistic spaces?
- We've talked about Indigenous women often facing higher expectations at work. Can you explain a bit what you mean and maybe your own personal experiences with that?
- How do you find ways to stand tall as proud Indigenous women in the face of so much pressure to be palatable and accepted and even assimilated into a workplace? Especially if you are the only one or one of few in your workplace? That fight gets so exhausting, I know it's one you are all continuously fighting. What advice can you share on persisting and taking care of yourself?
- Who here has encountered the angry Indigenous woman trope at work?
- Where do you feel like you are in your professional journey? Where would you like to wind up?
- What future do you imagine and hope for Indigenous youth?
- How can we create that future - a future of belonging for Indigenous youth?

[First Nations Technology Council \(FNTC\)](#)

FNTC is an Indigenous-led not-for-profit working to ensure that Indigenous peoples have the tools, education and support to thrive in the digital age. They are mandated by Indigenous peoples in British Columbia to advance digital and connected technologies. They provide funded and accredited education programs to advance Indigenous peoples careers in innovation and technology, participate in and lead community research projects that result in tangible benefits for Indigenous peoples, create strategies to advance equitable, affordable and sustainable access to technology in Indigenous communities and advocate for better policy solutions for internet affordability and reliability in Indigenous communities.



We hosted two webinars with [Lauren Kelly, Director of Sector Transformation](#) of the First Nations Technology Council. The first webinar focuses on FNTC's [Indigenous Leadership in Technology: Understanding Access and Opportunities in BC](#). Lauren shared with Chief Leanne the multiple phase approach to the project and how FNTC uses an Indigenous research approach that aligns with the principles of Ownership, Control, Access, and Possession (OCAP®), the goals of this project are to:

- understand the current and future demand for technology jobs in BC's seven regions;
- understand the challenges preventing Indigenous peoples from participating in and accessing technology-related opportunities,
- understand the challenges and opportunities identified by Indigenous peoples relating to needed telecommunication infrastructure in their communities to enable economic growth and participation,
- understand the priorities in technology sectors including innovation, hiring, and Indigenous recruitment; and
- explore opportunities for boosting talent acquisition and participation of Indigenous peoples in technology industries.

Much of the discussion focuses specifically on the most recent Indigenous Leadership in Technology Survey and the results coming from this work. Which led to Chief Leanne's curiosity, sharing insights and thoughts and questions about what was being shared.

The second webinar is also with Lauren Kelly discussing FNTC's [Moving Beyond Inclusion: Partnerships and Reconciliation project](#). This project provides an opportunity for industry to co-create a strategic and coordinated approach to actively engage in reconciliation and create local, transformational change within their companies. This initiative will challenge companies to look inwards, take actions beyond Indigenous inclusion and focus on creating a space where diverse worldviews thrive and contribute to a culture of innovation.

Lauren shared with Chief Leanne the intent and outcomes of these learning relationships for systems change are being built with technology industry partners (currently include SAP Canada, Pagefreezer, Microsoft and Bench Accounting) which include:

- Increase awareness of the impacts of colonization,
- Complete foundational HR, policy, and process design work to increase recruitment, retention, advancement, and positive experiences of Indigenous peoples in your workspace,
- Develop strategies to support Indigenous communities through corporate social responsibility activities,
- Create tangible actions that respond to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action,
- Seed a culture and environment that makes space for Indigenous worldviews, culture, and thought leadership in all areas of work within your company.

This discussion focuses on the project process of engagement with these technology companies and their experiences throughout the process of learning and engaging deeply in Reconciliation and meaningfully with organization-wide systems change within each organization. Which led to Chief Leanne's curiosity, sharing insights and thoughts and questions about what was being shared. Closing with some sharing by Chief Leanne about interpreting some of these learnings into an Indigenous worldview and perspective.

[Technology and People \(TAP\) Network](#)

The TAP Network is a community of People and Culture professionals committed to driving the growth and success of Canada's tech sector. As a non-profit organization, TAP Network exists to support a strong and diverse technology employment sector because they believe that a strong and diverse technology sector helps our communities to thrive. TAP provides our members with access to technology sector data, mentors, industry experts and an inclusive peer community to drive innovation, collaboration and results. Through their programs and events, they foster peer-to-peer connections and collaboration that enable learning and knowledge sharing.



We hosted two webinars with the TAP Network. The first webinar was with CEO, Stephanie Hollingshead, where Stephanie shared information about TAP's Diversity & Inclusion Tech Project. The project's purpose is to increase the attraction, retention and advancement of women, Indigenous peoples, people with disabilities, people of colour, newcomers to Canada, and individuals who identify as LGBTQIAS+ in addition to all under-represented groups in skilled occupations in B.C.'s technology sector. This diversity and inclusion project, which began in June 2019, has implemented several pilot diversity, inclusion and indigenization strategies to recruit, retain and support career development in these professions.

TAP's [D&I Final Report](#) shares low Indigenous representation within the sector (less than 1%). Further work is required to source and tailor information for the tech sector on inclusive business practices as well as gaps existing throughout it and improvement is needed in

sector-specific initiatives around Indigenous peoples, inclusion and reconciliation. The D&I report recognizes that addressing the technology skills and knowledge gaps of the province's diverse Indigenous peoples, their histories and their cultures is needed. Increasing dialogue and commitment to reconciliation is fundamental to ensuring a future where Indigenous Peoples participate in and benefit from the sector. However, this requires a Reconciliation Action Plan on behalf of TAP and other tech networks regionally and nationally, and within every major tech company in Canada. There are many ways to achieve this and many will be listed in the Action Guide of this report and with the Recommended Resources section for additional learning.

Chief Leanne was asked some pointed questions from TAP Network CEO, Stephanie, which included:

- Why do you think there is such a lack of indigenous women in the tech sector?
- Do you have thoughts on the activity/process of collecting diversity data? Could this research activity/process be decolonized?
- A concern of mine, and one that comes up from our members, is cultural safety in self-reporting Indigenous identity. We've encouraged organizations to share the reasons why they are asking for the information and how it will be kept confidential. We also encouraged organizations to provide an option of "prefer not to answer" for each question. These are very generic actions that alone won't create an environment of trust, where people feel safe to self-identify. Do you have some ideas or insights on creating cultural safety in organizations?
- When we spoke earlier you used the phrase "systematic changes through minute actions". I would love to hear more about that. What minute actions could bring about systemic change, and decolonize our corporate behavioural norms? What makes your eyes roll? What are some colonial business practices that make you uncomfortable or uninterested?

To hear the answers, you will have to watch the webinar and additional insights shared by Chief Leanne. Again, these webinars will be launched in April on the WiL website, and the same goes for the second webinar recorded, which is outlined below.

The second webinar we hosted with a small group of TAP networks member tech companies, where Chief Leanne and Lauren Kelly of FNTC's Sector Engagement spoke to their respective projects briefly and spoke more deeply to the barriers listed in this report. As well as answered several questions generated by the TAP tech companies, which included attracting and retaining Indigenous talent, reconciliation education, reducing barriers, etc.

Speaker Series (Live Events)

The Indigenous Leadership Circle project hosted 5 Live streaming events focussed on Indigenous Women leaders from the Education, Executive Level, Communications, Transportation, and Finance sectors. Each of these panellists shares their story and journey through their life to get where they are. Sharing insights, nuggets of Wisdom, resonating quotes, tribulations, and successes along the way.

Speaker Series #1: Indigenous Women in Education

Women In Leadership Education Webinar was moderated by Chief Leanne Joe and Jessie Williams. The Education Speaker Series panellists included:

- [Dr. Dara Kelly](#), Assistant Professor in the Beedie School of Business at Simon Fraser University shared this sacred space of connectedness through relationship about teaching and learning, *“One day, my mentor and supervisor took me out into the community and we stopped along the way, where he purchased a locally made Māori basket and gifted it to me, with the stipulation that I fill it with knowledge.”*
- [Tina Matthew](#), Executive Director, Office of Indigenous Education at Thompson Rivers University shared this piece of wisdom as her grounding to survive all that a post secondary education requires, *“If it wasn’t for the friends I made at University and the connections I definitely wouldn’t have made it.”*
- [Christine Cyr](#), Associate Vice-President Indigenous – Students, Community and Cultural Integration at the University of Manitoba began her story with naming all of her roles and responsibilities as an Indigenous woman, *“The many names that can define me as an Indigenous woman, “mama, kokum, sister, auntie, daughter, wife, escaabe-kwe, sundancer, pipe carrier, friend, and AVP (Associate Vice President of the University of Manitoba).”*

The purpose of this webinar was to increase understanding and awareness of education regarding Indigenous women's barriers in accessing education and resources. The panellists shared their stories and what it takes to create a successful career in education, their passion for learning and research, struggles in the education system, nuggets of wisdom and words of encouragement and inspiration.

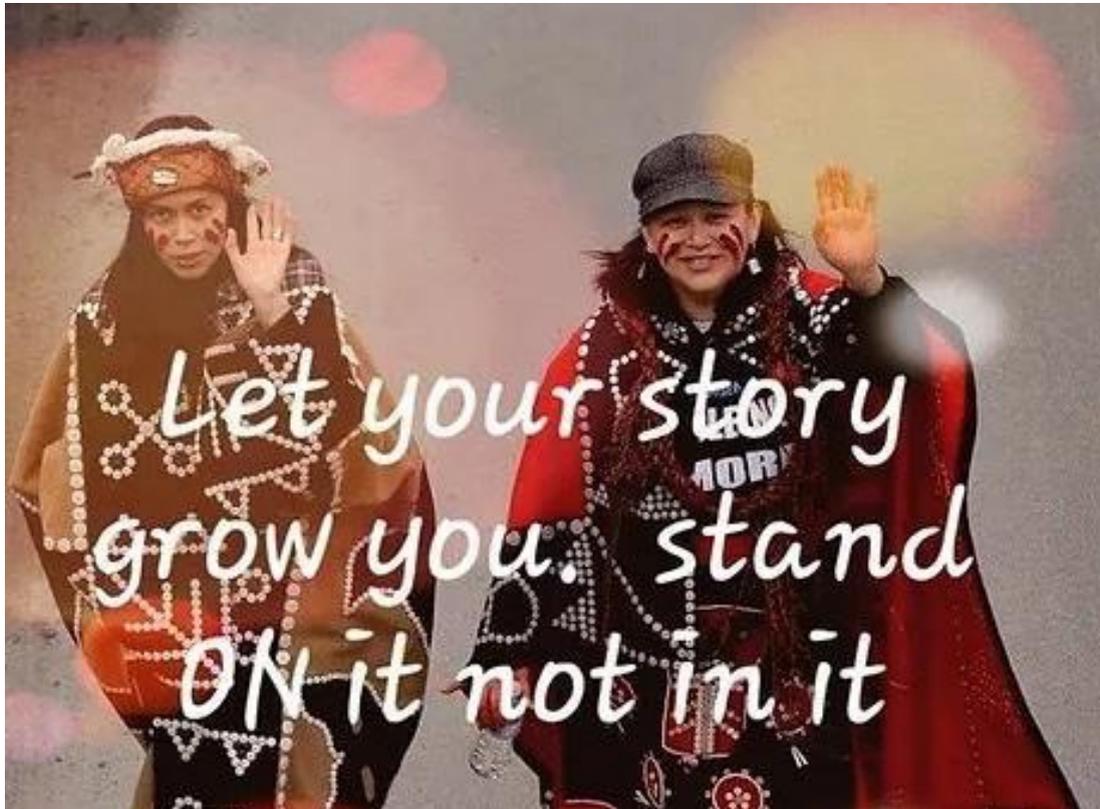
Each of these women shared amazing stories about their unique journey to being leaders in the education sector. The nuggets of wisdom shared through the storytelling was tremendously enriching and this session is a must watch. You can watch it by clicking on this link: [Indigenous Women in Education](#).

Speaker Series #2: Indigenous Women in Executive Leadership

The Women In Leadership Foundation, Indigenous Leadership Circle Speaker Series "Executive Leadership" Webinar was moderated by Jessie Williams. The Education Speaker Series panellists included:

- [Brenda Knights](#), CEO, Seyem; Brenda shared this about leading, *“I could have chosen a different direction but I chose to be a survivor. I think that is an essential ingredient to be a leader. Choose to be a survivor, not a victim”.*
- [Michele Young-Crook](#), Entrepreneur to many business ventures; and Closing nugget of wisdom for Michelle to close her sharing, *“If a door is open for you to walk through, just make sure you keep it open for the Indigenous person behind you. Keep the doors open for those after you”.*

- [Laurie Sterritt](#), Partner, Leaders International.
Laurie shared the following about her journey to Leadership, it was *“a winding road to leadership: by Leading with Your Heart”*



[Image Credit](#)

The main objective of this webinar was to increase understanding and awareness of Executive Leadership regarding Indigenous women's barriers in accessing senior management and board positions; and tools to help remove barriers. The panellists shared their stories about making it to their professional positions, but also all of the other work and spaces they contribute in, nuggets of wisdom and words of encouragement and inspiration.

Each of these women shared amazing stories about their unique journey to leadership. The nuggets of wisdom shared through the storytelling was tremendously powerful and this session is a definite to put on your watch list. You can watch it by clicking on this link: [Indigenous Women's Executive Leadership](#).

Speakers Series #3: Indigenous Women in Transport

The Women in Leadership Foundation, Indigenous Leadership Circle Speaker Series “Transportation” Webinar moderated by Sarah Thomas with guest panellists:

- [Kirsten Rock](#), Controlling Partner, NorthCoast Helicopters shared where there are shortages within the transport sector, *“There is such a huge shortage of engineers in the transportation sector, and great potential for Indigenous youth to explore as a career option.”*

- [Mikelle Sasakamoose](#), Acting Manager, TC TMX Secretariat at Transports Canada spoke to the many opportunities that this sector can offer to all Indigenous Peoples and exploring this sector should not be overlooked. “There are many employment opportunities for Indigenous peoples to explore in the transport sector, from railways, airports, civil aviation, marine transport, etc.”

Getting this panel together was challenging as there are very few Indigenous women in this sector across the country. However, we found 3 but could only get a commitment from 2 of them. The main objective of this discussion was to increase understanding and awareness of Indigenous women facing challenges and barriers in the Transportation sector. Panellists shared their personal experience highlighting tools to remove barriers for Indigenous Women in this sector. Each panellist shared their passion for the industry and supporting Indigenous Peoples, women and communities succeeding in this space. You can watch it by clicking on this link: [Indigenous Women in Transportation](#).

Speakers Series #4: Indigenous Women in Communication

The Women in Leadership Foundation, Indigenous Leadership Circle Speaker Series “Communication” Webinar moderated by Sarah Thomas with guest panellists:

- [Dana Foster](#), News Reporter/Anchor & Media Technical Manager, Foster News Media and Sun Peaks News shared her raw story through this sector as an Indigenous woman and hurdles that she overcame to be where she is today. Her honesty in who she is can be heard in this sharing, “I’m a real person, with flaws, learning differences, and overcoming many challenges. I want to be real in my work so that others can see my real humanness and know that they can move through life’s challenges, but you need the tools to do it.”
- [Kelsie Kilawna](#), Reporter, Indiginews shared passionately about moving through the challenging spaces in this sector, and how she created the space she needed to support the voices of herself and her peoples in a way that gives a true voice to their stories. She shared how storytelling needs to become the new norm, “I tell journalists, reporters, and storytellers, now is the time to become a storyteller. Storytellers shape their stories so much differently, rich with care, attention, love and focus. It demands the story gatherer to listen to the source with genuine care and while following certain protocols.”
- [Racelle Kooy](#), Media Relations, Stk’emlupsemc te Secwepemc Nation used the unicorn as a metaphor for her personality and journey. Being a ray of sunshine and brightness but having to use the horn to fend off the negative and trauma making space that media brings to Indigenous spaces. She closed her story with this nugget, “No matter what you do, there are lumps and bumps along the way. So you need to seek what makes you sparkle, that which lights you up, as it gets you through those tough times.”

The main objective of this discussion is to increase understanding and awareness of Indigenous women in the Communication sector. This will include barriers, in accessing the communication sector, and tools to help remove barriers.

Each of these women shared deeply personal stories about their journeys to get into and through the media/communications sector. Expressing the highs and lows in making it in this industry and finding the most powerful space that resonates with them where they can be the voice of Indigenous Peoples through media. This session is an absolute must watch. You can watch it by clicking on this link: [Indigenous Women in Communications](#).

Speakers Series #5: Indigenous Women in Finance

The Women in Leadership Foundation, Indigenous Leadership Circle Speaker Series “Finance” webinar took place during the Indigenous Women in Leadership Forum, which was held virtually on March 30th, 2022. It was moderated by Candice Loring and with guest panellists:

- Angela Ferguson, Regional Manager, Indigenous Banking, Prairies and Territories at TD Bank
“A real leader faces the music, even when she doesn’t like the tune.”
- Suzanne Trottier, Vice President, First Nations Bank of Canada - Indigenous Trust Services

The main objective of this discussion is to increase understanding and awareness of the Finance and Banking sector regarding Indigenous women's barriers in accessing senior management and board positions; and tools to help remove barriers. Each Indigenous Women panelists will share their personal story with a Q&A from participants.

Knowledge Gathering

“Studies on leadership have a tendency to collectivise “women”, disregarding the unique experiences of black women, Indigenous women and women of colour (biwoc).”

[Herclimb](#)



[Image credit](#)

Shared Lived Experiences

The greatest knowledge gathering came from bringing Indigenous Women together to share and storytell with each other. Through the Indigenous Women's Advisory Circle, Speaker Series, and Webinars, an abundance of knowledge was obtained for this project about Indigenous Women's experience in the Post-Secondary Educational Institutions, at workplaces throughout Corporate Canada and in various boardrooms. Many expressed the following challenges:

- Racism
- Discrimination
- Microaggressions
- Unconscious bias
- Unsafe in various ways
- Emotional tax
- Cultural tax
- Don't see themselves being reflected in many spaces
- Lack of support as they are typically the only Indigenous person in a space
- Having to leave parts of themselves out of the work environment to be palatable to the dominant environment

To hear their stories, experiences and the truth telling, please check out our [selection of events and webinars](#) recorded for this project.

There is nothing more powerful than to obtain first hand knowledge through lived experiences, directly from the source itself. The Indigenous Leadership Circle team used an Indigenous worldview/lens, approach and practice of storytelling as the means in which to gather this data. Creating safe space for these women to share. This can only come by having Indigenous women leading this space, from their ways of knowing and being and a place of matriarchy through the DNA of their ancestors and spirit.

Resources Review

The project team reviewed a multitude of online resources to reflect on the subject matter of the project: Indigenous Women in Senior Management and Board positions focussing efforts within four federally regulated sectors (Finance, Transportation, Communications and Technology). As expected, there is very limited research and data out there to review, specifically related to Indigenous Women in Senior Management and Board positions in Canada.

There are two research projects that are being undertaken by the First Nations Technology Council and the Tech and People Network (TAP). Three other research reports that stood out were the Catalyst Workplaces that Work for Women's report on Building Inclusion for Indigenous Peoples in Canadian Workplaces, The Prosperity Project's 2021 Annual Report Card On Gender Diversity and Leadership and Inclusion Futures: Indigenous Engagement in Canada's Workforce.

