

Increasing Indigenous  
Engagement in the  
Canadian Economy

# Annual Report 2019-2020



June 25, 2020

 Indigenous Works

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## Introduction

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**Fiscal 2019-2020 was successful for Indigenous Works with two main activities defining the year.**

- An emphasis on core advisory services in Indigenous employment & human resource development
- New research projects initiated and completed, and important foundations laid to strengthen Canada's Indigenous research ecosystem



## **Indigenous Employment & Human Resources**

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**Advisory Services did intensive work with three employment equity companies.**

- Indigenous employment Systems Reviews and Employment Equity Plans for three companies in the Banking and Financial Sector.
- In 2019 client companies had been selected to participate in the Canadian Human Rights Commission's Horizontal Audit of the Banking and Financial Sector.
- Each job required extensive employee interviews, analysis and weekly client meetings and there was a tight deadline for each project. We achieved high client satisfaction with EE Systems Reviews and plans.
- Subsequently Indigenous Works initiated partnership discussions with Canadian Human Rights Commission.

## Other Indigenous Employment and HR Projects

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### Other Indigenous employment and HR work undertaken during the year

- Preliminary Research and Barometer Report for Mitacs' Comprehensive Indigenous Employment and Workplace Inclusion Strategy for Mitacs, a national research funder with 206 employees.
- Proposal submitted and approved on Indigenous employment and workplace inclusion policy, strategy, and systems for Kids Help Phone.
- Workshop in May on Indigenous employment and procurement to Defense Construction Canada.
- Indigenous Employment and Business Workshop Foundations with Canadian Partnerships Against Cancer in November.

## Leadership Circle Membership Program

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### **A third-party program review was undertaken including member interviews**

- The review has led to revisions to the program with a stronger value proposition and it will be rolled out in fall 2020.
  - Lower membership pricing
  - Indigenous Employer of Choice Certification Program
  - Navigating Indigenous Employment Program



- Indigenous Works continued to work with our partner, the Canadian Chamber of Commerce throughout 2019-2020. This organization represents an opportunity and vehicle by which to engage with the business community.
- New Leadership Circle partners in 2019-2020 included Legal Services Society, Nielson, and Be Your Best Self.

## Speaking Engagements and Media

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**Indigenous Works gets many requests to deliver keynote addresses and speaking engagements which help promote our mission and services. Some examples this past year.**

- Pacific Northeast Economic Region (PNWER) Conference, Saskatoon;
- Food Processing Skills Canada Conference, Toronto;
- Bridging Economic Development Conference, Whitecap Dakota Economic Development, Saskatoon;
- Atlantic Schools of Business Conference - Msit no'kmaq, Sydney NS;
- Indigenous Clean Energy Forum, Ottawa;
- Hidden Connections Conference, Cambridge University, UK;
- Council for Institutes and Colleges Canada (CiCAN), Toronto;
- Growing the North Conference, Grand Prairie.

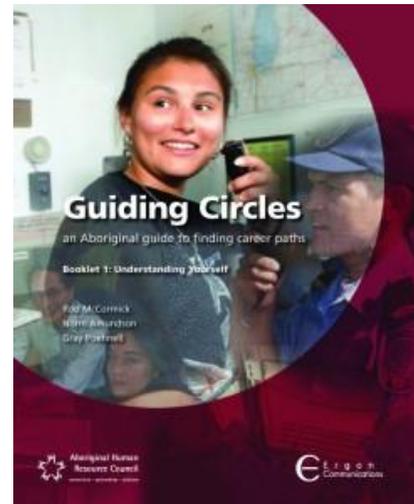


## Guiding Circles

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### Indigenous Works continued to deliver the popular Guiding Circles Training.

- We had a successful year for Guiding Circle Training, with 1 public and 5 private training sessions, including one in the Yukon. Close to 100 career seekers attended these 2-day workshops.



Guiding Circles workshops are developed for career development practitioners and teachers - mapping the path to a fulfilling career through a holistic blend of traditional Indigenous wisdom and modern practice.

