

LEVEL Granting 2018 Project Summaries

1. Board Decolonization and Capacity Building Project

Watari Research Association

Location:	Vancouver
Type of Grant:	Develop
Grant Amount:	\$10,000
Project Summary:	Our current Action Plan combines a systemic approach to decolonization with a recognition of the significance that Indigenous and racialized immigrants/migrants provide and engages staff and Board in implementing a work plan examining how we support the community in general, and how to locate structural/service gaps within our organization. We begin this process by addressing a primary critique arising from our Action Plan: our Board of Directors does not represent the communities we support. We plan to involve two facilitators in the process: one Indigenous and one migrant organizer. Their guidance and assistance will be the main driver in shaping of the conversation with the Board, staff and communities.

2. New Neighbors Project - Newcomer Youth for Real Representation

Mount Pleasant Neighbourhood House

Location:	Vancouver
Type of Grant:	Develop
Grant Amount:	\$10,000
Project Summary:	This project will invite and support newcomer youth in exploring ideas and strategies that will amplify their voices, ideas, thoughts, and lived experiences in decision-making spaces in which they are currently entirely excluded from or are underrepresented. We will convene immigrant and refugee youth, along with staff and board members of the Association of Neighbourhood Houses of BC, in co-creation style facilitated dialogues that draw out, identify, and document the most effective and sustainable strategies and structures in order to have newcomer youth's voices captured at the board, governance, and decision-making level at ANHBC's neighbourhood houses. MPNH's Newcomer Youth Leadership Group, along with our newcomer youth groups at fellow neighbourhood houses, will meet to form a city-wide Newcomer Youth Committee to design, implement and evaluate the project from beginning to end. Newcomer youth will meet, highlight key areas of exploration, and facilitate dialogue workshops. The results will be compiled by newcomer youth and the recommendations, strategies, and best practices will be presented to ANHBC staff and Board of Directors with the goal of increasing genuine representation in decision-making.

3. Indigenous Youth Engagement

Howe Sound/Atl'ka7tsem Marine Reference Guide

Location:	Vancouver
Type of Grant:	Develop
Grant Amount:	\$10,000
Project Summary:	This project's goal is to build capacity for Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish) Nation youth to be leaders in non-profit sectors associated with resource management in their traditional territory. We will achieve this goal by involving Squamish Nation youth in the Howe Sound/Atl'kitsem Marine Reference Guide (MRG). The MRG is a multi-stakeholder initiative whose goal is to improve marine health in Atl'kitsem by creating decision-support tools and processes that include perspectives from First Nations, governments, and stakeholders. The MRG's outcomes will affect Squamish Nation youths now and throughout their lives. Accordingly, they must be represented in its planning, leadership and delivery stages. During this project two Squamish Nation youths will work as staff members on the MRG's management team. They will work with community and project mentors to outline strategies for connecting traditional knowledge with resource management processes. They will also facilitate meetings to engage Indigenous youth in marine initiatives and participate in community stakeholder meetings organized through the MRG.

4. Diversifying Youth-led Boards

Check Your Head

Location:	Vancouver
Type of Grant:	Develop
Grant Amount:	\$10,000
Project Summary:	The Check Your Head board positions are open to youth and youth allies, and historically the vast majority of board members have been young people under 35. As such, our board of directors is unique in the non-profit sector, and there are lessons to be learned in the success in removing barriers to youth participation in the governance of the organization. This model also comes with its challenges. For the vast majority of all our directors, serving on our board had been their first experience of this kind. This has created gaps in our capacity as the organization and has a number of implications for our work, the solutions to which we want to examine through this project.

This project will:

- Examine structural components of our success in operating for 20 years with a youth-led board so that they can be shared with the wider community and inform further work;
- Develop solutions to address current gaps in the representation of racialized migrant/refugee and indigenous youth on our board of directors;
- Build organizational capacity in maintaining a strong and diverse youth-led board.

5. Indigenizing Poverty Reduction

BC Poverty Reduction Coalition

Location:	Vancouver
Type of Grant:	Test
Grant Amount:	\$50,000
Project Summary:	Indigenizing Poverty Reduction would enhance the BC Poverty Reduction Coalition's work in tackling poverty by bringing the critical issue of indigenous poverty to the forefront and mapping each theme through that lens: What are the specific housing, income, health, education and child care needs and solutions? And what are the legacies of colonization and present experiences of trauma that must be taken into account in shifting the foundation of the Coalition?

Through this project, the Coalition would hire an indigenous youth in a staff leadership role to coordinate the outreach, research and development of the plan. With concrete and extensive support, this person would: engage indigenous organizations and individuals in a collaborative process to determine the vision of the strategy, and short, medium and long-term actions; research indigenizing efforts in the field of poverty reduction across Canada and more broadly; and continue the engagement of indigenous organizations and individuals in the Coalition to shift the perspective of the Coalition and inform our future work. Other staff and members, in particular, the Executive Committee, would go through education and training in meaningful reconciliation and indigenous rights and sovereignty in order to incorporate the issues in the foundation of the Coalition.