First Nations Technology Council

FNTC embarked on a multi-year project entitled the Indigenous Leadership in Technology: Understanding Access and Opportunities in BC. FNTC completed phase one in 2019, which focused on engaging Indigenous people, communities and organizations to uncover themes that would guide ongoing research and engagement. Throughout 2020 and 2021, they completed phase two of the project which focussed on research, data collection and virtual engagements. In 2022, FNTC and its partners will work to analyze survey feedback and findings from the virtual engagement sessions and interviews that will help to inform a final report, which will be made available to all First Nations communities and leadership in BC. The report will outline the various strategies and areas for future investment that are required in order for Indigenous Peoples to participate in and thrive in BC's growing digital economy. We were privileged in our partnership with FNTC to review the draft findings of this research but are not able to share any of their findings until their report is formalized and published.

Technology and People's Network

TAP's 2017 *Diversity & Inclusion In the BC Tech Sector Report* specifically shares the following regarding Indigenous People but not directly related to Indigenous Women in the tech sector:

Today, more than 200,000 Indigenous peoples live in BC (Welcome BC, 2017), and Indigenous people represent the fastest growing segment of the Canadian population. Currently, **less than 1% of the tech sector's workforce are Indigenous Peoples**, which suggests the sector is missing out on the opportunity to meaningfully engage and benefit from the unique perspectives of Indigenous peoples (BC Tech Association, 2016)⁴. As a vibrant and progressive industry in British Columbia, the tech sector has a unique opportunity to deepen understanding, respect and recognition of Indigenous Peoples as a necessary step for diversifying the sector. Elevating Indigenous voices and responding meaningfully to reconciliation will help to generate innovative new approaches and perspectives across the sector. Meaningful engagement with Indigenous peoples in the provincial tech sector is not only beneficial but a necessary response to the Calls to Action of the 2015 Truth and Reconciliation Commission Report (Truth and Reconciliation Commission, 2015) as well as the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, which has been identified as the basis of Nation to Nation relationships by both the provincial and federal government.

One way in which Indigenous innovators are being empowered in the province is through a skills development initiative being developed by the First Nations Technology Council. This 5-year program will begin in 2018 and enable 1,000 First Nations youth (18-29 years old) to explore careers in technology and innovation and access the skills and certifications to contribute to and lead technology sector organizations. The 200 annual graduates will have the necessary skills to secure full time technical jobs across the province. This program is supported by Employment & Social Development Canada, Ministry of Indigenous Relations & Reconciliation, and Western Economic Diversification. Equally as important as addressing the technology skills gaps is addressing the sector's knowledge gaps of the province's

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https://www.tapnetwork.ca/download/e.lwFwQEKGcAMAMAXTU1tg34zN6QoU5oQ9Pru9jmHbd7bcZ02lZnOkuPGX7@5NSe9laCZiYKBUhTIBRFYloJQqJRxiWhG1p@2sYYIA=/HRTechGroup_DiversityInclusionReport_Digital_Feb22.pdf

diverse Indigenous peoples, their histories and their cultures. Increasing dialogue and commitment to reconciliation is fundamental to ensuring a future where Indigenous Peoples participate in and benefit from the sector.

Prosperity Project

The [2021 Annual Report Card on Gender Diversity and Leadership: The Zero Report](#), co-presented by KPMG in Canada, **surveyed 48 of Canada's largest organizations** in late 2020. Each organization collected and shared race-based data with The Prosperity Project. The results show 89 percent of surveyed organizations have zero black women in the pipeline to the leadership level and **91 per cent have zero Indigenous (First Nations, Inuit and Métis) women**.

“Some business leaders care and want to do better. We want to work with them. It's about strong and courageous leadership. The organizations that participated in our research are part of the solution with above-average representation of women at the leadership level. They are committed to transparency and the setting of a baseline in order to measure progress,” says Pamela Jeffery, founder of The Prosperity Project – a not-for-profit organization created at the beginning of the pandemic to ensure Canadian women are not left behind in the COVID-19 recovery.

The results are more positive for women in board roles with women's representation increasing within the survey organizations since the pandemic began. Women held 40.9 percent of board seats as of September 30, 2020. In sharp comparison, women held 21.5 per cent of all TSX-listed company board seats and 31.5 percent of S&P/TSX 60 company board seats, as of July 31, 2020.

“Having a strong inclusive leadership pipeline has the ability to transform not only a single company, but the future of Corporate Canada as well. At the moment, there is still much work that needs to be done before we can truly have a prosperous future for our daughters and granddaughters,” says Heather Baker, Partner, Audit (Financial Services) and Chair of the Board, KPMG in Canada.

The lack of women's representation isn't the only problem: there is also a lack of gender and diversity data collection within organizations. “BlackNorth Initiative Founder Wes Hall and I agree: not asking for race, gender and ethnicity data while trying to stop bias and systemic racism is like not testing for COVID-19 and tracing contacts while trying to stop the spread of the virus. If we don't look, ask, or measure, we won't know. Not knowing is how those at the top of a racist system want to keep it,” says Jeffery.

The 2021 Annual Report Card sets a new standard for the collecting and reporting on gender diversity and leadership in Canada and is the first to present intersectional data (women who also identify as BIPOC and/or living with disabilities) on women in leadership roles that has been collected and submitted by organizations, often for the first time look at the representation of women in board, executive officer and in the pipeline to executive officer roles across the economy in some of Canada's largest organizations provide three snapshots in time to determine if Canadian women at the leadership level are being disproportionately affected by the current crisis: March 31, 2019, March 31, 2020 and September 30, 2020.

Another useful resource has been the [Inclusion Futures: Indigenous Engagement in Canada's Workforce](#) document. This report examines four interlinked factors that contribute to Indigenous inclusion in the labour force and which are incorporated into a suggested framework for developing a tool to measure how inclusive an organization's workplace is.⁵ **The conclusion of the report is shared in this statement, "Indigenous Ideology Must Be A Part Of Reconciliation Moving Forward. [Creating] Culturally Inclusive Workspaces Is All [Of] Our Responsibility [In Order To Have] True Partnerships."** By Chief Cadmus Delorme, Cowessess First Nation.⁶

There are a number of other resources that are footnoted or linked throughout the report that support our project work.

Data Gathering: Surveys

Given more resources like time, human resources and funds, this project could have been much more decolonized in its knowledge review. For example, rather than creating surveys only, the team could have hired Indigenous researchers or partnered with Indigenous students from any of Canada's Post Secondary institutions for this research project and created space for Indigenous women to share their personal stories, culture, knowledge, wisdom, and goals for their lives. However, given the limitation of resources, the small but mighty Indigenous Leadership Circle team, which was led by the Indigenous Women's Advisory Circle, decided that surveys were the best option to gather some insights into Indigenous Women's experiences in Corporate Canada and within the Post Secondary Education system. Thus we created four (4) surveys:

- Professional Indigenous Women Employees Survey,
- Indigenous women in the Education System,
- Employer and Industry Stakeholders Survey,
- Senior and Executive Leadership Survey.

The Professional Indigenous Women Employees Survey was designed to gather some demographics about Indigenous women and information on their career and advancement opportunities, but more specifically we gathered responses on diversity, inclusion, support, etc. within their organizational sector. This will assist our Indigenous Women in Leadership project to better understand how organizations can better support Indigenous women in these sectors. Please note that data collected in this survey is completely confidential and all data is displayed in aggregate form.

The Indigenous women in the Education System was designed to gather some demographics about Indigenous Women in Post Secondary educational institutions across Canada and information on their career and advancement goals, salary expectations, further educational advancement, awareness of career supports, etc. This will assist the Indigenous Women in Leadership project to better understand how organizations can better support Indigenous women in these sectors. Please note that data collected in this survey is completely confidential and all data is being shared in aggregate form.

⁵ <https://ppforum.ca/publications/inclusive-futures-indigenous-engagement-in-canadas-workforce/>

⁶ <https://ppforum.ca/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/TF3-English-presentation.pdf>

The Employer and Industry Stakeholders Survey was designed to gather some demographics about sector organizations. But more specifically about diversity, inclusion, safe spaces, belonging, compensation, advancement supports, etc. for Indigenous Women or diverse individuals. This will assist our Indigenous Women in Leadership project to better understand how organizations can better support Indigenous women in these sectors. Please note that data collected in this survey is completely confidential and all data will be aggregate form.

The Senior and Executive Leadership Survey was one last attempt to gather some general stakeholder data through various leadership people within these four sectors. As there were great challenges in getting companies to complete the Employer and Industry Stakeholders Survey for a variety of reasons. This survey was brief and target some general answers about DEI in the various sectors.

Methodology

This report is not a comprehensive study of the frameworks currently in place to address the strategies in which Indigenous women are engaging with respect to professional advancement and attaining leadership roles. Higher education, strengthening career portfolios, and participating in mentorship opportunities are a few essential tools Indigenous women engage for their benefit and elevating their unique value proposition. The Indigenous Leadership Circle Project in collaboration with Women In Leadership worked diligently to continue with research for the purpose of discovery.

Agencies, consultants, and service providers whose support, programs, combined with tools and resources as well as ongoing work in ensuring accessibility, are growing. The Indigenous Leadership Circle Project in collaboration with Women In Leadership hope to be a part of this growing access for Indigenous Women across Canada.

The stakeholders, educational institutions, and industry leaders hold some of the answers to solutions that break down barriers for Indigenous women. The caveat is what conditions fulfil personal and professional needs that generate and guarantee positive experiences for Indigenous women preparing to take on leadership roles? What this report explores is the many spaces where Indigenous women's voices of truth need to be created and held to bring systemic and institutional issues and challenges to the forefront to be addressed.

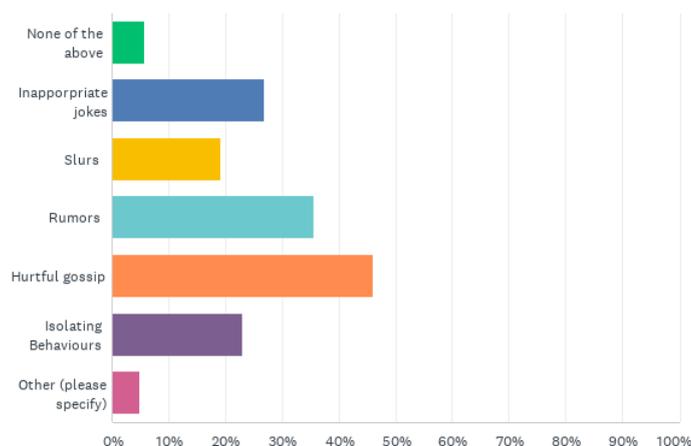


Indigenous Women in the Education System

Our survey results show that $\frac{2}{3}$ of respondents are married and are caretakers of dependents from birth to age 60. Just $\frac{1}{2}$ of respondents are able-bodied and another $\frac{1}{4}$ of respondents have a disability.

Experiences of Indigenous women students in Post Secondary Institutions

Q8 Have you experienced unwelcomed comment(s) or conduct within the educational institution that you felt was offensive, embarrassing or hurtful? Please select all that apply.

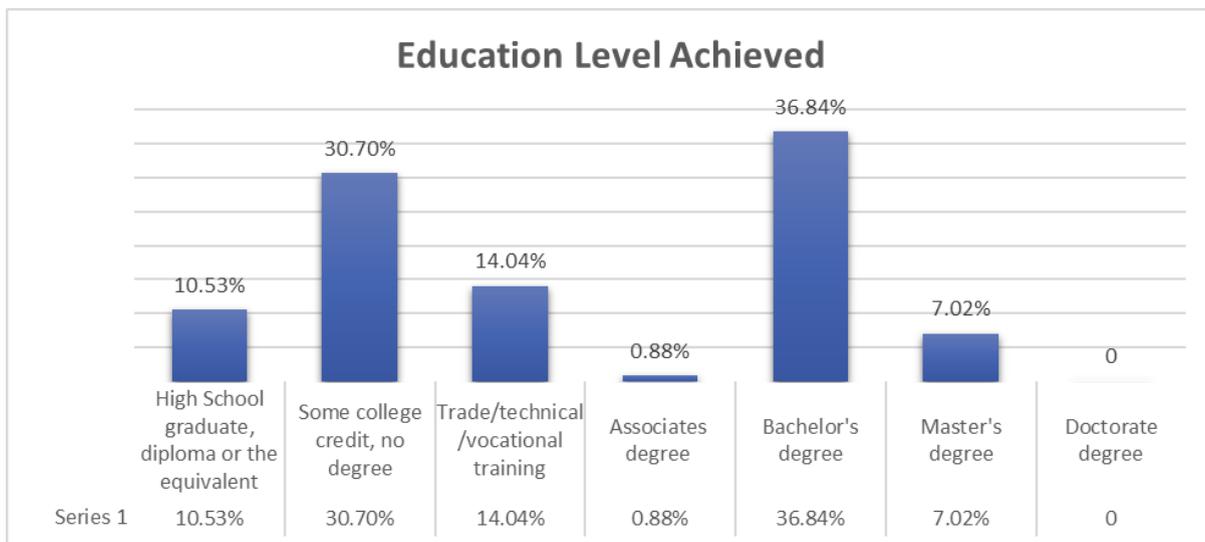


While there is some indication that the more recent efforts to raise awareness have had noticeable impacts on some survey respondents, the Indigenous experience is still largely impacted by racism which presents in many forms as noted in the above chart. Nearly 27% of students are experiencing inappropriate jokes, 19.23% are hearing slurs, 23% are

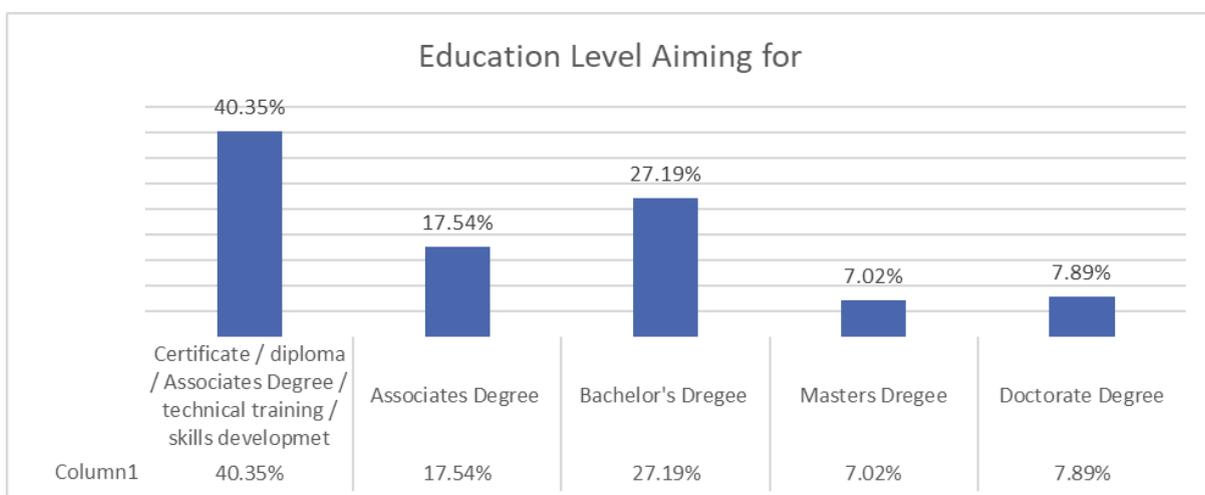
experiencing isolating behaviours, and nearly 66% of students are experiencing harmful gossip and rumours! The reality is that less than 6% (5.77%) of Indigenous students indicated that they had not experienced any offensive conduct with the educational institute. *Please note that this question allowed participants to select more than one option, so percentages represent reflect values over 100%*

While our survey indicated an enormous amount of offensive conduct with the educational institute, 62.5% of survey respondents also indicated that their educational institute provided space for learning, promoting, and practicing cultural safety. Only 3.85% indicated that their school did not provide this space. 18.27% indicated that this space was considered or developed, and 15.38% were not sure. *More research is needed to understand how Post Secondary institutions are providing such space.

Education Levels

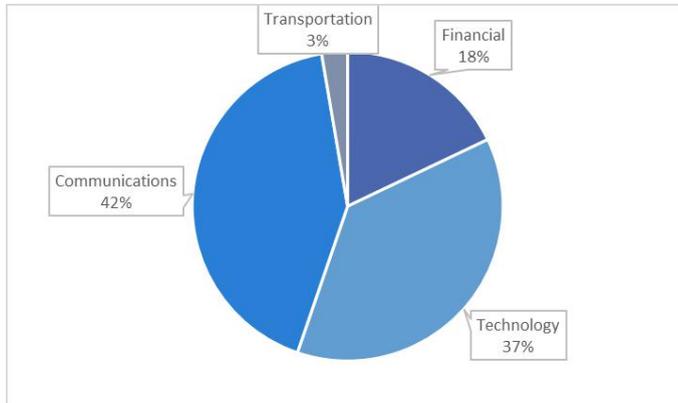


While it is encouraging to see that 36.84% of Indigenous students have achieved a Bachelor's degree, the second-highest statistic of 30.70% indicates that many Indigenous students are trying to complete or have not completed their degree. *further information needed to better understand barriers leading to this number being so high, is there enough support, training, etc for advancement... do organizations provide opportunities?



Interestingly, the majority of respondents are aiming to achieve a certificate, diploma, trade, technical training, or skills development. *need more information to better understand why or what the motivation is. Additionally, less than 15% (14.91%) of respondents are wanting to achieve a master's or doctorate degree. *Further research is needed to understand if this number is low.

Sector Interest



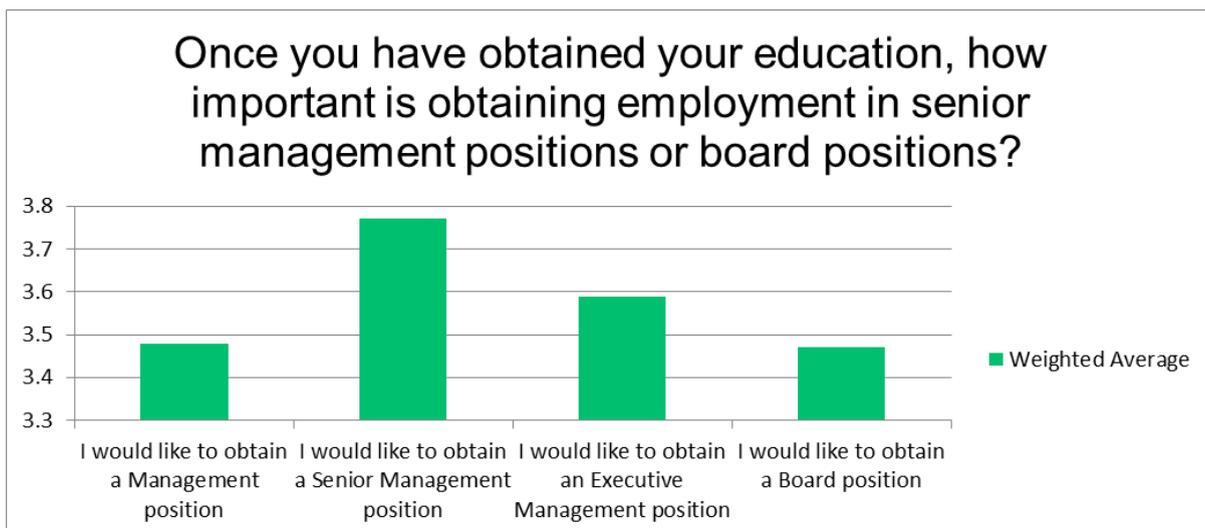
A majority of the survey respondents indicated a majority interest in the Communications sector, followed by Tech, and then Finance and only 3% in the transport sector. Of course, there were other respondents looking into a variety of other sectors. But we wanted to report on these four sectors as this project focussed their efforts towards them.