## A Growing Research Agenda

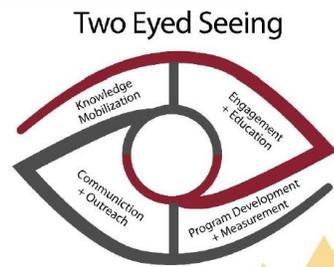
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### **Indigenous Works initiated and participated in research projects throughout the year.**

- Funded by Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada in 2018/2019, this Corporate/ Indigenous Engagement Survey research project replicated our 2017 study but with deep interviews in the Manufacturing, IT and Retail sectors. Survey results underscored low Indigenous engagements scores among businesses in these sectors. Final roundtable presenting the results held in Toronto in April 2019.
- Approval of 25K Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC) Engage Grant with University of Regina. Pioneering research to examine engagement levels of Indigenous graduate students in their course of studies.
- Indigenous Orientation and Relational Understanding of Partnership Competencies in a community-focused research and benchmarking project led by Dr Tanja Hoffman working with

Indigenous Works and Dr Ken Coates at the University of Saskatchewan's Johnson Shoyama Graduate School of Public Policy's. This multi-partner research project uses Grounded Theory methodology to understand partnership characteristics between Indigenous communities and mainstream companies operating in a major development project context. Invitation to present at Cambridge University, UK in December 2019.

- New publication on 'Indigenous Works and Two Eyed Seeing: Mapping the Case for Indigenous-Led Research' in Qualitative Research in Organizations and Management.'



Authors included Rick Colbourne, Peter Moroz, Craig Hall, and Kelly Lendsay.

- Big River Analytics, an Indigenous team specializing in economic research hired by Indigenous Works produced a comprehensive bibliography on Indigenous wellbeing.

- Participation on three research projects with a wide variety of business, industry, NGO, and government organizations.
  - Forest Products Association of Canada (FPAC) has developed and runs the ‘The Greenest Workforce’ which is a comprehensive program to grow awareness about the employment opportunities in the sector and grow the talent pipeline for the future.
  - PetroLMI, a labour market study of the petroleum resource sector.
  - HR Tech, a project in British Columbia which is seeking to increase hiring of Indigenous and other minority groups into the BC technology sector.

## A Journey with Mitacs

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In May 2019 Indigenous Works and Mitacs entered into a Collaboration Agreement to develop a vision and a strategy to support excellence in Indigenous innovation, increase Indigenous research, training, education and skills, and facilitate the development of collaborative networks and research partnerships.

- What followed was an intensive 6-month engagement exercise with consultations, research, two regional forums and Inclusion Works 19 focused on an agenda of innovation for economic transformation.
- We did one-on-one interviews to learn about the Indigenous research ecosystem and identify what strategies are needed to build stronger Indigenous research collaborations and what will be needed to mobilize new knowledge and increase Indigenous business innovation.



## Vancouver and Wakefield Forums

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What do we mean by ‘innovation’ in an Indigenous context? Example of a dialogue question which was discussed at the Wakefield and Vancouver forums.

- Representatives including academia, Indigenous businesses and organizations took part in this conversation. Over 500 people participated in our dialogues and interviews over 5 months.



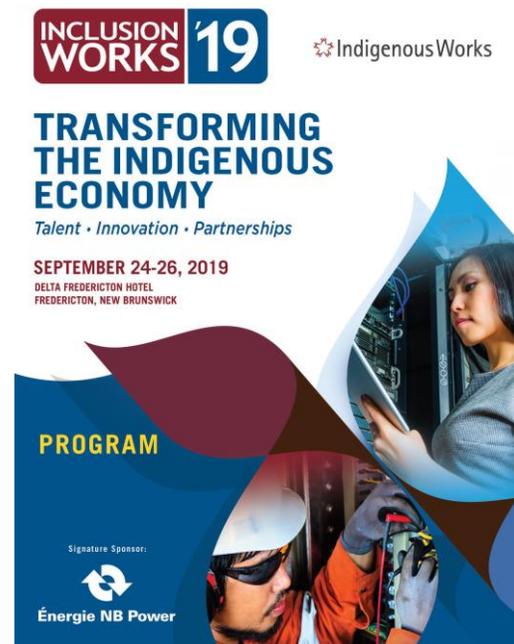
- Through discussion and our own research we are gradually understanding what it will require to encourage a culture of innovation among Indigenous businesses, build linkages with post secondary research institutions, identify community research priorities and develop mechanisms and systems which enable new research to be mobilized. If successful, the results will have significant impacts.