6. Indigenous Youth Governance

Bill Reid Foundation

Location:	Vancouver
Type of Grant:	Test
Grant Amount:	\$10,000
Project Summary:	The Indigenous Youth Governance Project (YGP) is a three-year long project that will seek to safely integrate Indigenous youth representation into the governance structure of the Bill Reid Gallery. We are asking the Vancouver Foundation to support Year 1 of this plan which includes the creation of an Indigenous youth board position in order to increase youth visibility at the leadership level of the organization. The Youth Candidate (YC) will be an Indigenous youth between the age of 16-24 and preference will be given to youth from the Squamish, Musqueam, and Tsleil-Waututh host Nations. The YC will receive an honorarium for their participation at Board and advisory meetings. Under regulation, Board members cannot receive remuneration, therefore we will work with the Board Chair and governance committee to determine an appropriate position title for the youth participant that will allow them to have a fulfilling governance experience and receive appropriate compensation for their expertise. The YC will undergo an orientation period with the Education Coordinator and learn about the Gallery's relationships with different organizations and artists. Near the end of the project, the YC will have the opportunity to develop youth-oriented programming with the Education and Program Coordinator.

7. Increasing Leadership Roles and Opportunities for Indigenous Members of the Youth Research Academy

McCreary Centre Society

Location: Vancouver
Type of Grant: Test
Grant Amount: \$49,700
Project Summary: In 2016 McCreary opened the Youth Research Academy (YRA) to train youth with care experience to conduct community-based research. To date, two cohorts have graduated and a third is in operation. Following the graduation of the first cohort, a YRA Alumni was formed to provide further opportunities for graduates. In 2018 this role was expanded to include greater responsibilities and leadership opportunities, and the position was extended to ten months.

The position is currently held by an Indigenous member of the YRA Alumni who, in addition to providing mentorship to Indigenous members of the YRA, has assumed a leadership role on projects which aim to improve outcomes for Indigenous youth. Feedback collected through evaluation surveys have suggested the value of this role in promoting cultural safety and inclusion for Indigenous youth.

This project seeks to create the role of Indigenous Peer Engagement Coordinator to increase engagement of Indigenous youth in the YRA, YRA Alumni, McCreary's Aboriginal Advisory Committee (AAC), staff and Board. The role would offer ongoing employment to an Indigenous youth who faces barriers to employment and provide training to enhance their leadership and workplace skills.

8. Changing the Face of Conservation

Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society

Location: Vancouver
Type of Grant: Test
Grant Amount: \$50,000
Project Summary: Conservation is based on a colonial model that has a long history of contributing to systemic oppression, devaluing non-white worldviews, and Indigenous erasure. As part of our ongoing work to both decolonize our organization – and influence decolonization in the movement – and to create more spaces for marginalized voices in decision making processes, we would like to more proactively challenge the status quo. We would also like to create two new roles on our staff team for young Indigenous youth and folks of colour. The goal would be to have them work directly within our program teams and be fully engaged in decision making, policy development (both at an organizational level and a government level), and all aspects of programming. They will be mentored by staff at the organization to develop strong skills, while having space to shape conservation plans with their own knowledge and experience.

9. Engagement and Building Capacity with Diverse Young Adults

Inner Activist

Location:	Vancouver/Victoria
Type of Grant:	Test
Grant Amount:	\$44,444
Project Summary:	The Inner Activist (IA) completed a comprehensive research project in 2006-2010 that acted as the foundation for the IA project, and the development of our course curriculum to date. The premise was to address and support the connection between our own individual development, intentions, and our external impacts and actions for change in the world, also taking into consideration systemic issues and oppression. The IA is seeking support through this grant to increase job security for the Engagement and Events Manager, who is a young Muslim woman, and increase the resources offered to help young adults become coaches at the IA courses, in order to build their capacity through mentorship and community engagement with the hope of them eventually expanding their role with IA.

10. Leaders Now

Victoria International Development Education Association (VIDEA)

Location:	Victoria
Type of Grant:	Test
Grant Amount:	\$50,000
Project Summary:	<p>In the next four years, 210 Indigenous youth will pass through VIDEA's Indigenous Internship, Shared Wisdom, and youth-led reconciliation projects. This represents an unprecedented opportunity to build Indigenous Board leadership. Leaders Now develops on VIDEA's work in each of these projects, engaging Indigenous participants to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Create a leadership development project that meaningfully responds to their own needs as emerging Indigenous leaders;2. Explore the challenges that Indigenous youth face from their perspective in accessing, and thriving in Board roles;3. Create, implement, evaluate, and refine with Indigenous youth, innovative tools that help them to better understand the role they can play in Board governance and decolonisation and that build their own Board knowledge, governance and leadership skills.4. Create resources for VIDEA (and others) to use with Indigenous youth on an ongoing basis;5. As appropriate, support participating youth to identify and take up Board roles and explore the role they can play in mentoring and encouraging peers into Board roles.

Leaders Now will also explore the impact that funding relationships and mechanisms have on an organisations ability to decolonise organisational governance practices, among other things.