Interest in Senior Management and Board Positions

(Q 17-20) On a scale from 1 – 5 (one being not important and 5 being very important)

Do respondents believe that obtaining a formal education will provide them with the necessary knowledge, skills, work ethic, confidence, social and professional networks to support their career advancements?

The average score was 4/5 on all – this supports the notation that formal education is relevant in obtaining Senior Management or board positions. *However, again, this data should be compared to data from the Profession Indigenous Women survey to better understand the statistics surrounding women who have obtained career advancements without a formal education.

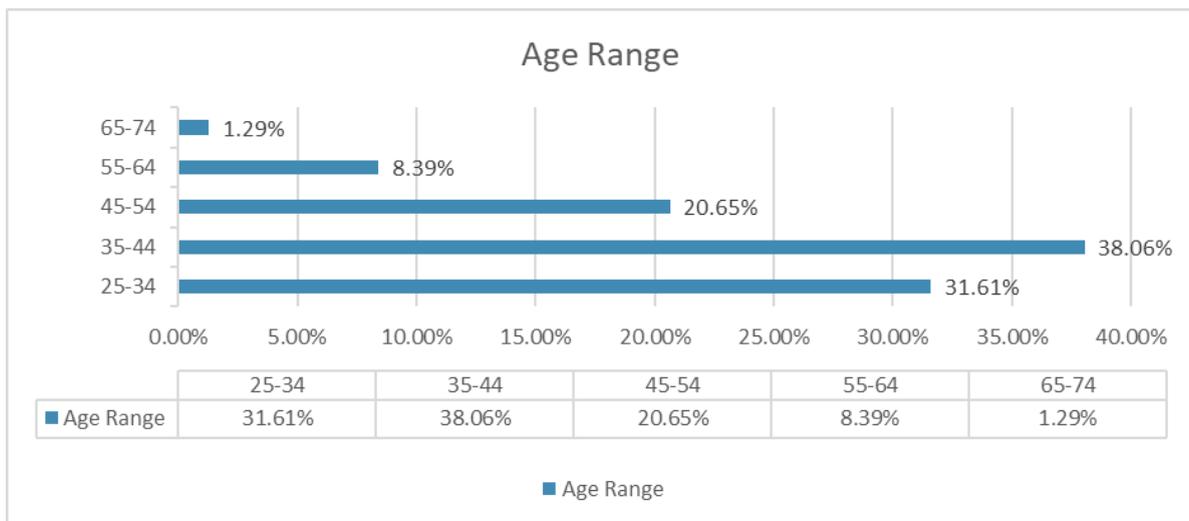


Many survey respondents were interested in management and higher level positions in their careers, as well as interest in obtaining a Board position, which correlates well to the career vision question. Where a majority of respondents stated they have a short and long term career vision for themselves.

Naturally, a majority of respondents wanted to see a growth in their respective compensation with their career advancement and correlated to their level of education and experience.

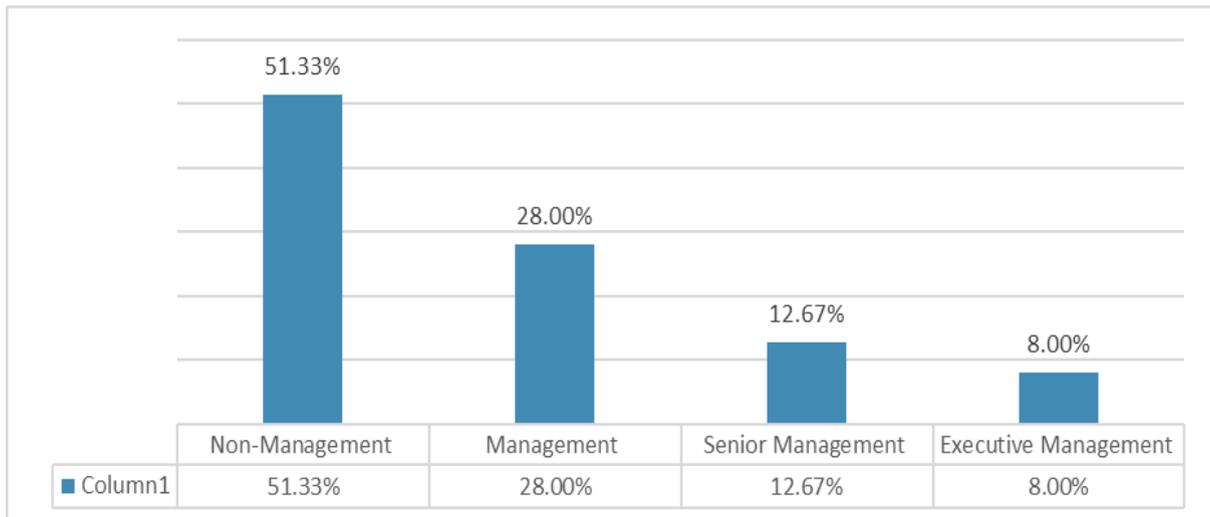
The survey closed with an open ended question: What more can the education system provide to support you in your employment and career advancement? Which provided a gamut of responses that included more Indigenous professors, integrated community/ organization connections meaningfully throughout the courses that are being offered, mentorship opportunities, more career related opportunities within programs, decolonization and Indigenization of courses, and so much more.

Professional Indigenous Women’s Survey



Our survey results show that $\frac{2}{3}$ of respondents are under the age of 55 and are caretakers of dependents from birth to age 60. Just over $\frac{1}{2}$ of respondents are married and are able-bodied and another $\frac{1}{4}$ of respondents have a disability.

Our survey results show that 41.56 % are in the Finance/Banking sector, 14.94% are in the communications sector, 7.79% are in the transport sector, 15.58% are in the technology sector and 20.13% of respondents are in other sectors. Just under $\frac{2}{3}$ of respondents worked less than 10 years with their sector organizations. Over $\frac{3}{4}$ of these Indigenous women survey respondents have a Bachelor’s Degree or higher level of education.



When looking at all of the Data collected, nearly 70% (69.67%) of respondents between the age of 25 - 44 years, have advanced education, over half (51.33%) do not hold management positions. But this is also directly correlated that a majority of respondents have been with their sector organization for less than 10 years. It would be interesting to follow up with this population to see if they have moved into management and executive level positions over the next 5-10 years, as majority (¾) of the survey respondents stated that they wanted to move into these senior level roles within their sectors.

Career Goals and Advancement

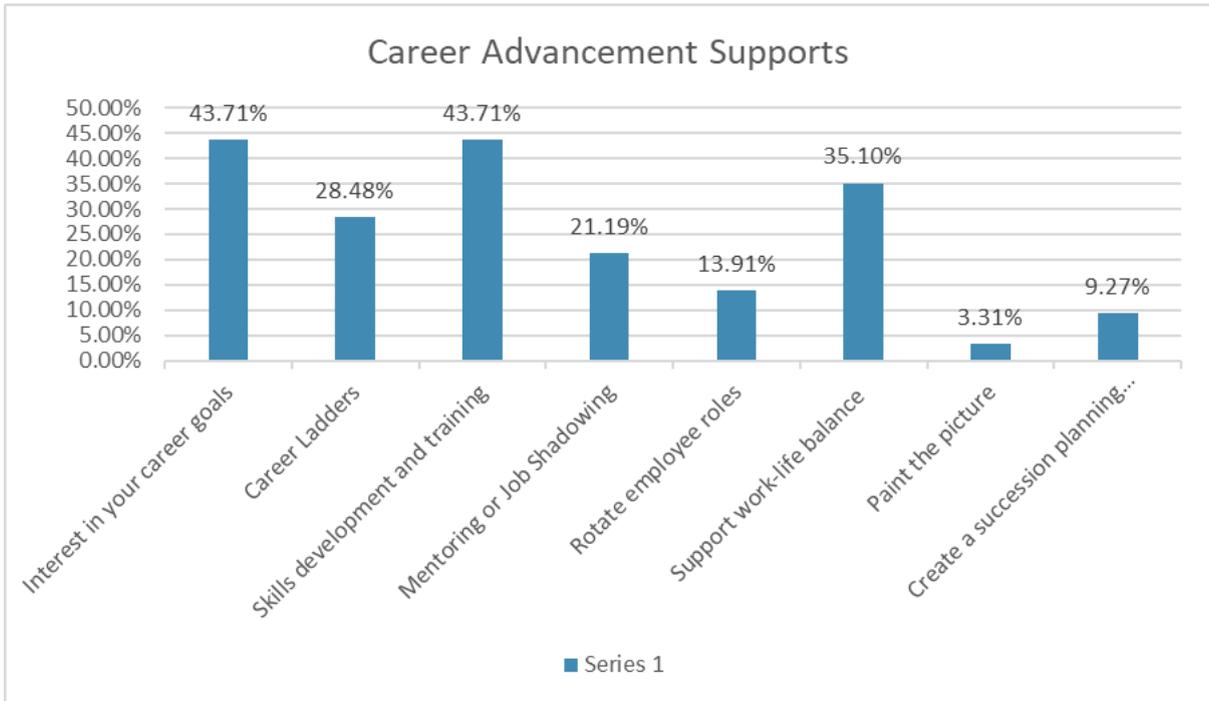
- Nearly 88% (87.33%) of respondents felt that they had career growth and development opportunities at their current organization.
- Nearly 89% (88.67%) of respondents felt that their current job was in alignment with their career goals.
- 78% of respondents felt that they were in control of their career path and progressing in their professional development at their current place of employment.
- Nearly 72% (71.33%) felt that their promotion and career path is clear to them.

When respondents were asked to rate the following statement from 1 - 5 (1 being strongly disagreed and 5 strongly agreed) the average response was 3 for both questions.

Question 1: I understand the criteria I must meet to be promoted.

Question 2: I can predict my future career path in this organization by observing other people's experiences.

These statistics are encouraging and reveal that the majority of Indigenous women feel that their career goals are both clearly laid out, and attainable, at their current place of employment. Additionally, it is encouraging to see that organizations are setting out promotional criteria clearly. Although the question remains, what are organizations doing to support Indigenous women in their career advancement?



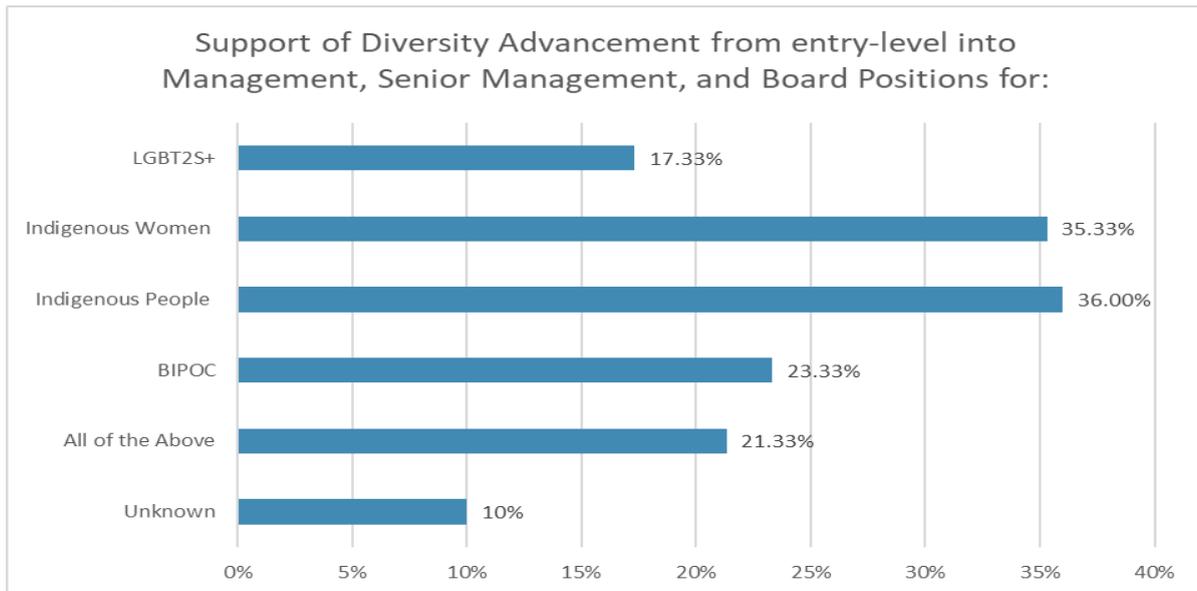
Please note that values reflect values higher than 100% due to participants being able to select all options that apply.

Interestingly the top-rated career advancement support offered through current employers is having an interest in their employee's careers, and offering skills development and training. Although both of these supports are indicated by 43.71% of Indigenous women employees, that leaves significant room for improvement.

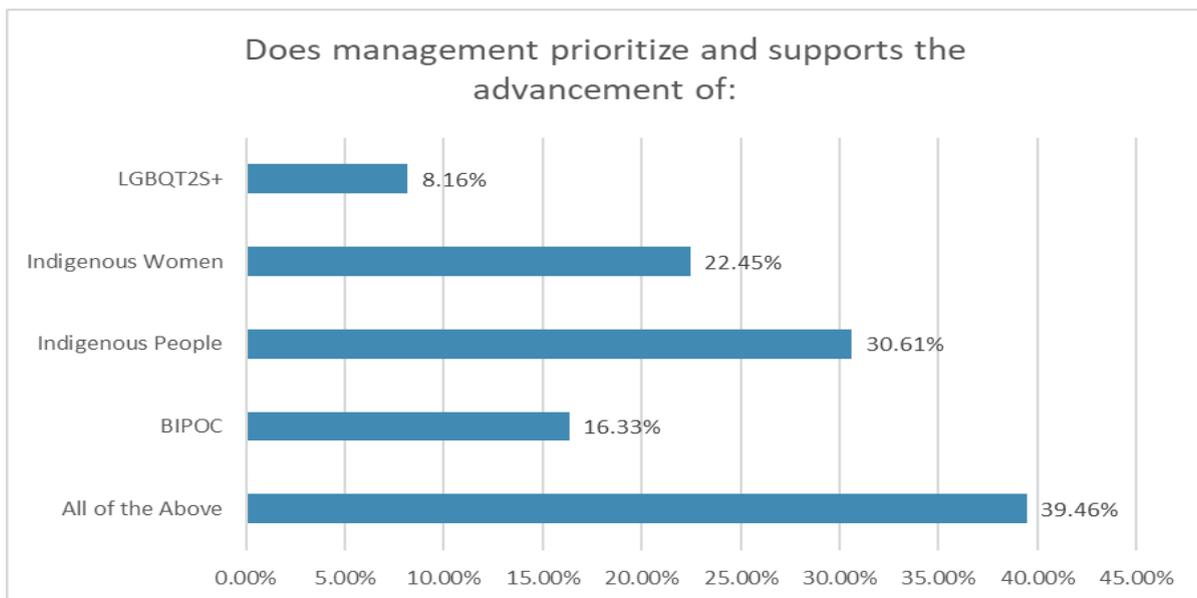
Note that only 21.19% of respondents indicated the opportunity for mentorship or job shadowing. This indicates the need for additional mentorship programs that are supported within the organizations themselves.

Further research is needed to better understand what the Indigenous women employees would like to have as support vs. what they are offered.

Diversity



Please Note that percentages will reflect values higher than 100% as participants could select more than one option.



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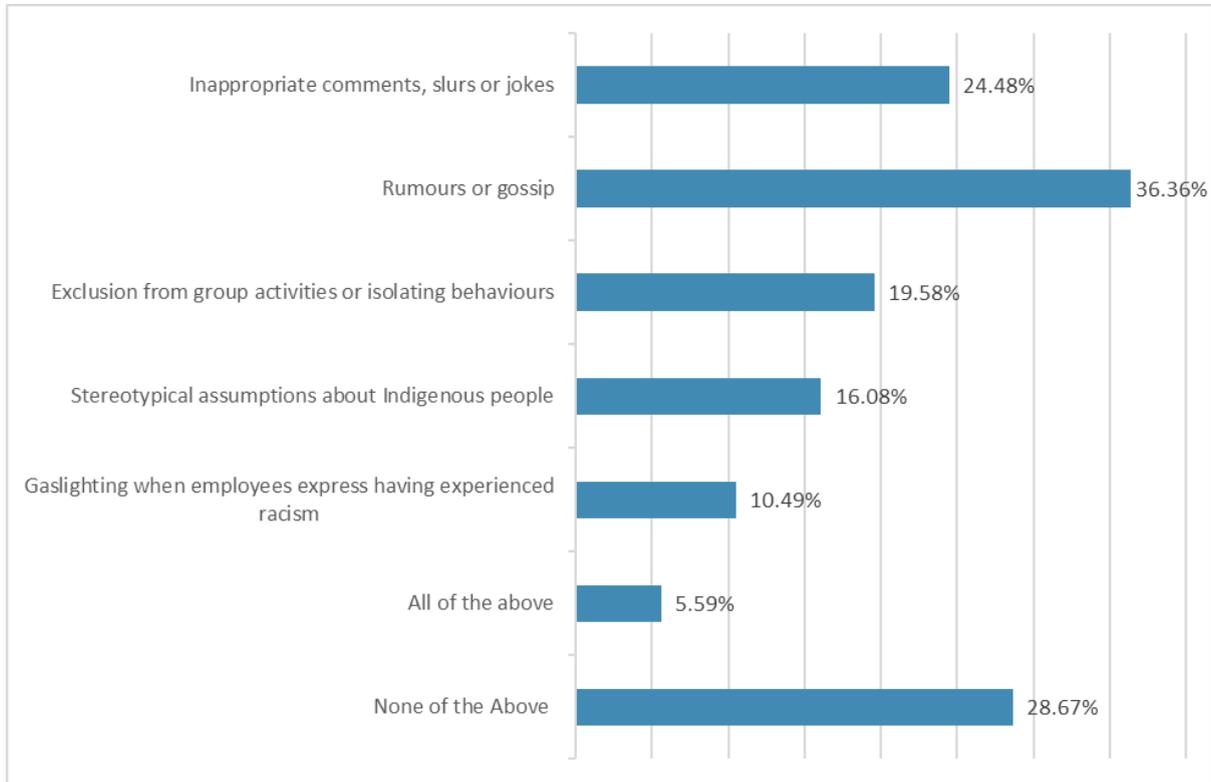
The above graphs demonstrate that most survey respondents believe that their sector organizations support diversity efforts or are developing them. We have to recognize that these numbers are not in the higher percentage levels yet and that there is definitely a need for additional work in the area of equity, diversity and inclusion in all sectors in Canada.

Personal experiences

55-67% of Indigenous professional women survey respondents indicated that the personal experiences felt by them in the workplace, reflect aspects of discomfort. Feeling out of place, not being able to bring their whole selves to work, and generally feeling like they don't fit in. When participants were asked if they had faced any obstacles in their career progression or ability to participate fully in work processes that are not experienced by all of their colleagues. Responses included spaces where racism, discrimination, white fragility, unsafe

workspaces, harassment, lack of advancement opportunities, wage disparity, micro-aggressions, lack of respect from male peers and leadership, etc.

Lastly, we wanted to share responses from this question. Have you experienced any unwelcome comments or conduct within the organization that you felt were offensive, embarrassing, or hurtful?