# Inclusion Works 2019: Transforming the Indigenous Economy

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Research as a catalyst to Indigenous business and economic development was the theme of the highly successful Inclusion Works event held in September 2019 in Fredericton.

- The event was made possible by partners which included Mitacs, the Joint Economic Development Initiative (JEDI), the Council for the Advancement of Native, Development Officers (Cando), Ulnooweg Development Group, the National Aboriginal Capital Corporations Association (NACCA), NB Power, Calian and many others.
- Over 200 participants with notable presentations by the Right Honourable, Honourable Paul Martin, Former Prime Minister of Canada, George Lafond, Indigenous thought leader and



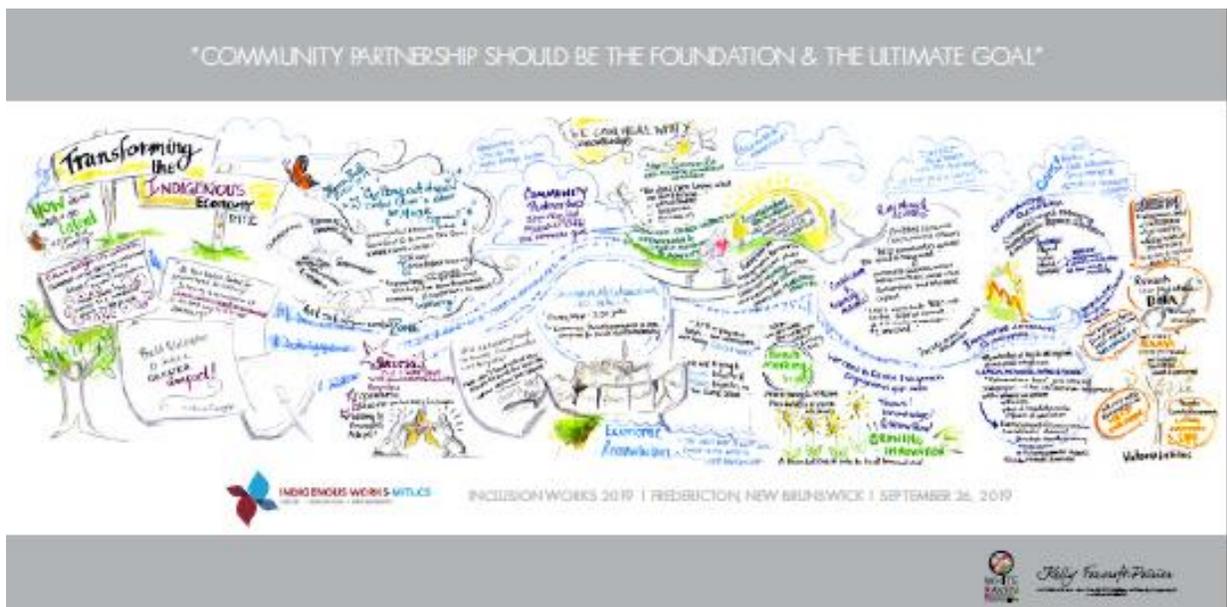
community advocate and Dr L Jane McMillan, Associate Professor, St Francis Xavier University, Nova Scotia.



Dr Manley Begay from the University of Northern Arizona presents a keynote to the audience at Inclusion Works.

## A Valuable Archive of Video, photo and Storyboard Documentation was Developed About the Journey

An award-winning Indigenous video business Imagination FX was hired by Indigenous Works and it conducted interviews and video at each of the three events. These materials will continue to be invaluable in Indigenous Works' efforts to make improvements in the Indigenous research ecosystem.



- Kelly Foxcroft-Poirier amazed participants at each event as she captured the dialogues and themes, pictorially.