11. Newcomer Youth Ambassador Program

Victoria Immigrant and Refugee Centre Society

Location:	Victoria
Type of Grant:	Test
Grant Amount:	\$39,044
Project Summary:	<p>The Newcomer Youth Ambassador Project consists of three components providing the selected youth the chance to gain experience and develop their leadership skills within their peer groups, in the formal workplace, as well as in the broader community. The Youth Ambassador would be a paid position responsible to form and lead a youth advisory committee with other immigrant and refugee youth participants, who together would inform and advise VIRCS Staff on the challenges they are facing, their needs, desires, and how youth programming can better address these. The Youth Ambassador would then take a leadership role in the official development and facilitation of these programs and services. The second component is a mentorship program with a member of the VIRCS board of directors. This opportunity would allow the youth to sit on the board for an in-depth learning experience about non-profit governance, while also being supported by a board member in advocating for matters as they pertain to newcomer youth. The third component is community outreach and networking, where the Youth Ambassador would sit on the City of Victoria's Youth Council to advocate for social justice issues that pertain to immigrant/refugee youth specifically.</p>

12. Centering Indigenous Leadership for the Environmental Non-Profit Sector

Sierra Club of British Columbia Foundation

Location:	Victoria
Type of Grant:	Test
Grant Amount:	\$50,000
Project Summary:	<p>This project provides an opportunity for an Indigenous youth to lead the development of a Sierra Club BC outings program, as well as engage with senior staff and a board committee to strengthen organizational policy and approach to Indigenous relations, with mentorship from Indigenous elders and Indigenous board members. Sierra Club BC's Board of Directors recently called for an Indigenous solidarity lens to be applied to all we do. The outings project (launching January 2019) originated when T'Sou-ke Nation knowledge-keeper Charlene George~kQwa'ste'not approached us to co-develop with her a place-based program that would deepen Sierra Club BC's relations with local nations, build respect for Indigenous worldviews, and highlight best practices for how ENGOs can be in 'right relations' with the land and Indigenous peoples.</p>

13. Youth-Leadership-Action

Kamloops Indian Band

Location:	Kamloops
Type of Grant:	Test
Grant Amount:	\$36,900
Project Summary:	Tk'emlups te Secwepemc's (TteS) project entitled Youth-Leadership-Action will develop the unique leadership skills that youth required in Indigenous organizations, by combining traditional knowledge and protocols with contemporary leadership skills and methods. Indigenous youth will learn local protocols such as Welcoming Ceremonies that are regularly practiced within the community and traditional territory. Supported by elders, the transfer of knowledge inter-generationally will provide a platform for youth to augment their self-awareness and identity and build community connectiveness that will increase their leadership abilities and motivate them to participate within the community as leaders.

The project will consist of four key components that will build on the necessary skills and abilities of today's Indigenous leaders. The four components: Cultural Protocols and Teachings, What it Means to be a Leader, Goal Setting, and Community Leadership in Practice, will provide them with the theoretical knowledge and practical experience needed to hold leadership positions within the community and organization.

14. Northern Indigenous Artists' Collective - Youth Arts Administrator

Community Arts Council of Prince George and District

Location:	Prince George
Type of Grant:	Test
Grant Amount:	\$16,300
Project Summary:	The Community Arts Council of Prince George & District ("CAC") supports the newly formed Northern Indigenous Artists' Collective ("NIAC"), an unincorporated group, comprised of Indigenous artists, nested within the CAC. NIAC has worked hard over the past months to forge a pathway to become the first non-governmental Indigenous Arts Council in British Columbia. The next initiative is to hire a youth in a paid employment position in a new role of "Indigenous Arts Administrator". This new role will mentor with the CAC Executive Director and the NIAC steering committee members. Activities that will occur with this new position and mentorship will include being a staff resource to local Indigenous artists seeking professional development / funding / marketing resources, helping to guide the group towards non-profit status, and helping with the coordination of a major arts event in June.

15. Right Relations Advisor

Global Youth Education Network Society

Location:	BC-wide
Type of Grant:	Test
Grant Amount:	\$41,000
Project Summary:	The Right Relations Advisor (RRA) position will provide a pathway to non-profit leadership for a young, Indigenous professional that extends beyond the frontline work that racialized youth are often silo-ed within. The RRA would provide organizational leadership that challenges how we, as the non-profit sector, are complicit in perpetuating colonial structures - and confront this head on!

The RRA would focus on 3 strategies:

- Lead genius in decolonizing our organizational systems: We believe that before we can demand better of others, we must demand better of ourselves. This work would include decolonizing our base curriculums, providing training, and examining our administrative systems, and /or other organizational systems that are rooted in processes that create barriers to true equity
- Convene Indigenous and non-Indigenous young progressives: The non-profit sector is not immune to systemic racism - in fact, we can be the most blind to it! The RR Advisor will spark local conversations that bring together young professionals in a series of workshops and dialogue series to name & tackle these systemic blindspots in a community-driven report
- Praxis: The burden of anti-oppression work often falls to those who are most affected by oppressive systems. It will be important for this role to be one of both teaching and learning. Through our partner, IndigenEYEZ, the RRA will have access to Indigenous-centred coaching, elder support, and professional development.