Please Note that percentages will reflect values higher than 100% as participants could select more than one option

Generally speaking, our previous data regarding personal experiences have indicated that most Indigenous women professionals have had positive experiences surrounding diversity, representation, and advancement opportunities - however, when asked 51% of respondents indicated that they have experienced discrimination based on one or more aspects of their background or identity. Furthermore, 65% of respondents indicated that any feedback they provided would be considered negative. Most importantly is the response to the following question, do any of your team members make you feel like you only got the position because you were a diversity hire? 53% replied YES. which speaks greatly to the absolute requirement for Reconciliation and Diversity, Equity and Inclusion education and training for white privilege employees.

Employer and Industry Stakeholders Survey

It is important to note that stakeholder participation was challenging due to the limited timeline. A project like this required one-to-one relationship building in each sector. Additionally, many organizations have certain approval requirements that need to go through a chain of command. For many organizations, there was just not enough time allotted for the necessary approvals to participate.

Also, note that due to unforeseen circumstances of the natural disaster (2021 floods), the Indigenous members of the research team were displaced and unable to fully contribute to this survey. In the future, these questions and approaches to understanding stakeholders need to be led by an Indigenous perspective, over a much longer period of time and some additional support.

Given the above circumstances, a larger portion (44%) of survey respondents were from the technology sector, only 17% from finance, 9% communications, 4% transport and 26% from other sectors and almost $\frac{3}{4}$ of these respondents had less than 500 employees. The stakeholder respondents were $\frac{1}{3}$ national and $\frac{1}{3}$ global in scale, with the remaining being regional or local in scale.

Our survey results indicate that nearly 35% of these stakeholder organizations had no Indigenous women employees and 43% only had 1 - 10 Indigenous women employees and that a majority of these Indigenous women were NOT in senior/management/board positions. More research is needed as comments suggested that this question was difficult to answer as the organizations do not track intersectionality.

The majority (81.82%) of stakeholders indicated that they have a Diversity and Inclusion policy and 13.64% indicated that one was currently being developed. However, of the 4.55% that do not have a Diversity and Inclusion policy, 0% are considering developing one. More research is needed to understand the context surrounding these statistics - are these companies Indigenous owned and operated?

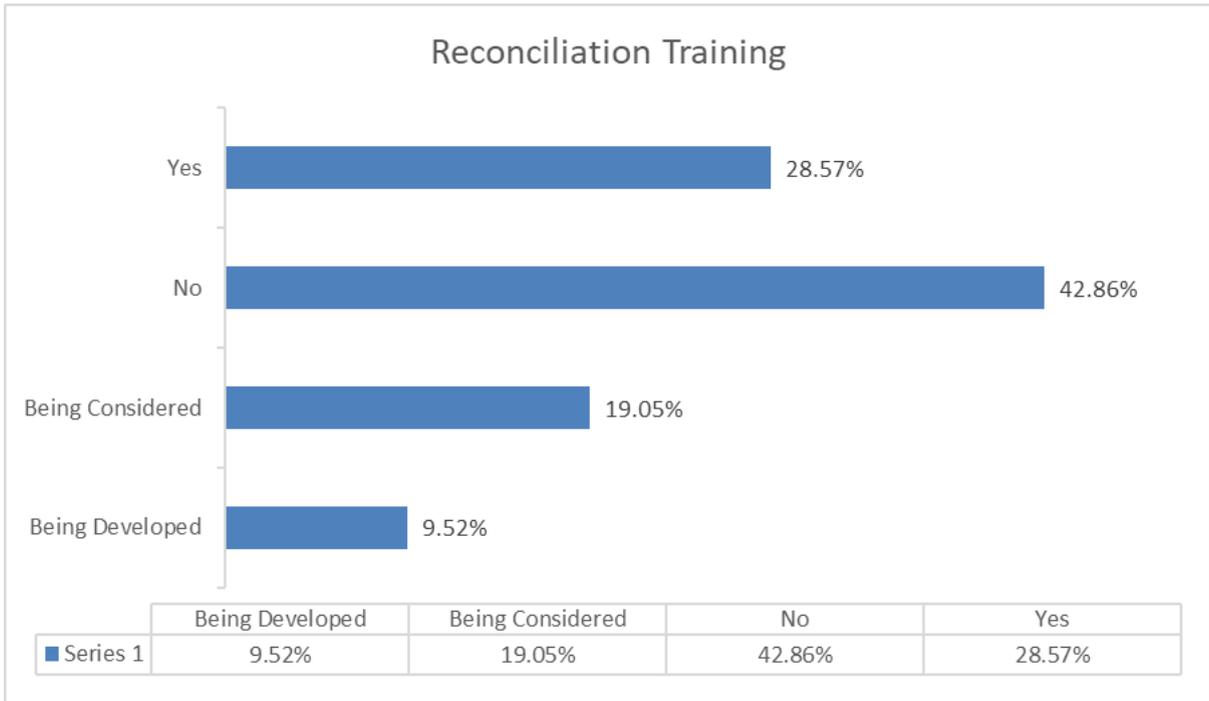
Of the nearly 82% of organizations that have a Diversity and Inclusion plan, 63.64% indicated that they also have a Diversity and Inclusion feedback plan. 72.73% of respondents indicated that the organization provides space to learn, understand, and practice reconciliation. More research is needed to understand what this looks like and how it is done.

Recruitment and Retention

Nearly 67% (66.67%) of organizations indicated that they specifically recruit Indigenous Women. More research is needed to better understand how and what recruitment efforts are made.

When asked, 33.33% of organizations indicated that they have a diversity quota for hiring Indigenous women, while 42.86% indicated that they did not. 19.05% indicated that a diversity quota was being developed or being considered. 4.79% of the organizations indicated that this was not applicable. More research is needed.

Nearly 62% (61.90%) of organizations indicated that they recruit outside of their normal channels for diverse candidates. Again, this will need more information to understand what these channels are.



When organizations were asked if their recruiters, managers, or owners received Reconciliation training to assist with hiring diversity, Nearly 43% (42.86%) responded no, 19.05% indicated that this was under consideration, and 9.52% noted that this was being developed. Only 28.57% indicated that recruiters, managers, or owners have had Reconciliation training to assist with hiring diversity.

This data suggests there is a large gap in understanding the importance of Reconciliation training. More research is needed to understand what channels the organizations are taking for Reconciliation training, and for the 43% who have not received training, what are the reasons behind that decision; lack of access? Lack of interest? Lack of understanding? Not sure where to start?

When organizations were asked if their onboarding process had been reviewed so that diverse candidates received the information they needed to succeed in their new role, 42.86% responded yes, 28.57% responded with no, and 28.58% indicated that this was being considered or developed.

94.44 % of organizations indicated that their interview process made diverse candidates feel welcome. 72.22% additionally indicated that the organizational space appeals to diverse candidates. With only 30% of organizations having Reconciliation training, I would be interested to know how they achieve this. In future work, we will need to ask more professional women employees similar questions to better understand if there is a considerable gap between the experience of diverse candidates and organizational opinion.

Does the organization provide space for learning, promoting and practicing cultural safety?

Yes - 61.11%

No - 5.56%

Being Considered - 5.56%

Being Developed - 22.22%

Need to learn more about cultural safety - 5.56%

Again, with only 30% of organizations having Reconciliation training how is cultural safety being defined and understood?

Survey participants were asked to rate the following statement on a scale of 1-5, (1 being strongly disagreed and 5 being strongly agreed):

- The organization is a safe and supportive workplace for BIPOC,
- Indigenous women or diverse individuals within the organization feel comfortable talking about issues or racism on my team,
- Indigenous women or diverse individuals within the organization know where to find resources to learn more about these issues.

The average rating for all questions was 4 indicating that organizations feel that they have provided a safe place for diverse candidates. What this data fails to tell us is how often the diverse candidates feel unsafe, what exactly the provided resources are, and how they ensure that these women feel safe to discuss such issues. When compared to the Professional Indigenous Women's survey, the Indigenous women indicated that they generally felt safe, supported, and had available resources. Both surveys failed to examine exactly how this is achieved.

According to our data, organizations generally feel they are doing well at providing safe spaces for;

- Learning, understanding, and practicing unconscious bias (Yes -70.59%)
- Acknowledging micro-aggressions, racism, discrimination, inequity/equality, and disparity (yes -64.71%)

What this data fails to do is acknowledge how this is done.

Additionally, 76.47% of organizations felt that they provide avenues of learning understanding, and recourse for unconscious bias, micro-aggressions, racism, discrimination, inequity/equality, and disparity. Whereas, 17.65% indicated that they were unsure, and 5.88% indicated they needed to learn more. The shortcomings of this question again pose the question, how?

The turnover rates for Indigenous women indicated by participating stakeholder respondents showed relatively low turnover rates for Indigenous or diverse women within their organization. However, just over 29% (29.41%) indicated that the turnover rate was high. More research is needed to fully understand the reasons behind the turnover rates. 64.71% of organizations did indicate that they complete exit interviews with diverse employees exiting the company - How does this data support change within the organization?

Advancement

Our survey asked stakeholders if they have the following:

Annual Personal Development plans	82.35%
Personal Development Plans with funding	41.18%
Career Ladders	47.06%
Skills Training	64.71%
Management Training	52.94%
Leadership Training	70.59%
Other	11.76%

Other replies included:

- paid and time off for professional development
- quarterly check-ins on development and engagement
- Industry and scientific training

This data shows how organizations are promoting advancement through training, specific planning, and support. For future work, more details are needed. How are these supports connected to diverse candidates specifically?

52.94% of participating organizations additionally indicated that they provide their employees with a promotion process with clear criteria outlined.

76.47% of participating organizations indicated that all employees have the same or equal opportunity for advancement. What's interesting is that 23.53% indicated that not all employees have equal opportunities for advancement. More research is needed to better understand why this is, and what is being done to rectify the situation.

Does the organization provide support with an internal women's group?

Yes - 64.71%

No - 17.65%

Being considered - 5.88%

Being developed - 11.76%

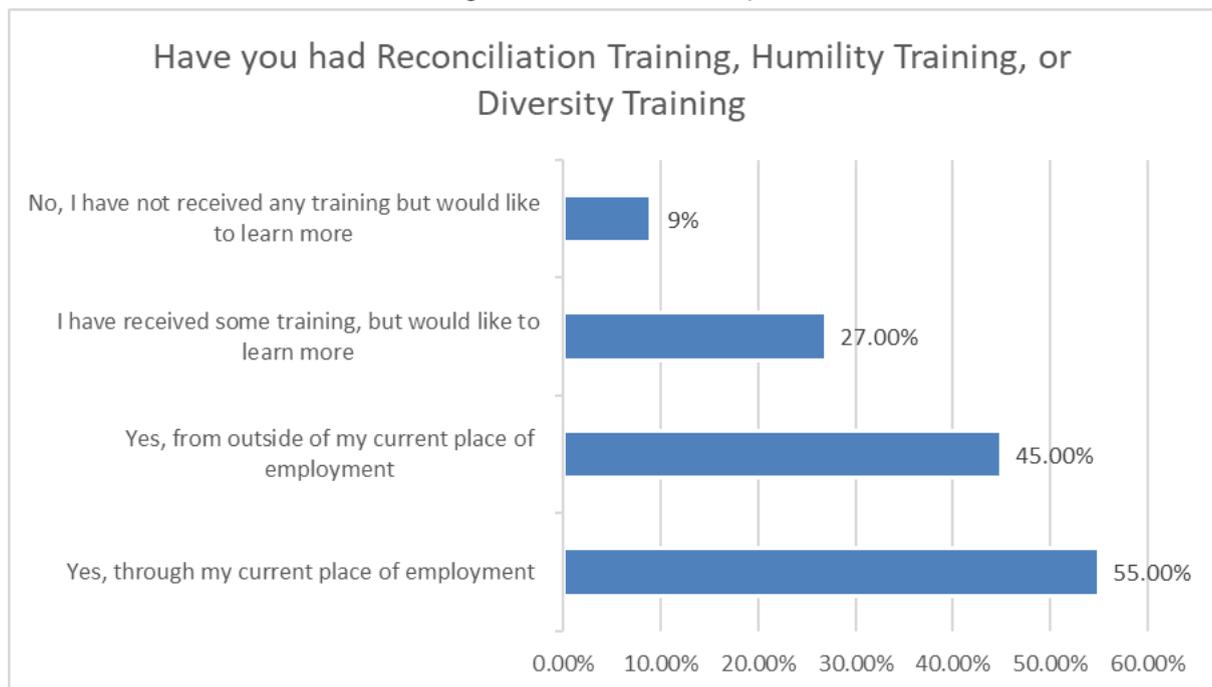
More research is needed to understand how many seats within these groups are filled with diverse candidates.

We questioned stakeholders about mentorship programs and our data shows that over half (58.82%) of the participating organizations offer mentorship programs that additionally support diversity and inclusion for their employees. More research is needed to better understand what kind of programs these are, how they are developed and how they exactly support diversity and inclusion.

While there is additional data collected, none of the questions were written specifically relating to Indigenous women and therefore does not serve this project's research.

Senior and Executive Leadership Survey

The Senior and Executive Leadership survey was intended to be short in length and capture a non-Indigenous perspective. The challenges to obtaining data on this survey were strictly tied to time constraints and the inability to distribute the survey within that very short period of time, as it was developed and promoted late in the project for a variety of reasons. Nevertheless, this is what we have gathered from our respondents:



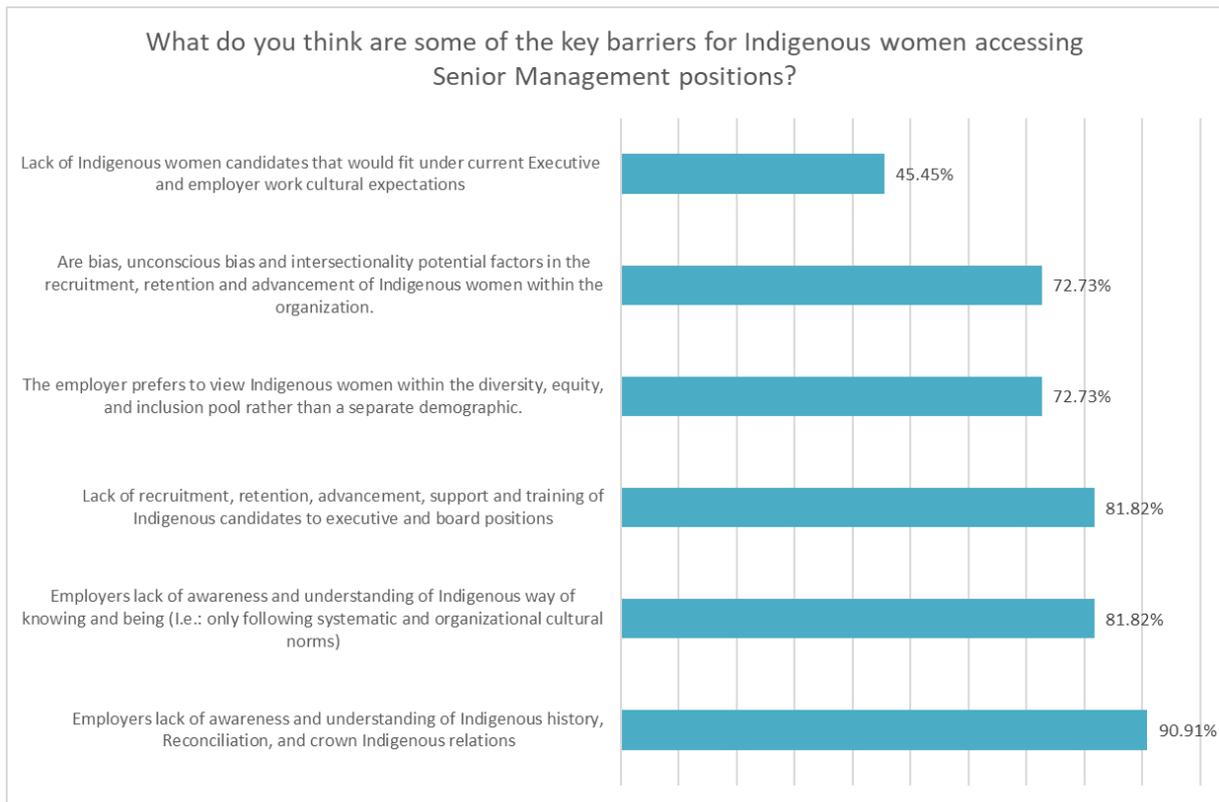
Barriers

When asked if respondents had a good understanding of the barriers that Indigenous women face, 54.55% selected “yes” and 45.45% selected the “need to learn more” option. Based on the previous data regarding Reconciliation, humility, and diversity training there is a gap between training and understanding.

It is interesting that while this specific survey is meant to better understand non-Indigenous perspectives, the data very clearly indicates that there is awareness of the problem. Note that 90.91% of respondents indicated that one of the major barriers is the employers' lack of awareness of Indigenous history, Reconciliation, and crown Indigenous relations. This data clearly indicated the need for Reconciliation training at all levels!

When survey participants were asked if they felt that their place of employment did a good job at engaging and supporting Indigenous women for increased retention and advancement, 36.36% responded with yes, 9.09% responded no, 9.09% responded with unsure, and 45.45% indicated that the company wanted to know more. Again, there is a clear gap between having the information and needing the information - Future research

projects should be aimed at creating space for the research and development of programs that educate.



Experience

We asked respondents to describe in their own words, how their employer could advance organizational work culture, leadership and values? Responses included themes like awareness of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion training, practices, processes, policy for recruitment, retention, and advancement, expanding outside of traditional or typical recruitment networks, a lot more education from Boards to front line staff, and that the right intention, values and purpose is set for DEI work. Only 1/3 of the respondents identified their organizational Board of Directors considers DEI in its membership, policies and decision making and over 1/2 stated that they needed to learn more, which strongly suggests that real action for education at this level of leadership is required.

After having completed these four surveys, what does this all tell us? Mostly what Indigenous women all over corporate Canada know already, that there is still a need for additional commitments and action plans towards Reconciliation and DEI education, policy development, implementation of plans to entrench transformative practices and processes that give way to increased participation of diverse groups within all levels of any organization, reduce many disparities, and allow for a variety of voices at the leadership tables.

Knowledge Review: What We Know

“Truth And Reconciliation Requires Strong Indigenous Female Leadership. There Is No Reconciliation Without Indigenous Women Leading The Path Forward.”

Rebecca Chartrand, Executive Director, Indigenous Strategy At Red River College

Indigenous Peoples of Canada

Indigenous Peoples comprise 4.9% of the total Canadian population, and include three groups:

First Nations: A diverse group of Indigenous Peoples who are not Inuit or Métis and who live in cities, towns, and within the more than 630 First Nations communities across Canada.

Inuit: Indigenous People who traditionally have lived in Inuit Nunangat, which is composed of the land, water, and ice in the Arctic region, including the Inuvialuit Settlement Region (in the Northern Yukon and the Northwestern parts of Northwest Territories), Nunavut, Nunavik (in Northern Québec), and Nunatsiavut (in Northern Labrador).

Métis: People descended from Indigenous and European ancestors who self-identify with the distinct Métis culture and ancestry and are accepted by the Métis Nation.

INDIGENOUS PEOPLES 1.67 Million Million People in Canada identified as an Indigenous Person	42.5% Population Growth in Canada Between 2006 & 2016
640,000 INDIGENOUS WOMEN = 4% of Indigenous Population In Canada	44.0% Were Under 25 In 2016

“As the fastest growing population in Canada, Indigenous Peoples and their participation in the workforce will have a positive influence on the future of work. Despite efforts to increase the inclusion of Indigenous workers in the Canadian workforce, labour market outcomes and employment rates for Indigenous Peoples lag significantly behind the non-Indigenous. Moreover, the disparity of labour market outcomes for Indigenous is expected to worsen with technological advances in automation, artificial intelligence and robotics.”