# Working with the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council (NSERC)

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**Building Engagement Plans with NSERC. Creating a relationship with this research funding agency to encourage new research partnerships.**

- Sector Engagement Plans
  - Bioenergy
  - Clean Energy
  - Agriculture & Agrifoods
  - Environment

- NSERC is trying to understand how to make their research programs more relevant to Indigenous businesses and communities and how to grow some of their new funding platforms with colleges as well as universities and polytechniques.

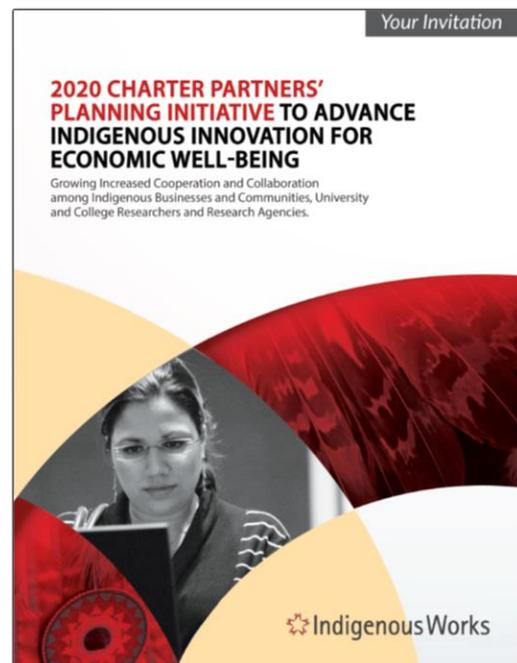


# Luminary - a Transformative Initiative

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## LUMINARY: 2020 Charter Partners' Planning Initiative to Advance Indigenous Innovation, Economic Transformation and Well-being

- Outreach to partners to sign a Charter and participate in a dialogue leading to a strategy and business plan for Luminary, an initiative to identify the strategies, mechanisms and systems needed to grow Indigenous research collaborations and Indigenous business innovation.



Over a hundred Luminary Charter partners from post secondary institutions, Indigenous economic development organizations and businesses, students, Elders and stakeholder Charter partners have come on board, with the strategy Dialogue commencing in fall 2020.



## Other Achievements During the Year

### Exemplary financial stewardship and administration

- Annual ISO certification approved
- Commendations from our Financial Auditor
- Robust social media management
  - Total LinkedIn - 30,442
  - Facebook: 8,141 followers
  - Twitter: 730 followers
- This was the first year that Indigenous Works has achieved its year-over-year break-even financial statement track record without government funding. We appreciate the support from our Leadership Circle membership fees, consulting services and sales of tools and services.



## Concluding Commentary

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**Indigenous Works is well-positioned to weather the oncoming challenges presented by the Covid-19 pandemic.**

- A lean nimble organization with strong governance and management capacity, an established reputation, high output, and a dedication to quality which is making a difference in its mandate to increase Indigenous engagement in the Canadian economy.
- Strategic value propositions, services and a defined niche in Indigenous employment and human resources, Indigenous research, and the Indigenous research ecosystem.
- Financial reserves on which to fall back on if the economic climate continues to slide because of changing Covid circumstances.
- Pursuing greenfield opportunities in two areas where it has established a leadership position.

## Board Members

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### **During fiscal 2019-2020 the following served on Indigenous Works' Board of Directors**

- Pat Baxter (co-chair)
- Stephen Lindley (co-chair)
- Andrea Allen, New Brunswick Power
- Maynard Angus, Prince Rupert Port Authority
- Ken Bell, Syncrude
- Carolann Brewer, BC Utilities Commission
- Trevor Ives, Peter Ballantyne Corporation
- Andrew Jack, Enerflex
- Kelly Lendsay, Pres.& CEO, Indigenous Works
- Chris Lefebvre, Scotiabank
- Amy Rose, Canfor
- Grant Simons, RBC Financial

Indigenous Works mourns the passing of a great friend and leader who served on our Board of Directors for several years. W. Thomas Molloy, OC SOM QC, died on July 2, 2019.