[Inclusive Futures Indigenous Engagement in Canada’s Workforce](#)

According to Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada, in the 2016 census, “more than 1.67 million people in Canada identifi[ed] themselves as an Aboriginal person. Aboriginal peoples are the fastest growing population in Canada – growing by 42.5% between 2006 and 2016; [and represent] the youngest population in Canada [with] about 44% were under the age of 25 in 2016.”⁷

⁷ [Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada](#)

According to Statistics Canada and Department of Justice, Indigenous women and girls make up four percent of the total Canadian female population, represent 10 percent of missing women and, on average, 16 percent of female homicide cases, a number that fluctuates and was as high as 21 percent in 2014.⁸

Despite these numbers and the pain they represent across the country, more Indigenous women are seeking higher education than ever before. In 2006, 47 percent of Indigenous women between 25 and 54 had completed post-secondary school, up from 41 percent in 2001, according to the Government of Canada.⁹

In 2016, 4.9% of all Canadian women and girls identified as Aboriginal (860,265).¹⁰ By 2031, the population of Aboriginal women may reach 1.1 million.¹¹

Indigenous Women on Boards

“Women Belong In All Places Where Decisions Are Being Made”

Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg

According to the newest [Directors Journal](#), published by the Institute of Corporate Directors, “Canada has begun to recognize long-standing injustices forced on Indigenous Populations. Now to advance the reconciliation process further, and to maximize the potential of the economy and society, it is essential businesses begin to add Indigenous perspectives to their Boardrooms”. The 2022 January/February Directors Journal is solely dedicated to the space of reconciliation and prosperity. This journal shares a not surprising but definitely staggering stat, reported by [Osler Hoskins & Harcourt LLP 2021’s Diversity Disclosures Practices Report](#), that **there are less than 0.5 Indigenous Peoples on Canadian Public Boards**. Additionally, the same report states that women hold only about 21% of these Canadian public company board seats, the number of Indigenous women holding any of these board seats would be nothing less of a miracle.

We have to recognize that Indigenous women all over Canada are board members within various sectors, non-profits, educational institutions, Indigenous and non-Indigenous organizations, development corporations, companies, etc. Many of the Indigenous women on this project’s Advisory Circle share their wisdom, knowledge, skills and brilliance on many boards, many times in a volunteer capacity. We also have to recognize that we don’t always stay on or join these boards, many times because we are the lone Indigenous person, only Indigenous women amongst an all white male board, are burdened with the tax of pan Indigeneity, Reconciliation and educator to many with no support whatsoever. Most boards do not understand, let alone relate or desire to incorporate an Indigenous worldview, lens, perspective, values or practices into that space.

We also have to recognize that Indigenous Peoples and women offer up not only their ancestry and history to these tables but so many other dimensions of themselves for the

⁸ [Statistics Canada](#) and [Justice Canada](#)

⁹ [Indigenous Women Leading the Way at Red River College](#)

¹⁰ Statistics Canada, “Aboriginal Population Profile, 2016 Census,” 2016 Census (2018)

¹¹ Anne Milan, “Female Population,” Women in Canada: A Gender-Based Statistics Report (Statistics Canada, March 30, 2015): p. 14.

benefit of not only the company but to the large community and Indigenous Peoples. Every public Canadian company should have diversity and inclusivity reflected on their boards, and the same should hold true for every Canadian business, industry and sector organization. Most importantly having Indigenous Peoples and women on their boards as their unique connection to culture, land, sustainability, environment, and so much more brings a critical lens to a world in flux, especially from the rise in disparities identified through this pandemic.

The key success factors to this journey is in the transformation of a company's inflection points on systemic colonial practices and policies, inequities and exclusion of Indigenous Peoples and women due to racism and discrimination in attraction, hiring, retention and most importantly advancement into Senior Management, Executive level, C-Suite and Board positions. This is going to require a lot of internal self-reflection and investment in Indigenous Peoples, communities, Nations, entrepreneurs and companies in every space as these issues are a constant for Indigenous women we heard from throughout this project. Most of which stems from the lack of education of company personnel and outright racism and discrimination towards them, either publicly, privately and behind closed doors.

The Directors Journal goes on to share that "For companies the consequences of doing nothing may be riskier than embracing reconciliation...and, whatever business you are in, you are going to be dealing with Indigenous Peoples at some point".¹² Having an Indigenous women's voice at the Boardroom table can shift and support a company's business approach. Moving thoughts from 'Indigenous Peoples being a problem', to being a part of the solution, values based thinking, greater insights, broader and deeper knowledge, and richer perspectives. More importantly, shifting a Corporate entity beyond just providing Indigenous communities Impact Benefit Agreements, where only employment, contract or procurement opportunities are provided to where they have and can become joint-venture partners in many industry sectors. And hopefully more and more corporate Canadian entities choose this economic reconciliation inclusionary process before they are mandated. And it just makes good business sense to bring that diversity into the Boardroom, which includes Indigenous women's voices as they bring their matriarchal voice and leadership to every space.

There isn't any significant data on Indigenous women on boards, but many can share their lived experiences to support the learning required to transform their participation on them.

What barriers are preventing Canadian organizations from creating inclusive workplaces?

"I didn't want to show when I was angry or that I disagreed with my peers," said Abotossaway, TD Bank Group's senior manager of diversity and inclusion and the president of the Indigenous Professional Association of Canada.

"I didn't have the same privilege as non-Indigenous people and I was aware of it."

Krystal Abotossaway¹³

¹² Page 28, [Directors Journal, A Publication of the Institute of Public Directors](#)

¹³ <https://www.ctvnews.ca/business/60-per-cent-of-indigenous-workers-feel-emotionally-unsafe-on-the-job-catalyst-survey-1.5303156>

This is a list of what we found out through this project, but this is not an exhaustive list, that highlights the on-going barriers faced by Indigenous Women in every sector/ workplace:

- Racism
- Discrimination
- Microaggressions
- Unconscious bias
- Unsafe in various ways
- Emotional tax
- Cultural tax
- Don't see themselves being reflected in many spaces
- Lack of support as they are typically the only Indigenous person in a space
- Having to leave parts of themselves out of the work environment to be palatable to the dominant environment

Racism

Indigenous Peoples in Canada experience racism in interpersonal, structural and sometimes violent ways. Racism is a social injustice based on falsely constructed, but deeply embedded, assumptions about people and their relative social value; it is often used to justify disparities in the distribution of resources.¹⁴ Racism manifests in multiple ways that allow some groups of people to see themselves as superior to others and to claim and maintain multiple forms of political, sociocultural, and economic power. Racism also intersects with, as well as reinforces, other ways in which human beings discriminate against each other, including socially constructed categories of gender, disability, ability, sexual orientation, class, and age.¹⁵

Racism must be understood as something that is lived; it is experienced by individuals, families, communities, and nations through interactions and structures of the everyday world. The truth is that the ideologies, social prejudices and words upon which race and racism are built do a great deal of damage. In fact, racism infects the lives of individuals and institutions - sometimes quietly, sometimes covertly, sometimes immediately, and sometimes over long periods of time, but always unjustly. Racism is an experience acutely felt by many Indigenous people in Canada.¹⁶

Expressions of racism include:

- Racialized stereotypes and stigma,
- Violent racism,
- Structural racism.

Ways racism is upheld in institutions:

- Anti-Indigenous racism and colonialism continue to manifest themselves to the disadvantage of Indigenous employees;

¹⁴ MacKinnon, C. (2004). Difference and dominance. In *Oppression, privilege & resistance*, L. Heldke & P. O'Connor (eds.), pp. 81-94. New York, NY: McGraw-Hill.

¹⁵ Heldke, L., & O'Connor, P. (2004). *Oppression, privilege and resistance: Theoretical perspective on racism, sexism and heterosexism*. New York, NY: McGraw-Hill.

¹⁶ <https://www.nccih.ca/docs/determinants/FS-Racism2-Racism-Impacts-EN.pdf>

- There is a degree of reluctance in senior executives to hold non-Indigenous members of management personally accountable for those actions which help sustain systemic and everyday racism in the workplace and such reluctance operates to the detriment of BIPOC and under-represented staff;
- Colonialist structures are affecting processes related to corporate governance, decision-making and expectations;
- Strategic planning and budgeting processes are systemic factors which have been supporting the maintenance of oppressive structures.

Racism experienced on an individual level does harm to one person, which in turn can affect one's family and friends; but racism experienced on a structural level goes beyond the individual. It informs institutions (such as schools, healthcare, and justice) that enact and perpetuate racism against an entire group of people.¹⁷ Racist ideologies have fostered a social hierarchy in which Indigenous Peoples, and more so Indigenous women, are denied many resources, even today, while dominant groups maintain authority and power. Personal and structural racism towards Indigenous individuals, communities and First Nations is justified by way of 'othering' Indigenous Peoples through socially constructed differences, such as media portraying them as 'protestors' and not guardians and delaying progress. In Canada, race-based colonizing powers, governed through the Indian Act, have attempted to socially isolate, culturally assimilate, and politically decimate Indigenous Peoples as a way of rationalizing colonialism and genocide. Legally sanctioned discrimination has immensely impeded opportunities for Indigenous Peoples and women in particular. to be self-determining, self-governing and generations of residential schools promoted racialized antagonism toward Indigenous Peoples in many spaces and actively offers a curriculum of assimilation into the body politic of Canada. The harm done to survivors, their children, grandchildren, great-grandchildren and extended families, communities, and potentially future generations is immeasurable.

Discrimination

“Racism/discrimination/stereotypes: this is one of the fundamental barriers to Indigenous people getting a job and remaining in the job, and it is directly related to the attitudes passed down since European settlers arrived in North America. There are a number of myths and misconceptions about Indigenous people and perceived special treatment that some non-Indigenous people still believe are truths.”

[8 Basic Barriers to Indigenous Employment](#)

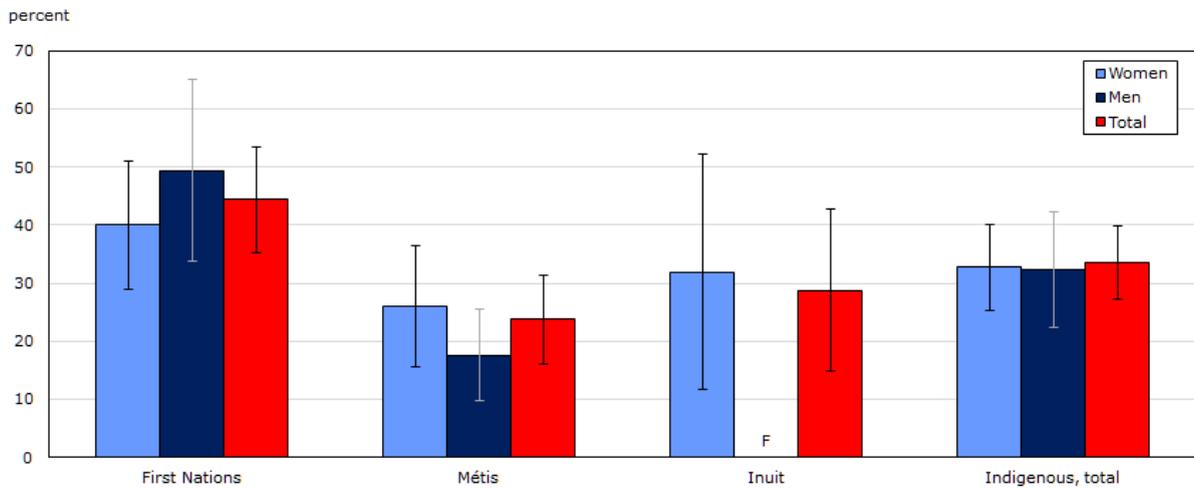
The definition of discrimination is the unjust or prejudicial treatment of different categories of people or things, especially on the grounds of race, age, or sex. This can be quite different from racism and needs to be addressed separately. Since it can be seen and felt differently by those experiencing it as well as those who witness it. Like racism, discrimination of Indigenous Peoples and women is prevalent both inside and outside of the workplace.

According to [Experiences of discrimination among the Black and Indigenous populations in Canada](#) survey completed by Statistics Canada in 2019 states that, “One in three Indigenous

¹⁷ Zong, L. (1994). Structural and psychological dimensions of racism: Towards an alternative perspective. *Canadian Ethnic Studies*, 26(3): 122-134.

people experienced discrimination in the past 5 years.” The following chart also comes from the same report:

Chart 3
Experiences of discrimination in the past 5 years, by Indigenous identity and gender, Canada, 2019



F too unreliable to be published

Note: Error bars represent the 95% confidence intervals and can be interpreted as such: if the survey were repeated many times, then 95% of the time (or 19 times out of 20), the interval would cover the true population value.

Source: Statistics Canada, General Social Survey on Canadians' Safety (Victimization), 2019.

Common reasons for the discrimination experienced by Indigenous people included ethnicity or culture (15%) and race or skin colour (14%). These proportions were approximately five times higher than among the non-Indigenous, non-visible minority population (2% and 3%, respectively). In addition to race and ethnicity, Indigenous people were also more likely to perceive discrimination or unfair treatment due to their physical appearance (14%), physical or mental disability (7%), and religion (5%) than were non-Indigenous, non-visible minority people (5%, 2%, and 2%, respectively).

Microaggressions

“60% of Indigenous Peoples report feeling emotionally unsafe at work.”

[Leading D&I orgs in Canada collaborate to address issue of microaggressions](#)

Racial microaggressions are incessant, subtle forms of racism that can be verbal, behavioural or environmental. Racial microaggressions have been described as “racial indignities.” Microaggressions may seem small or “micro,” but as incessant forms of racism, they can have big impacts on mental health, physical health and social life.¹⁸

Microaggressions are also harder to ‘prove’ and thus, not reported as much by those being affected by them in the workplace. “It can also be exhausting to decide what to call out and when or how to explain why something is harmful, especially when comments may be the result of ignorance rather than malice. This resource ([The Micropedia of Microaggressions](#)) explains the harm a person might unknowingly cause and includes real-life examples. We hope that it will help individuals to become more aware of bias, stereotypes and offensive comments and behaviours.”¹⁹

¹⁸

<https://news.umanitoba.ca/why-words-matter-the-negative-impacts-of-racial-microaggressions-on-indigenous-and-other-racialized-people/>

¹⁹ <https://www.thedrum.com/news/2021/12/08/leading-di-orgs-canada-collaborate-address-issue-microaggressions>

Many Indigenous people experience microaggressions on a regular basis. They are often statements that:

- repeat or affirm stereotypes about Indigenous Peoples or subtly demean them,
- position the dominant non-Indigenous culture as normal and the Indigenous culture as abnormal,
- express disapproval of or discomfort with Indigenous Peoples,
- assume all Indigenous Peoples are the same,
- minimize the existence of discrimination against Indigenous Peoples,
- deny the perpetrator's own bias toward Indigenous Peoples,
- minimize real conflict between the Indigenous Peoples and the dominant non-Indigenous culture.²⁰

The key to dealing with microaggressions is managing the situation in the moment, which requires appropriate and safe support for everyone involved. Overall, institutions need to challenge their respective spaces when it comes to racism, discrimination, unconscious/implicit bias, and 'othering' as well as all that we have discussed in this report and much more. **This begins with a journey of education, learning, unlearning, dismantling systemic issues, reflecting, healing, and inclusionary practices and processes for transformation.**

Unconscious/Implicit Bias

Unconscious bias is, simply put, when a person unknowingly believes in a stereotype about a group of people. It happens when a person has limited exposure to people who are different from them in their personal lives and in media representation. At one level, unconscious bias can be hard to assess given that it's, well, unconscious. But at another, it's easy to see how unconscious biases can lead to overt acts of discrimination.

Unconscious or conscious bias is prevalent in every aspect of our Canadian Society. Examples include [Banking while Brown](#) (racism and discrimination within banking institutions), Indigenous youth being targeted as they walk into any store or asked to leave the store, racial profiling in many spaces, lack of care of Indigenous Peoples within the health care system, asking the sole Indigenous person in a classroom or within the work environment, to speak on behalf of all Indigenous Peoples (pan indigeneity) and the list could go on for a very long time.

Cultural and Emotional Tax

..."emotional tax can be conquered if workplaces help to educate people about Indigenous history and correct misrepresentations that popular culture has generated."

Krystal Abotossaway²¹

Cultural Tax is the price paid by Indigenous employees within non-Indigenous organizations to support Indigenous specific projects, reconciliation and the like within the organization but not compensated for the additional time, effort, commitments and overall labour. Many Indigenous people are asked to bear this additional responsibility as they are the only Indigenous person with the non-Indigenous organization, thus the sole voice of Indigenous

²⁰ <https://opentextbc.ca/indigenizationfoundations/chapter/stereotypes/>

²¹ <https://www.ctvnews.ca/business/60-per-cent-of-indigenous-workers-feel-emotionally-unsafe-on-the-job-catalyst-survey-1.5303156>

People. Yet the non-Indigenous organization does not fully understand the weight of this responsibility on these employees.

Catalyst Research shares the following from their [Building Inclusion for Indigenous Peoples in Canadian Workplaces \(Report\)](#), “Indigenous Peoples pay an emotional tax at work and experience low levels of psychological safety”.

Emotional tax is the combination of being on guard to protect against bias because of race, ethnicity, and gender and experiencing the associated effects on well-being and ability to thrive at work.²² More than half of survey respondents (52%) said that they are regularly on guard to experiences of bias, a hallmark of emotional tax.²³ **Being on guard to bias includes feeling the need to prepare for possible insults or avoid certain situations where they anticipate bias may occur.** Indigenous women (67%) reported this experience much more commonly than Indigenous men (38%), reflecting the disproportionate discrimination and violence they experience compared to other groups.²⁴

Psychological Safety

Psychological safety—when employees feel they can make mistakes and take risks without being penalized—is an important characteristic of an inclusive and constructive workplace.²⁵ Yet 61% of Indigenous Peoples we surveyed indicated that they do not or seldom feel psychologically safe at work.²⁶ There was no significant difference between women and men.²⁷

The Prosperity Projects [2021 Annual Report Card on Gender Diversity and Leadership: The Zero Report](#) shares the following stats:

22 Travis, D. J. & Thorpe-Moscon, J. (2018). Day-to-day experiences of emotional tax among women and men of colour in the workplace. Catalyst.

23 Being on guard to bias is a three-item composite measured on

a 7-point scale where 1 = almost never, 4 = sometimes, and 7 = almost always. Being on guard is defined as being on guard sometimes (“4”) or more often, and percentages reported are based on this dichotomous split of the composite. Adapted from Hicken, M. T., Lee, H., Ailshire, J., Burgard, S. A., & Williams, D. R. (2013).

“Every shut eye, ain’t sleep”: The role of racism-related vigilance in racial/ethnic disparities in sleep difficulty. *Race and Social Problems*, 5(2), 100-112; Hicken, M. T., Lee, H., Morenoff, J., House, J. S., & Williams, D. R. (2014). Racial/ethnic disparities in hypertension prevalence: Reconsidering the role of chronic stress. *American Journal of Public Health*, 104(1), 117-123.

24 Indigenous overrepresentation in the criminal justice system. (2019). Department of Justice Canada; Reclaiming power and place: The final report of the National Inquiry into missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls. (2019).

25 For example, Travis, D. J., Shaffer, E., & Thorpe-Moscon, J. (2019). Getting real about inclusive leadership: Why change starts with you. Catalyst; Prime, J. & Salib, E.

R. (2015). The secret to inclusion in Australian workplaces: Psychological safety. Catalyst; Edmondson, A. (1999). Psychological safety and learning behavior in work teams. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 44, 350-383; Bradley, B. H., Postlethwaite, B. E., Klotz, A. C., & Hamdani, M. R. (2012). Reaping the benefits of task conflict in teams: The critical role of team psychological safety climate. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 97(1), 151-158; Hira, R., Peng, A. C., Carmeli, A., & Schaubroeck, J. M.

(2012). Linking leader inclusiveness to work unit performance: The importance of psychological safety and learning from failures. *The Leadership Quarterly*, 23, 107-117;

Kirkman, B. L., Cordery, J. L., Mathieu, J., Rosen, B., & Kukenberger, M. (2013). Global organizational communities of practice: The effects of national diversity, psychological safety, and media richness on community performance. *Human Relations*, 66(3), 333-362; Carmeli, A., Sheaffer, Z., Binyamin, G., Reiter-Palmon, R., & Shimoni, T. (2014). Transformational leadership and creative problem-solving: the mediating role of psychological safety and reflexivity. *The Journal of Creative Behavior*,

48(2), 113–135; Stoverink, A. C., Chiaburu, D. S., Li, N., & Zheng, X. (2017). Supporting team citizenship: The influence of team social resources on team-level affiliation-oriented and challenge-oriented behavior. *Human Resource Management Journal*, 28(2) 1-15.

26 Psychological safety is a four-item composite measured on a 5-point scale where 1 = never, 2 = rarely, 3 = sometimes, 4 = often, and 5 = always. Being psychologically safe is defined as being psychologically safe at least often (4 on the scale), and percentages reported are based on this dichotomous split of the composite.

27 There is no significant gender difference in likelihood of being psychologically safe, $\chi^2(1) = 0.13, p > .10$. A t-test confirms that there is no relationship with the continuous variable either; there is no difference between women and men on psychological safety, $t(81) = -.36, p > .70$.



Lack of Support

Indigenous women are being headhunted for management positions within public institutions but are not being compensated financially to the peer equivalent of that position, which doesn't align with equity or reconciliation plans instilled within these institutions. They are being asked to support a role without the appropriate level of pay and also have to typically support Indigenous specific change-work which requires a heap of skills sets, a lot of spirit as this work is exhausting as well as carrying and sharing their teachings, relations, and lived experience (which usually includes on-going trauma) and very little to no mental health supports or other additional capacities, such as a team.

Which leads to the main area of support for Indigenous women in the workplace, more specifically, the lack thereof. As mentioned, many women are facing and dealing with racism, discrimination, bias, microaggressions, cultural and emotional tax, feeling unsafe and feeling like they have to eliminate parts of themselves to be palatable within their work environment. This is all in addition to external spaces where they are also facing and dealing with these on-going same societal challenges. But more importantly, are expected to just suck it up as it relates to their indigeneity and patriarchy, such as:

- Bearing witness to ongoing trauma of Murder and Missing Women and Girls (almost every Indigenous family has or is being touched by this in some way)
- Bearing witness to ongoing children's graves being identified at former residential schools (EVERY Indigenous family is touched by this trauma)
- Holding space for Reconciliation efforts in some form or fashion
- Being a water protector, land defender, upholding Indigenous Title and Rights, etc.
- Being an elected councillor, trustee, advisory or board member for one of their community entities
- Community and Cultural responsibilities
- Supporting family (both immediate and extended) in many spaces such as elder care, child care, grief and loss, etc.
- Being a grandmother, mother, daughter, auntie, sister, cousin, friend are all very important roles that are taken seriously for the well-being of all

In short, the workplace is generally not a safe space to be all of these things and is definitely not well supported in terms of health services, education to reduce on-going systemic issues, lack of appropriate policies and processes to support them to challenge negative behaviours, and lack of other resources to support Indigenous specific change-work that is often expected from them in addition to fulfilling their regular work responsibilities.

Cannot Bring Whole Selves to Work

“Indigenous workers often feel torn between being true to themselves and ignoring colleagues' unconscious biases, so they can seem amenable to corporate culture”.

Tabatha Bull²⁸

This section is very much related to the section above. Here we are going to address the space of Indigenous Peoples and women not being able to bring themselves into their work space. Meaning, there is no room for them to be their true and pure selves within the work environment due to the fear of having to face and deal with the impacts that will more than likely arise, such as racist and discriminatory behaviors, microaggressions, or bias from peers and leadership. Which just makes them feel even more unsafe than they already feel and creates increased psychological safety issues that they are not getting enough support for to address them sufficiently.

Note these barriers are directly related to Indigenous women in the workforce. We have to acknowledge the larger issues from the finding in the Missing and Murder Indigenous Women and Girls report and 231 Calls to Justice, that require immediate attention.

Our Findings: What We Found

Barriers for Indigenous workers, in particular Indigenous Women, will continue, unless action is taken

Indigenous and non-Indigenous Peoples do not share the same labour market outcomes. In 2019, the unemployment rate for the Indigenous Peoples was 10.1 percent, versus 5.5 percent for others. An examination of unemployment data by region between 2015 and 2019 reveals striking results where Indigenous rates of unemployment are consistently higher — in many cases double — that of non-Indigenous peoples. There are several explanations for the disparity. Two of the most prevalent include the need to close the skills and experience gap between Indigenous candidates and workforce vacancies, and the historic and systemic discrimination toward Indigenous Peoples in the labour force.²⁹

Education, Skills & Experience Gap of Indigenous Peoples

“Gaps in Indigenous education and skills training harm Indigenous business and overall economic growth. Better data are needed to address the problem”.

[Filling Canada's Indigenous skills gap would be an economic boon](#)

²⁸ <https://www.ctvnews.ca/business/60-per-cent-of-indigenous-workers-feel-emotionally-unsafe-on-the-job-catalyst-survey-1.5303156>

²⁹ Employment and Social Development Canada. 2019b

“Over the course of 10 years (between 2016 and 2026), 350,000 Indigenous youth will turn 15”.³⁰ This is a huge milestone for any young person, but continues to be a struggle for many Indigenous Peoples in Canada to obtain the education, skills and training necessary to be equitably and meaningfully participate in the workforce. There are many facets to understanding this challenge for so many youth, but do include but not limited to:

- Chronic under-funding of quality on-reserve education and the lack of teachers in rural and remote communities, especially special education teachers, assistants and other specialty trained professionals to support these young learners.
- Lack of assessments of Indigenous children for learning differences, mental health, grief and trauma, and no supports (funding, trained professionals, etc.) within the education system to support these challenges for these children and youth.
- Lack of reliable or no internet access, or it is very expensive for families to have satellite access, as well as access to the technology they need to even access the internet. The pandemic has fully demonstrated the lack of access to both over the past two years.
- A myriad of corollary effects of growing up in households disproportionately impacted by poverty, addictions, trauma, grief and generational impacts of genocide, the resevation system, housing, food security, oppression through the Indian Act and other policies and practices of government, 60s scoop, child welfare system and residential schools. And that is only a short list of the impacts on Indigenous People in Canada.

All of the above factors impact Indigenous children and youths ability to access quality education. However, we have to also question, if the current education system is an appropriate space for Indigenous learners? Many Indigenous children thrive with land based learning activities, through visual, audio and sensory learning techniques and spaces and in less theory and more practical life based learning ways. Not to say that many Indigenous youth aren't succeeding within the current education system, but according to the limited data and lived experiences of many Indigenous families, the system continues to fail them in many ways.

Between 2006 and 2016, the Indigenous population grew at four times the rate of the non-Indigenous population, though Indigenous peoples experience poorer socio-economic outcomes, higher unemployment rates and lower levels of education. Indigenous peoples cite a lack of jobs, education, training, skills and prior work experience as reasons for unemployment.

³⁰ [Mapping the Landscape: Indigenous skills training and jobs in Canada](#)



[Image Credit](#)

This is not only a supply-side issue, however — even at higher numeracy and literacy skill levels, First Nations people have a significantly lower probability of employment (75 percent) than Métis (87 percent) or non-Indigenous (90 percent). Even lower-skilled non-Indigenous people have a higher probability of employment than First Nations people (87 percent). Workplace bullying, racism and discrimination are some casues for Indigenous peoples to leave employment.

A 2014 study suggests that First Nations women fare worse than men due to discrimination based on the intersection of race, ethnicity and gender. Women are more likely to head single-parent households, and need upskilling support through the provision of accessible transport options and affordable childcare services. Social inequality is also increasing in Indigenous communities. Basic inequities such as inaccessibility of sewage treatment and water sanitation facilities, and crowded and poorly built housing on reserves create chronic levels of poor health. As mentioend previously, Indigenous women and girls are at higher risk for abduction, abuse, violence, and death at the hands of someone else, as shared in the Murder and Missing Women and Girls 2019 report which called for 231 Calls to Justice. The report also states that persistent and deliberate human and Indigenous rights violations and abuses are the root cause behind Canada's staggering rates of violence against Indigenous women, girls and 2SLGBTQQIA people.

Other studies have shown that the likelihood of success increases when training is culturally appropriate, engaging in land-based training and including wrap-around support. Meanwhile, current federal skills and training programs are flawed: one independent study found that data was not collected on program success, rendering the most effective programs no more likely to be supported or renewed than the least.

We also need clarity on what labour market data is most useful to Indigenous business operators, policy makers, and workers. Some studies say that Indigenous community organizers lack enough Indigenous labour market data to plan programs and services. Others reach opposite conclusions, citing a wealth of Indigenous labour market information. Evidence-driven policy requires good data, and many recommend on-going investment in understanding the nature of Indigenous labour market data gaps.

Given the appropriate data and information, but more importantly, using an Indigenous worldview, lens, ways of knowing and being to create educational programs, training, skills and training development programs will positively impact education, skills and employability gaps for Indigenous Peoples. Harnessing culture, language, land based teachings, spirituality, and the like in all spaces, will enhance every Indigenous person's experience in any learning environment. But just as important to have Canadian settlers educate themselves to become positive and impactful allies in their personal and professional lives.

Despite the challenges presented by the underemployment of skilled Indigenous workers and by a lack of baseline essential skills amongst Indigenous youth and adults, there are many bright spots on the horizon. Indigenous businesses are growing and creating employment, and self-employment and entrepreneurship are both increasing.

Historic and systemic discrimination towards Indigenous Peoples in the Canadian labour force

“The road we travel is equal in importance to the destination we seek. There are no shortcuts. When it comes to Truth & Reconciliation we are forced to go the distance.”

Senator Murray Sinclair

There are numerous studies that demonstrate the above challenges against Indigenous Peoples in the Canadian workplace, but very little about Indigenous Women specifically and more needs to be conducted for both.

“Canada’s historical mistreatment of Indigenous people has, both deliberately and inadvertently, created generations of challenges that make it difficult for Indigenous people to find and keep meaningful employment. Many of the underlying barriers that Indigenous people face, such as... stereotypes and racism, can affect people’s physical and emotional health... Most employers surveyed did not think biases of current staff were significant barriers to Indigenous recruitment; however, the third most common reason Indigenous employees voluntarily left an organization was ‘current employees’ lack of awareness of Indigenous culture’. This reflects the fact that there is, at times, a clear disconnect between the perceptions of employers and the experiences of employees.”³¹

We believe we have shared enough in this area already and do not need to belabour it. But we need to question, given what we now know, what can you do about it? We will explore this in the action guide section of this report.

³¹ Ng, E.S., and Gagnon, S. 2020. Employment gaps and underemployment for racialized groups and immigrants in Canada: Current findings and future directions.

Lack of Data

According to the [OECD's Linking Indigenous Communities to Regional Development in Canada](#), "the quality and reliability of data related to the Indigenous population is generally high in Canada," however, "despite this, data gaps remain and the need for improved data is well recognised." In almost every report, article, document, resource read during this project, data was generally lacking and there is much room for not just data collection for Indigenous Peoples but more specifically Indigenous women, LGBTQIA2S+, youth, Indigenous women entrepreneurs and business owners, etc. Sectors should collaborate with Statistics Canada, Indigenous organizations, etc. to create appropriate data collection efforts where this work can be Indigenous led, where capacities can be built within Indigenous peoples, where Indigenous values, processes and practices can be at the helm of this work, and where data sovereignty is priority.

Retention of Indigenous Peoples and Women

Since the pandemic began, Statistics Canada has made additional data available for racialized Canadians and Indigenous peoples. Previously, the Labour Force Strategy (LFS) did not collect data on the labour market experience of racialized workers: the only data that was available was from the census, which is produced every five years and, therefore, made it difficult to track labour market impacts on racialized people in real time. While data on the off-reserve Indigenous labour market experience had been collected in the LFS prior to the pandemic, more detailed data is now being made available. Unfortunately, as a result of data availability and small sample sizes, they do not have an immediate pre-pandemic comparator to understand the impact of COVID-19 on BIPOC or other racialized groups. LFS data that was used to analyze labour market impacts on racialized Canadians was made available starting in August 2020. Using the average of the period from August to December 2020 to compare unemployment rates for Black, other racialized and white Canadians and Indigenous Peoples. Using the 2016 census for pre-pandemic comparators for Black, other racialized and white Canadians (due to data limitations, the census data for white people includes Indigenous peoples). We used the 2019 annual averages for pre-pandemic comparators for Indigenous peoples.³²

Indigenous people are not recovering from loss of employment during the COVID-19 pandemic as well as non-Indigenous Canadians, according to new data from Statistics Canada.³³

Sectors and employers have to engage in reflection on why Indigenous Peoples and other people of colour were disproportionately affected by loss of employment throughout the pandemic. This is also a bigger question to be reflected upon in general in all sectors and with all employers wanting diverse talent serving the Canadian economy.

³² <https://monitormag.ca/articles/racialized-and-indigenous-workers-pandemic-job-loss>

³³

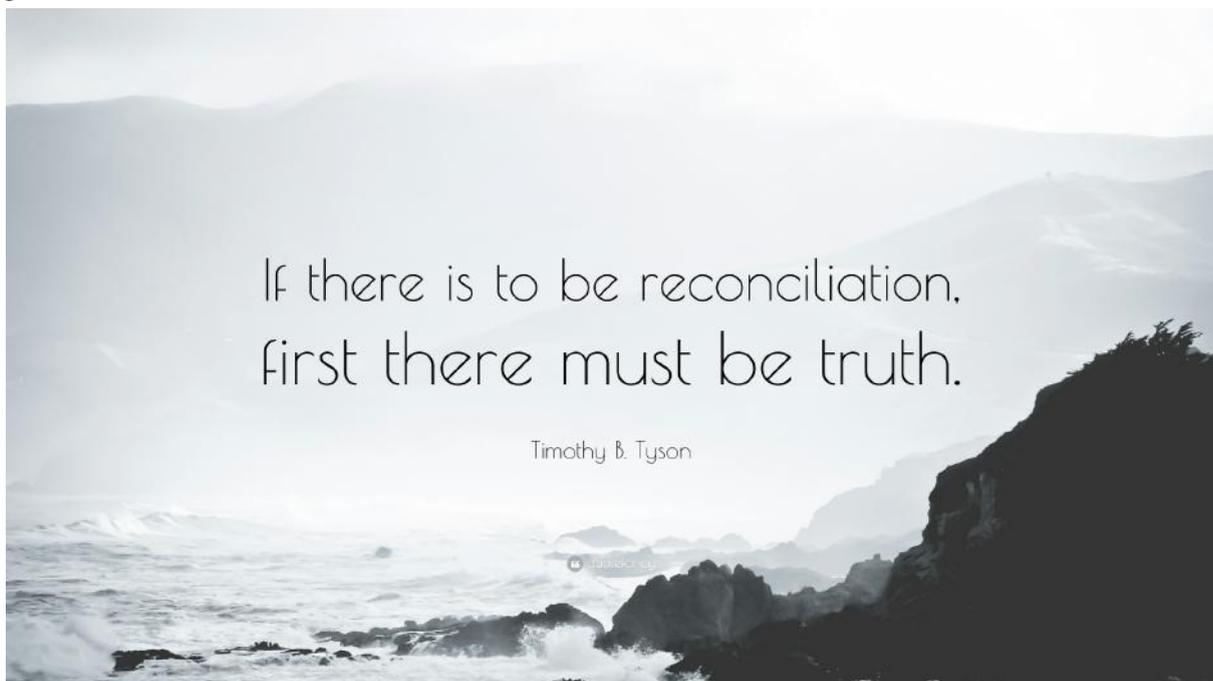
<https://www.ctvnews.ca/health/coronavirus/economic-recovery-during-pandemic-slower-for-indigenous-people-statistics-canada-1.5171030>

Now What?

Now that we have highlighted many issues, challenges, barriers, spaces for reflection, curiosity, and need for transformation in all spaces, now what? The journey begins with education, as mentioned many times throughout this report. Which means both learning what you may and do not know and unlearning what you know where colonial, white privilege and dominant patriarchal systems hinder equity and inclusion for Indigenous women thriving in the Canadian workplace. Dismantling is required in many of these spaces and transforming them with new values, processes and practices.

Education

Action through education requires both learning and unlearning. Every Canadian is responsible and accountable to their journey in reconciliation. Lauren Kelly, Director of Sector Transformation with the First Nations Technology Council, kept reminding all that **“Learning is Action”**. You are doing something through this part of the journey. Indigenous Peoples are not the only ones responsible for Reconciliation, they are only part of it because it is needed and required to repair the historical and ongoing atrocities against them. Nor is it just government responsibility, this a human responsibility as we are living together in a country and if we do not, then it will be left as a legacy to our children and future generations.



Learning includes hearing the “Truth” before the reconciliation. They do not go without each other. How can you reconcile if you don’t know why you are doing it? The truth is going to be hard to hear, uncomfortable, raw, and challenge you in ways that are not going to be easy. However, we can’t heal what we do not acknowledge. There has to be spaces created for learning within the workplace, support provided to move through it, so that people can heal, forgive, and process what comes up from it.

Unlearning also has to happen. Unlearning colonial ways of being and doing to create spaces for Indigenous ways of knowing and being into the workspace to ensure inclusion and equity for the First Peoples of this country. The land in which you work, live and play, where and how your wealth and privilege comes from, is Indigenous land and was built through very destructive ways that still hinders Indigenous Nations and Peoples from Coast to Coast.

There are a multitude of spaces to do this learning, however, knowledge mobilization, through a dedicated reconciliation plan, is the key to beginning the educational journey, whereupon relationships with Indigenous Peoples, communities and Nations can be built.

Meaningful Engagement with Indigenous Peoples & Women

A recent report of more than 500 medium and large companies surveyed in Canada found only one in four had strategies in place to engage Indigenous communities.

[Blackman, J. 2017. Researching Indigenous partnerships: An Assessment of Corporate-Indigenous Relations. R.A. Malatest & Associates. 29 Ibid.](#)

Without a funded strategy that is linked to changing internal policies and procedures, organizations will not change. With this key component in place, organizations can then turn to determining which factors can make their workplaces inclusive and thriving spaces for Indigenous Peoples.



Also, work in collaboration with First Nations led local, regional and national organizations to ensure you are working in right relationship with Indigenous Peoples and women to achieve meaningful engagement. All forms of engagement are required, and they generally need to be decolonized to create a safe space (culturally, mentally, emotionally and spiritually) for sharing and not in ways that you are used to. You need to respect data sovereignty over what is being gathered also, which can be achieved through relationship building and partnership with respective Indigenous organizations. One also has to look outside of their usual channels to build these relationships and embark on a journey that is

unknown, uncomfortable yet possible and doable when you lay a path built on foundational Indigenous ways of being and knowing.

Inclusion

How an Indigenous person and women is treated in the workplace is crucial to recruitment and retention. And if an organization has not done any Truth and Reconciliation work, or

expects their one and only Indigenous employee to carry this responsibility, then the organization will constantly face an uphill battle seeking and keeping Indigenous talent.

Firstly, the key question that needs to be truly reflected by any organization, is do Indigenous Peoples and Indigenous women see themselves meaningful and substantively reflected in the sector? Secondly, what does a sector and organization need to shift systemically and within their policies and practices to attract Indigenous Peoples and Women? Thirdly, an organization has to be self aware of its intentionality in hiring Indigenous Peoples and Women, as the emotional and cultural tax is a true and real burden on every Indigenous employee. This can take away from achieving the work required of them or add too much work to their load because they are asked to manage the “Indigenous” project, program, initiative, without any additional support, compensation or time. They become the ‘end all and be all’ of everything Indigenous within the organization and this isn’t something their non-Indigenous counterpart is asked to take on. Fourthly, does the sector or organization provide access to Indigenous Peoples and Women equally as their non-Indigenous counterparts, are Indigenous People and Women encouraged and supported to up-skilling, training and educational opportunities or mentored to increase capacity and knowledge to increase advancement opportunities?

In addition, counting how many Indigenous employees you have isn’t Reconciliation. True Reconciliation is understanding their experience in the workplace, learning the impacts of this experience on their happiness, safety, and productiveness, and being able to shift, adapt, support and ultimately change in many ways to provide the positive spaces and advancement opportunities for them. Meaningful Reconciliation, at every leadership level requires learning, deep listening, and uncomfortableness of the “Truth” about Canada’s history with Indigenous Peoples, on-going oppression through the Indian Act, and the Federal Government’s continued lack of support, in all ways, to provide self-determination for Indigenous Peoples.

Inclusion is not just about attraction, it also includes retention and advancement through all of the ways we have shared throughout this report.

Cultural Awareness, Safety, Humility, and Competence

Given that there are about 1.7 million Indigenous Peoples in Canada, composed of First Nations, Métis and Inuit representing over 630 Nations, cultures, histories and traditions — there is no “pan-Indigenous” approach to learning about Indigenous communities. Thus, organizations that commit to engaging in Indigenous cultural competency training are more likely to be exposed to Indigenous Peoples’ respective worldviews and experiences of colonialism, which allows for greater opportunity to create shared understanding within the workplace. However, it is recognized that this is not void of constraints, and reaching out to different Nations, communities and urban Indigenous peoples to learn about their needs as Indigenous employees and their specific cultural practices is a time-consuming and potentially resource-intensive practice. Hence, organizations need to be practical about how they introduce Indigenous history, culture and traditions into their workplace.

The concept of cultural safety grew from concerns about the health status of Māori peoples, who are the Indigenous people of New Zealand, and has been more broadly taken up in

Canada since 2002. Cultural safety is more than being aware of other cultures and respecting their people. It is an environment where people of diverse cultural and ethnic backgrounds can feel respected and safe —spiritually, socially, emotionally, and physically — from discrimination and denial of their identity and needs.³⁴



There is no such thing as a 'culturally safe provider'. Cultural safety is a perspective that is observed and experienced by the individual accessing services. That person alone determines whether services offered are culturally safe.³⁵

But steps can be taken to provide safer spaces for all employees and stakeholders within an entity. Especially for Indigenous Peoples, and more specifically Indigenous Women.

Recognize the central importance of

Indigenous knowledge and practices.

Many policies and programs in their current form explicitly undermine Indigenous knowledge and practices. This occurs in many ways, related to such things as: content, structure, language, underlying values and assumptions, hiring practices, and more. In order for system-level change to be meaningful and culturally safe, Indigenous knowledge and practices need to be centered at the outset. Only with this recognition will the remaining recommendations have a substantial impact.

Understand, and commit to cultural safety – personally and organizationally.

Cultural safety is an outcome of ongoing and organization-wide commitments to doing things differently. Stepping stones to cultural safety include:

Cultural humility: cultural humility has a number of important components, such as self-reflection, willingness to learn from Indigenous staff, relationship building, and the concept of lifelong learning.

Critical reflection: includes more than becoming culturally aware or practising tolerance, it is the ability to identify and challenge one's own cultural assumptions, values, and beliefs.

Cultural awareness: the outcome of this step would be the ability to identify both Western and Aboriginal knowledge and find ways to integrate them into practice. This step influences cultural sensitivity because it identifies what culture means from each perspective.

³⁴ <https://vpfo.ubc.ca/2021/04/how-do-we-foster-cultural-safety-in-the-workplace/>

³⁵ <https://ca.linkedin.com/in/len-pierre-2b40b74a> (Len Pierre Consulting)

Cultural sensitivity: acknowledge cultural world views and modify conventional approaches and practices to suit the cultural worldviews.

Cultural competence: this step includes understanding history, context, and power relations – including the impacts of historical trauma. It involves getting to know the culture of clients, and centering knowledge and practices that are important to them. It centers self-determination, supports cultural revitalization, and moves towards decolonization.

Reciprocity: is about building the relationships between the client, health care practitioner, family, and community.” These relationships need to be meaningfully invested in (with time, human, and financial resources), and should occur at a community level.

Cultural safety can only begin at this point. It takes time and commitment to create cultural safety in the workplace. As individuals, reflecting on your own practice is a critical aspect of achieving cultural safety in the workplace.

Recommendations

We have outlined below eight recommendations:

- 1) Education and unlearning colonial ways of doing and being for leadership, board, management, etc. within sectors (knowledge mobilization)
- 2) Dismantling and transforming systemic issues and challenges within sectors and organizations
- 3) Appropriate research and data collection to support Indigenous equity and inclusion
- 4) Align attraction practices with Indigenous employment viewpoints
- 5) Ensure additional educational opportunities, mentorship, training and skills development and other sources of support are provided to increase Indigenous retention and advancement within the sector and organization
- 6) Commit to Reconciliation, through a Reconciliation Plan and dedicated actions over the short, medium and long term
- 7) Build a reciprocal relationship with Indigenous entities to collaborate on meaningful engagement and partnership on all of the above
- 8) Support Indigenous persons and organizations to provide opportunities for Indigenous youth and young adults to seek careers in all sectors (e.g. awareness, scholarships, internships, bridging programs, summer camps, etc.)

Conclusion

“FOR INDIGENOUS PEOPLE IN CANADA, life can be hard. There is a long list of socio-economic indicators that testify to that fact. In our everyday experiences, there can be little space to breathe amid the cascading indignities, to see hope in movement towards change here and there. But, they are often short lived, and punctuated by moments in our

collective history that reveal how hollow whatever gesture towards transformation is on offer”.

[Banking While Brown: Indigenous People And Structural Racism In Canada](#)

We have spoken about how Indigenous Peoples are one key to Canada’s productivity and stronger Canadian economy, through education, employment, entrepreneurship, business development and advancement in all sectors and workplaces. Since they are the fastest growing population in Canada and generally an untapped market. But this requires everyone to dismantle so much in our current economic ways of being. Our systems are not serving anyone anymore and require meaningful transformation through engagement with Indigenous ways of knowing and being. Once again, there is no “pan Indigenous” or “one-size fits all” prescribed way to achieve this, as it will be in a reciprocal relationship with local First Nations and local urban Indigenous populations, who each have their own culture and language based in place (tied to the land) that directly influences their own ways of knowing and being.

Issues and Constraints to inclusion of Indigenous peoples and women in your sector include but are not constrained to the following:

- Indigenous women not seeing themselves reflected within the sector (mentorship)
- Lack of awareness, promotion and willingness to step into non-traditional (for them as Indigenous women) sectors where their values and social impact needs can be met, where they will have a voice, be heard, be supported, and meaningfully contribute to change and transformation for their people, etc.
- Barriers such as educational, essential skills, training and skills development, elder and child-care responsibilities, wanting to be closer to home and community which is generally rural and remote
- Racism
- Discrimination
- Microaggressions
- Unconscious/implicit bias
- Unsafe in various ways within the workplace
- Emotional tax
- Cultural tax
- Lack of support as they are typically the only Indigenous person in a space, having to be sole ‘educator’ to all things Indigenous
- Having to leave parts of themselves out of the work environment to be palatable to the dominant environment

We are not capturing all of the issues and constraints but this rounds out what we learnt through this project. So now that we know this, what needs to be done about it? Nothing changes without additional education and action.

Building a new foundation

Innovation is critical if Canada is to improve its productivity advantage. small, medium and large businesses must play a leading role in designing labour market strategies that meet their needs. From a policy perspective, Canadian business and Indigenous leaders, along with government, education and labour organizations need to tackle these questions:

- What needs to happen so that Indigenous organizations and businesses can work together in more efficient ways to build an inclusive and productive workforce?
- How can more efficient labour market strategies affect a positive change locally, provincially and nationally?
- How can investments in human capital be better aligned, and coordinated to achieve better outcomes?³⁶

It begins with a new foundation. A foundation that is inclusive of an Indigenous worldview, lens, knowledge, wise processes and practices that are inclusive of generational thinking, sustainability, land based, holistic, values driven, centering children and families, and grounded in cultural ways of being. Committing to a sector wide and organizational Reconciliation Plan that guides the short medium and long term strategies, commitments and actions to equitable and inclusive participation of Indigenous women in all spaces.

“The manner in which we base our ‘credentials’ for certain jobs are completely colonized and do not necessarily represent what Indigenous peoples consider assets or skills.”

Jean Francois Tremblay - former Deputy Minister of Indigenous Services Canada

Resource

[Indigenous Works](#) and their [Navigating Indigenous Employment](#) is a new on-line systems-based program that will help small, medium, and large companies, educational institutions and public organizations achieve increased Indigenous employment and workplace inclusion. This product and service offer is built in modules so that employers can jump in and out of the program according to your own pace and needs. It is intended for companies and organizations that want to grow their Indigenous employment numbers. Federally regulated companies will find this program to be especially useful to fulfill Employment Equity Legislation. Begin your journey by reading the [Navigating Indigenous Employment Catalogue](#).

³⁶ https://indigenousworks.ca/sites/ahrc/files/attachments/2006_champions_labourmarket_0.pdf

Appendix A: Key Terms

Aboriginal – the three groups of original inhabitants of the lands known today as Canada. These groups are defined as First Nations, Inuit, and Métis in the Constitution Act of 1982.

Ally - someone from a privileged group who is aware of how oppression works and struggles alongside members of an oppressed group to take action to end oppression.

Chief

An **Elected Chief** is the political leader of a Band Council of a First Nation under the Indian Act electoral system. Some First Nations have Elected and/or Hereditary Chiefs, while some self-governing First Nations use the term Executive Director or President.

A **Hereditary Chief** is not an elected official under Section 74 of the Indian Act. A Hereditary Chief is the traditional leadership system of First Nations communities, with title passed down within family bloodlines generally following either a matriarchal or patriarchal line.

Colonization - occurs when a new group of people migrates into a territory and then takes over and begins to control the Indigenous Peoples of those territories. The settlers impose their own cultural values, religions, and laws, seizing/stealing land and controlling access to resources and trade, forcing the Indigenous People to become dependent on the settler systems and institutions.

Cultural Appropriation - using intellectual property, traditional knowledge, cultural expressions, or artifacts from someone's culture without permission. It is most likely to be harmful when the source culture is a group that has been oppressed or exploited in other ways (as with Indigenous Peoples), or when the object of appropriation is particularly sensitive or sacred.

Cultural Oppression - shared societal values and norms that allow people to see oppression as normal or right.

Cultural Humility - a lifelong process of self-reflection and self-critique whereby the individual not only learns about another's culture, but one starts with an examination of her/his own beliefs and cultural identities.

Cultural Safety - the recognition that one needs to be aware of and challenge unequal power relations at the level of individual, family, community, and society. In a culturally safe environment, each person feels that their unique cultural background is respected, and they are free to be themselves without being judged, put on the spot, or asked to speak for all members of their group.

Decolonization - the process of deconstructing colonial ideologies of the superiority and privilege of Western thought and approaches. Decolonization involves valuing and revitalizing Indigenous knowledge and approaches, and rethinking Western biases or assumptions that have impacted Indigenous ways of being.

Elder - Elders are recognized because they have earned the respect of their community through wisdom, age and balance of their actions in their teachings.

First Nation - First Nation people have inhabited the lands of Canada for thousands of years and were the first Indigenous identity group to be recognized under the Indian Act. Today, there are more than 634 First Nations communities made up of roughly 50 broader nations.

'First Nation' is a term used to identify Canadian Indigenous Peoples who are neither Métis nor Inuit. This term came into common usage in the 1970s to replace the term "Indian" and "Indian Band".

Indian - A term commonly used to describe the hundreds of distinct nations of Indigenous Peoples throughout North, Central and South America and the Caribbean. It can be traced back to Christopher Columbus in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries during his expeditions to find Asia. Widely used by explorers and missionaries, the term was later adopted by the Government of Canada and incorporated into the Indian Act, 1876. It is often used in the context of historical government departments, documents, policies and laws. Indians are one of three recognized Indigenous peoples in Canada—Indian (First Nation), Inuit and Métis—according to Section 35(2) of the Constitution Act, 1982.

Under the Indian Act, **Indian** means "a person who pursuant to this Act is registered as an Indian or is entitled to be registered as an Indian." In the Act there are three classifications of Indian:

Status Indian: A person entitled to have his or her name included on the Indian Register, an official list maintained by the federal government. Certain criteria determines who can be registered as a Status Indian. Only Status Indians are recognized as Indians under the Indian Act, which defines an Indian as "a person who, pursuant to this Act, is registered as an Indian or is entitled to be registered as an Indian." Status Indians are entitled to certain rights and benefits under the law.

Non-Status Indian: An Indian person who is not registered as an Indian under the Indian Act, who lost their status or whose ancestors were never registered, or lost their status under former or current provisions of the Indian Act.

Treaty Indian: A Status Indian who belongs to a First Nation that signed a treaty with the Crown and as a result are entitled to Treaty rights.

Indian Act, 1876 - The Canadian legislation, first passed in 1876, which defines an Indian in relation to the federal government's fiduciary responsibility as it applies to "Indians" living on-reserve. The Act sets out certain federal obligations and regulates the management of Indian reserve lands, Indian monies and other resources, as well as approves or disallows First Nation bylaws. It has been amended several times, most recently in 1985 with Bill C-31 and again in 2011 with Bill C-3 pertaining to identity.

Indian Band - The Indian Act's definition is as follows: "band" means a body of Indians:
(a) for whose use and benefit in common, lands, the legal title to which is vested in Her Majesty, have been set apart before, on or after September 4, 1951,
(b) for whose use and benefit in common, moneys are held by Her Majesty, or
(c) declared by the Governor in Council to be a band for the purposes of this Act

Inuit - The Inuit are Indigenous Peoples of Arctic Canada. Inuit communities are located in regions based on modern land claims known as the Inuvialuit Settlement Region (the Northwest Territories), Nunavut, the Northern Québec region of Nunavik, and the Northern Labrador region of Nunatsiavut.

Holism/Holistic learning - engaging the four knowledge domains that interweave all aspects of learning: emotional (heart), spiritual (spirit), cognitive (mind) and physical (body).

Indigenization - the process of naturalizing Indigenous knowledge systems and making them evident to transform spaces, places, and hearts. In the context of education, this

involves bringing Indigenous knowledge and approaches together with Western knowledge systems. It is a deliberate coming together of these two ways of being.

Indigenous Epistemologies - theory of knowledge that is based on Indigenous perspectives, such as relationality, the interconnection of sacred and secular, and holism. The emotional, spiritual, cognitive, and physical dimensions of knowledge are common in Indigenous epistemologies.

Indigenous Knowledge/knowing - unique Indigenous knowledge (based in Nations & Communities) are conveyed formally and informally amongst kinship ties throughout many communities in social encounters, language, song, storytelling, ceremony, land based activities, etc.

Indigenous Peoples - Historically it refers to the original inhabitants of a territory. For this purpose, the term refers to people classified as Indigenous under international law in such documents as the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

Indigenous Traditional Knowledge - can be defined as a network of Indigenous based knowledges, beliefs, and traditions intended to preserve, communicate, and contextualize Indigenous relationships with culture, land, resources, place, etc. over time.

Indigenous Ways of Knowing - a useful term that recognizes the complexity and diversity of Indigenous ways of learning and teaching. Many people continue to generalize Indigenous experience and lived realities. The intent of the phrases "Indigenous Ways of Knowing" or "Indigenous Knowing" is to help educate people about the vast variety of unique knowledge that exists across diverse Indigenous communities throughout Canada.

Indigenous Sovereignty - The term "sovereignty" has been used in many different ways in Canada. It is understood as the right of self-government, which Canadian Indigenous Peoples neither surrendered nor lost by way of settlement, colonization, and the like.

Intergenerational trauma - where the effects of traumatic experiences are passed on to the next generations.

Land acknowledgement - an honest and historically accurate way to recognize the First Nations, Métis and/or Inuit territories of a place. They can be presented verbally or visually.

Inspired by the 94 recommended calls to action contained in the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (now known as the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation, or NCTR), land acknowledgements are a necessary first step toward honouring the original occupants of a place. They also help Canadians recognize and respect Indigenous peoples' inherent kinship beliefs when it comes to the land, especially since those beliefs were restricted for so long.

Métis - Métis are the descendants of European settlers and the First Nations people of Canada, particularly the Cree and Anishinaabe. These unions resulted in a distinct collective culture and nationhood along the central and prairie regions of Canada. Today, there is a wide array of Métis communities across Canada, with Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta having the highest density of Métis people.

Protocols - ways of interacting with Indigenous people in a manner that respects traditional ways of being. Protocols are unique to each Indigenous culture and are a representation of a culture's deeply held ethical system.

Reconciliation - addressing past wrongs done to Indigenous Peoples, making amends, and improving relationships between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people to create a better future for all.

Self-determination - A term introduced to gradually replace the term, “self-government.” The Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development’s Community-Based Self-Government Policy of 1984 was perceived as more of a municipal government model and did not fully recognize the authoritative powers to the extent envisioned and asserted by many Indigenous peoples.

Self-government - A term originally conceived and used by Indigenous peoples in the late 1970s to describe their right to govern their own affairs. Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada adopted the term and applied it to the Community-Based Self-Government Policy of 1984. Such a government is designed, established and administered by Indigenous peoples under the Canadian Constitution through a process of negotiation with Canada and, where applicable, the provincial government.

Structural (or systemic) oppression - the manifestation of oppression in societal institutions, such as governments, religions, education systems, health care, law, and the media. For example, the fact that Indigenous people are overrepresented in the criminal justice system and child welfare systems is a form of structural oppression.

Traditional territory - the geographic area identified by a First Nation as the land they and/or their ancestors traditionally occupied and used.

Treaty - A formal, ratified agreement or contract usually made between two nations, such as those between Indigenous peoples and governments.

Historic treaties - treaties signed by First Nations and the British and Canadian governments between 1701 and 1923.

Modern treaties - treaties being negotiated today in B.C. through tri-partite negotiations with three levels of government: the First Nation, the Government of Canada, and the Province of British Columbia. The first modern treaty in B.C. was completed in 1999 with the Nisga’a First Nation. Some First Nations in B.C. do not agree with the treaty process.

Numbered Treaties - 11 treaties signed by the First Nations peoples and the reigning monarchs of Canada between 1871 and 1921, providing the settler government with large tracts of land in exchange for promises that varied by treaty.

Peace and Friendship Treaties - treaties signed in the Maritimes between 1725 and 1779 intended to end hostilities and encourage cooperation between the British and Mi’kmaq and Maliseet First Nations.

Treaty Rights - The specific rights of the Indigenous peoples embodied in the treaties they entered into with the Crown, initially Great Britain and after Confederation, Canada. They often address matters such as the creation of reserves and the rights of Indigenous communities to hunt, fish and trap on Crown lands. Treaty rights are protected by section 35(1) of the Constitution Act, 1982.

Turtle Island - refers to the vast traditional lands of the Indigenous or ‘First’ peoples of Canada. For most Indigenous Peoples, the term is inclusive of the lands encompassing the continent of North America and all that live and have lived within these lands. Turtle Island comes from Indigenous oral traditions with differing variations among Indigenous Peoples,

notably, between Algonquian, Iroquoian and Anishinaabe or Ojibwe. This traditional story represents the turtle as an icon of life and creation.

Two-eyed seeing (Etuaptmumk) - the guiding principle of seeing the strengths of multiple perspectives in an interconnected and respectful way rather than as binaries or opposites. Shared by Mi'kmaq Elder, Albert Marshall, the word Etuaptmumk is a way to see the strengths of Indigenous knowledge and perspectives with one eye and to see the strengths of Western knowledge and perspectives with the other eye; then you learn how to see with both eyes together to benefit all peoples.

Unceded - means that First Nations people never ceded or legally signed away their lands to the Crown or to Canada. A traditional territory is the geographic area identified by a First Nation as the land they and/or their ancestors traditionally occupied and used. **Ninety-five percent of British Columbia is on unceded traditional First Nations territory.**

UNDRIP (United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples) - an international instrument adopted by the United Nations on September 13, 2007, to enshrine (according to Article 43) the rights that “constitute the minimum standards for the survival, dignity and well-being of the indigenous peoples of the world.” UNDRIP protects collective rights that may not be addressed in other human rights charters that emphasize individual rights, and it also safeguards the individual rights of Indigenous people.

Terminology Resources:

- [Terminology Guide: Research on Aboriginal Heritage](#)
- [Indigenous Peoples: A Guide to Terminology – the entire guide can be found here](#)
- [UBC Foundations-So what term do I use?](#)
- [Background Information: NWC First Nations of B.C.](#)
- [Pulling Together: A Guide For Curriculum Developers](#)
- [What are land acknowledgements and why do they matter?](#)

Appendix B: Recommended Resources

MUST LEARN	MUST READ
<p>University of Alberta - Indigenous Canada is a Massive Open Online Course (MOOC) from the Faculty of Native Studies that explores Indigenous histories and contemporary issues in Canada. From an Indigenous perspective, this course explores key issues facing Indigenous peoples today from a historical and critical perspective highlighting national and local Indigenous-settler relations.</p> <p>UBC - Reconciliation Through Indigenous Education Reconciliation Through Indigenous Education is an online course taught by Jan Hare of the University of British Columbia. The purpose of the class is to provide community leaders, service workers, teachers and managers with insight into how indigenous histories, perspectives and worldviews impact learning.</p> <p>Columbia University - Indigenous Peoples Rights Examine how Indigenous Peoples have been contesting norms, institutions and global debates in the past 50 years, and how they have been re-shaping and gradually decolonizing these systems at international and national levels.</p> <p>Ladders to Kindness Ladders to Kindness Training aims to minimize lateral violence and promote lateral kindness and Cultural Safety through our trauma informed Training Programs. As well, a core value and emphasis for creating meaningful relationships and moving forward, reconciliation is foundational. Indigenous Corporate Training Inc.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Birdie by Tracey Lindberg ● Indian Horse by Richard Wagamese ● The Inconvenient Indian by Thomas King ● Up Ghost River by Edmund Metatawabin with Alexandra Shimo ● The Reason You Walk by Wab Kinew ● Price Paid by Bev Sellars ● Wenjack by Joseph Boyden ● Secret Path by Gord Downie & Jeff Lemire ● The Outside Circle by Patti LaBoucane-Benson ● The Education of Augie Merasty by David Carpenter and Augie Merasty ● The Break by Katherena Vermette ● The Lesser Blessed by Richard Van Camp ● Dancing on Our Turtle's Back by Leanne Simpson ● In This Together: Fifteen Stories of Truth and Reconciliation edited by Danielle Metcalfe-Chenail ● Indigenous Wellbeing and Enterprise: Self-Determination and Sustainable Economic Development by Rick Colbourne and Robert B. Anderson. ● The Reconciliation Manifesto: Recovering the Land, Rebuilding the Economy by Arthur Manuel and Grand Chief Ronald Derrickson. ● Whose Land Is It Anyway? A Manual for Decolonization - free

ICT offers free and paid in-person and online training programs for every Canadian. They specialize in corporate training. The blog and books are a wealth of knowledge also.

[Decolonizing Practices](#)

They offer workshops for groups who want to learn about & commit to decolonizing practices including our upcoming Interactive Introduction to Territorial Acknowledgments; a Decolonize First workbook for people who want to unlearn supremacy & personalize tools to dismantle colonialism; and we are working on some new unlearning innovations including an update of our decolonizing board game Sínulkhay & Ladders.

[Mitelnexw Leadership Society](#)

Squamish-led Leadership Transformation Transforming leadership and organizations with teachings centered in decolonizing practices, indigenization, reconciliation and self-actualization.

Hold or attend the a virtual [KAIROS Blanket Exercise](#)

The Blanket Exercise is based on using Indigenous methodologies and the goal is to build understanding about our shared history as Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples in Canada by walking through pre-contact, treaty-making, colonization and resistance. Everyone is actively involved as they step onto blankets that represent the land, and into the role of First Nations, Inuit and later Métis peoples. By engaging on an emotional and intellectual level, the Blanket Exercise effectively educates and increases empathy.

[4 Season of Reconciliation Course](#)

RBC is honoured to partner with First Nations University of Canada and ReconciliationEducation to welcome and invite you to learn from the various

ebook by the Federation of Post-Secondary Educators of BC.

- [21 Things You May Not Know About the Indian Act](#) by Bob Joseph and Indigenous Relations Insights Tips & Suggestions To Make Reconciliation A Reality and Working Effectively with Indigenous Peoples® (which is only available by taking the training).
- **Resource Rulers: Fortune and Folly on Canada's Road to Resources** by Bill Gallagher
- **Indigenomics: Taking a seat at the Economic Table** by Carol Anne Hilton
- **Peace Pipe Dreams: The Truth About Lies About Indians** by Darrell Dennis
- **Unsettling Canada: A National Wake-up Call** by Arthur Manuel
- **Surviving Canada: Indigenous Peoples Celebrate 150 Years of Betrayal** edited by Kiera L. Ladner & Myra J. Tait
- **Seven Fallen Feathers: Racism, Death, and Hard Truths in A Northern City** by Tanya Talaga
- **Indigenous Writes: A Guide to First Nations, Métis & Inuit Issues in Canada** by Chelsea Vowel
- **#NotYourPrincess: Voices of Native American Women** by Edited by Lisa Charleyboy & Mary Beth Leatherdale
- **Economic Well Being of Canada's Indigenous People** by Belayet Hossain & Laura Lamb
- **Routledge Handbook of Indigenous Wellbeing** Edited by: Christopher Fleming & Matthew Manning
- **My Conversations with Canadians** by Lee Maracle

Indigenous contributors involved in the creation of 4 Seasons of Reconciliation. This self-paced online program offers 10 modules on truth and reconciliation, which is available to all Canadians.

[Elements of Truth Workshops](#)

By [kinSHIFT](#) is an Indigenous-led initiative supporting settlers who are committed to building respectful relationships with Indigenous peoples and places. Our experiential, arts-based workshops and programs allow participants to learn, practice, ask questions, and make mistakes in a safer environment, all while building a foundation for engaging meaningfully with Indigenous peoples.

[The Village © Workshop Series](#)

Kathi Camilleri facilitates experiential reconciliation workshops Building Bridges through Understanding the Village© and strategic planning workshops Paddling Together© for diverse groups of people and organizations in communities across Canada and the U.S.

Pulling Together: A guide for Indigenization of post-secondary institutions. A professional learning series:

- [Foundations Guide](#)
- [A Guide for Teachers and Instructors](#)
- [A Guide for Front-Line Staff, Student Services, and Advisors](#)
- [A Guide for Leaders and Administrators](#)
- [A Guide for Curriculum Developers](#)

[Len Pierre Consulting](#)

Len Pierre provides Consulting services, Educational and Training workshops and Guest Speaking.

[Cultivating Safe Spaces](#)

Elaine Alec practices and teaches

- **Braiding Legal Orders: Implementing the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples** by John Borrows (Editor); Larry Chartrand (Editor); Oonagh E. Fitzgerald (Editor); Risa Schwartz
- **Métis: Race, Recognition, and the Struggle for Indigenous Peoplehood** by Chris Andersen
- **Living on the Land: Indigenous Women's Understanding of Place** by Nathalie Kermaal (Editor), Isabel Altamirano -Jiménez (Editor)
- **Values: Building a Better World for All** by Mark Carney
- **Sacred Economics: Money, Gift, and Society in the Age of Transition** by Charles Eisenstein
- **Indigenous Women, Work, and History: 1940–1980** by Mary Jane Logan McCallum
- **Indigenous Men and Masculinities: Legacies, Identities, Regeneration** by Robert Alexander Innes & Kim Anderson (Editors)
- **Decolonizing Employment Aboriginal Inclusion in Canada's Labour Market** by Shauna MacKinnon
- **Life Stages and Native Women: Memory, Teachings, and Story Medicine** by Kim Anderson
- **From Where I Stand: Rebuilding Indigenous Nations for a Stronger Canada** by Jody Wilson-Raybould
- **Decolonizing Wealth: Indigenous Wisdom to Heal Divides and Restore Balance / Decolonizing Wealth: Second Edition** by Edgar Villanuev
- **"Indian" in the Cabinet: Speaking Truth to Power** by Jody Wilson-Raybould

decolonized practices for healing and decolonizing within the workplace and in all areas of life. She offers a variety of online training **workshops, seminars, & keynotes.**

[Canadian History through the Indigenous Women's Lens](#)

Canadian History Through the Lens of Indigenous Women consists of four 2 hour modules that bring learners on a journey through the 1700's to present day through sharing the history of the creation of Canada through Indigenous women's worldviews, knowledge, and lived experiences. It is taught by Chastity Davis through her educational website [DEYEN](#) an Invitation to Transform.

MUST WATCH

[8th Fire Series with Web Kinew](#)

A 500-year-old relationship ... coming out of conflict, colonialism, and denial. Join Wab Kinew on a two-minute walk through 500 years of aboriginal history and then watch the entire 4-part series.

[Namwayut: we are all one. Truth and Reconciliation in Canada](#)

Chief Robert Joseph shares his experience as a residential school survivor and the importance of truth and reconciliation in Canada.

[Treaties, reconciliation and Indigenous history in Canada](#)

How well do Canadians know Indigenous history? What role did treaties play in forming our country? Are the stories told through truth and reconciliation changing our understanding of Canadian history?

[What is reconciliation? Indigenous educators have their say](#)

Is hanging Indigenous art in an office "reconciliation?" In this web series called "First Things First," Indigenous experts take a look at what it really means to reconcile after generations of systemic racism against Indigenous peoples.

[Truth and Reconciliation Progress?](#)

Just over five years ago Canada's Truth and Reconciliation Commission released its report. In it there were almost 94 recommendations. Now there are 10 that are considered completed and even that is debatable. The TRC was established to research the harms to the Indigenous communities over the practice of sending children to residential schools. What happened as a result has been termed cultural genocide. We look at progress on true reconciliation in Canada.

[Beyond 94](#)

An immersive website on the 94 Calls to Action of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and a curated selection of Beyond 94 video content, as well as other videos on the theme of reconciliation, are featured in this collection.

[National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation](#)

Hosted by the University of Manitoba, the TRC legacy lives on here with archived statements and videos, research, report, etc. available on this website.

Any video of [Senator Murray Sinclair](#) or [Dr. Chief Robert Joseph](#) is powerful and worth watching.

[Reconciling the Power of One Story | Angela Sterritt | TEDxJIBC](#)

Growing up, many were only exposed to media centered on white characters and white points of view. Today, in the age of reconciliation, the public is hungry to learn more about Indigenous world views. But many are grappling and flailing with education about Indigenous people and communities. Sterritt takes us on a journey of how Indigenous people went from victim, to victors, in the eyes of a slowly learning public.

[CBC Unreserved](#)

Unreserved is the radio space for Indigenous community, culture, and conversation.

[Chief Robert Joseph's Epiphany](#)

[Economic Reconciliation- Final Documentary](#)

MUST LISTEN

Here are some recommendations from [Chatelaine](#), [IndigiNews](#) and [UBC Library](#), including:

[2 Crees in a Pod](#)

2 Crees in a Pod, unapologetically creates space for Indigenous resurgence. Our intention is to disrupt western colonial systems and honor Indigenous helping practices.

[A Tribe Called Geek](#)

Indigenerdity for the Geeks at the Powwow. Visit our website at www.atribecalledgeek.com

[All My Relations](#)

All My Relations is a podcast hosted by Matika Wilbur (Swinomish and Tulalip) and Adrienne

[The Secret Life of Canada](#)

The Secret Life of Canada highlights the people, places and stories that probably didn't make it into your high school textbook. Join hosts Leah and Falen as they explore the unauthorized history of a complicated country.

[Nation to Nation](#)

Nation to Nation takes a weekly look at the politics affecting Indigenous people in Canada. Join Host Brett Forester as he connects you with the decision- makers in Ottawa and across the country.

[New Fire with Lisa Charleyboy](#)

From remote reserves to bustling big cities, join Urban Native Girl Lisa Charleyboy as she brings

Keene (Cherokee Nation) to explore our relationships— relationships to land, to our creatural relatives, and to one another.

[Book Women Podcast](#)

A podcast where three Métis aunties figure out how to publish, edit, and write Indigenous stories.

[Coffee & Quaq](#)

Coffee & Quaq aims to incite discussion on topics of interest for young Alaska Native people and bring awareness to the various facets of modern Indigenous life.

[Coffee With My Ma](#)

My radical activist mother Kahentinetha Horn tells me stories of her very long adventurous life, always with the sense of humour that carried her through.

[For the Wild](#)

Focused on land-based protection, co-liberation and intersectional storytelling rooted in a paradigm shift away from human supremacy, endless growth and consumerism.

[The Henceforward](#)

The Henceforward is a podcast that considers relationships between Indigenous Peoples and Black Peoples on Turtle Island.

[Indigenous Action](#)

A radical volunteer crew of anti-colonial & anti-capitalist Indigenous media makers, designers, artists, writers & agitators that work together on a project by project basis for liberation for Mother Earth and all her beings.

[Kiwew](#)

Kiwew is a five-part podcast in which Governor General award-winning author David A. Robertson dives into his family's history and mysteries as he discovers and connects with his Cree identity.

[Matriarch Movement](#)

On Matriarch Movement, host Shayla Oulette Stonechild shares stories of Indigenous women,

you to the surprising heart of the conversations important to Aboriginal youth.

[Our Native Land](#)

Join our host, Tchadas Leo as we explore all things Indigenous and First Nations! Our Native Land features fun interviews and compelling discussions about Indigenous and First Nations cuisine, culture, heritage, and more from Vancouver Island and around the world. Recorded at CHEK Studios in Victoria, BC, Tchadas is joined by guests of all backgrounds and professions for educational, emotional, and engaging conversations.

[Recoding Relations](#)

Recoding Relations is a podcast series on Indigenous new media and the politics and potentials of the digital humanities. Written and recorded by Autumn Schnell and Melissa Haberl and produced by Dr. David Gaertner the series captures key themes and conversations from the 2018 Symposium for Indigenous New Media (SINM).

[Stolen: The Search for Jermain](#)

In 2018, a young Indigenous mother named Jermain Charlo left a bar in Missoula, Montana, and was never seen again. After two years and thousands of hours of investigative work, police believe they are close to solving the mystery of what happened to her. We go inside the investigation, tracking down leads and joining search parties through the dense mountains of the Flathead Reservation. As we unravel this mystery, the show examines what it means to be an Indigenous woman in America.

[Story-telling / Story-listening: Decolonizing Research Through Podcast as Storytelling](#)

As a way to help prepare for climate change (changes to land, water, living beings and inter-relationships) I am developing this practice by recording oral stories/teachings. Listening to stories builds relationships of mutual respect and reciprocity, through podcasts - a modern invention for internet broadcast - yet they build on the age-old medium of storytelling. Podcasts are a lot like radio, except they live on the internet, forever.

from Canada to Turtle Island and beyond. Through interviews where issues facing Indigenous women are brought to light, and with portraits that challenge the mainstream narrative around Indigenous identity, Matriarch Movement offers up a new category of Indigenous role models, to inspire the next seven generations.

[MEDIA INDIGENA](#)

MEDIA INDIGENA is a weekly Indigenous current affairs podcast. Our website also features Aboriginal news, views and creative expression.

[Métis in Space](#)

otipêyimsiw-iskwêwak kihci-kîsikohk is Chelsea and Molly and the occasional parasitic alien lifeform controlling their bodies and/or very special guests drinking a bottle of wine, watching and reviewing a science fiction television episode or movie from an Indigenous and decolonial perspective, and then asking the most important and relevant scifi demographic, the white man, a surprise question.

[Missing & Murdered](#)

MISSING & MURDERED is a CBC News original podcast hosted by CBC News investigative reporter Connie Walker.

[Red Man Laughing](#)

Red Man Laughing created, written and hosted by Anishinaabe comedian, Ryan McMahon, is an Indigenous arts and culture podcast rooted squarely at the intersection between the good, the bad and the ugly between Indian Country and the mainstream.

[Revolutions Per Minute](#)

On the RPM Podcast, Indigenous music and culture meet in sound. Each episode we give voice to the music, stories, and experiences of Indigenous artists from around the world by exploring a place, idea, or tradition that inspires our songs and our people.

[Telling Our Twisted Histories](#)

Words connect us. Words hurt us. Indigenous histories have been twisted by centuries of colonization. Host Kaniehti:io Horn brings us together to decolonize our minds— one word, one concept, one story at a time.

[This Land](#)

The award-winning documentary podcast This Land is back for season 2. Host Rebecca Nagle reports on how the far right is using Native children to attack American Indian tribes and advance a conservative agenda.

[Toasted Sister](#)

Toasted Sister is radio about Native American food because it came a long way. Traditional indigenous foodways were lost, found, redefined and modernized in the last few hundred years. And here it is today, in the hands of Native chefs and foodies who work to keep their traditional flavors and ingredients alive.

[Unreserved](#)

Unreserved is the radio space for Indigenous community, culture, and conversation. Host Rosanna Deerchild takes you straight into Indigenous Canada, from Halifax to Haida Gwaii, from Shamattawa to Ottawa, introducing listeners to the storytellers, culture makers and community shakers from across the country.

[Voicing the Circle](#)

This is a podcast geared toward themes in the performing arts. It is an Indigenous-led podcast that will have guests from different backgrounds in performing arts.

[Warrior Life](#)

This is an Indigenous podcast about warrior life - a lifestyle that focuses on decolonizing our minds, bodies and spirits while at the same time revitalizing our cultures, traditions, laws and governing practices.