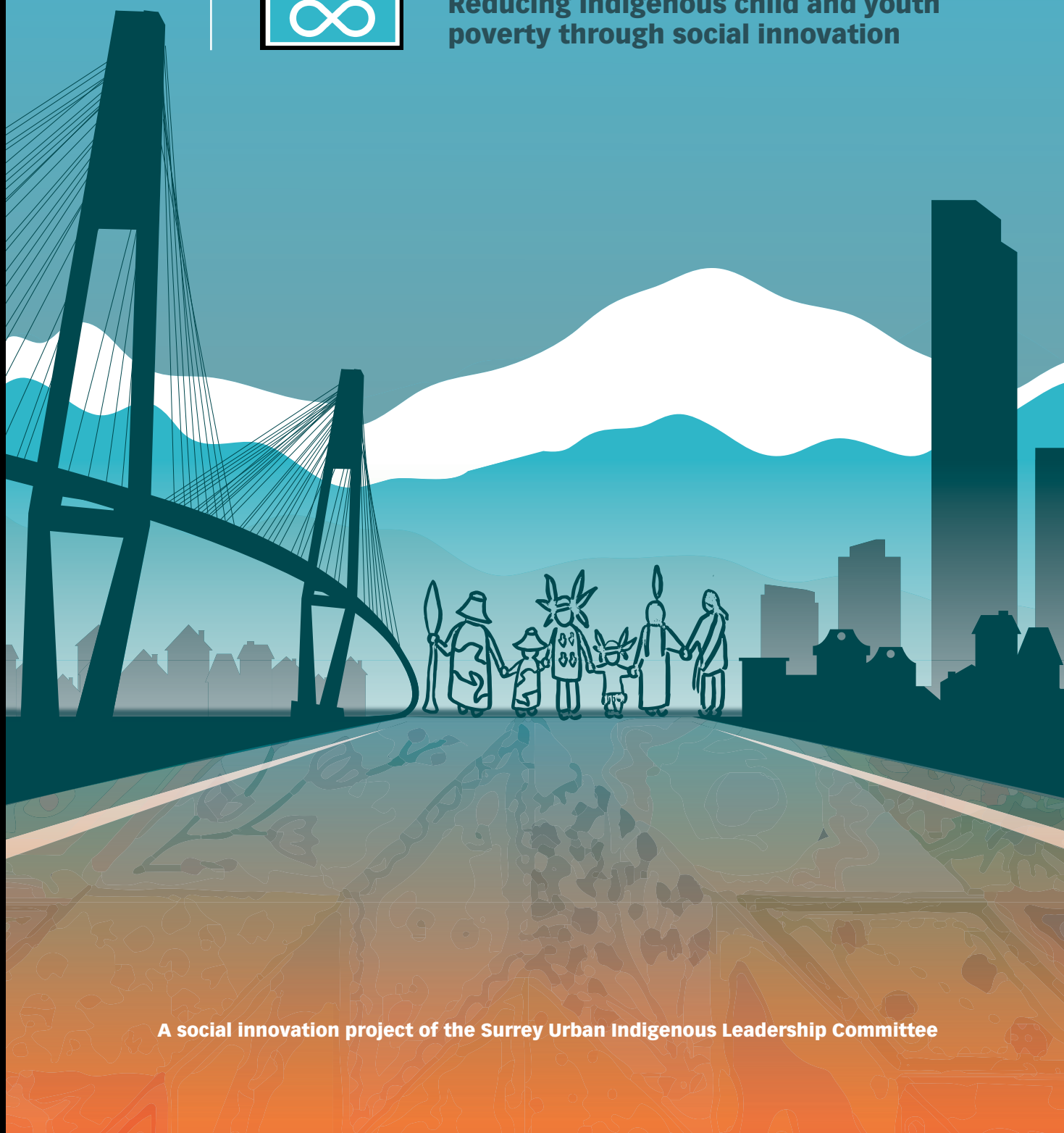**SURREY URBAN INDIGENOUS LEADERSHIP COMMITTEE**

Skookum Lab

PROGRESS REPORT 2018/19

Reducing Indigenous child and youth poverty through social innovation

A social innovation project of the Surrey Urban Indigenous Leadership Committee

SKOOKUM LAB

Strong. Powerful. Brave.

Skookum means strong, powerful, and brave. With the support of strong leadership, powerful methodologies, and a brave community, Skookum Lab is developing new ways to address Indigenous child and youth poverty in Surrey, BC.

Convened by the Surrey Urban Indigenous Leadership Committee (SUILC), Skookum Lab puts Indigenous wisdom at the centre of its activities. Skookum uses a social innovation approach to tackle this complex issue in BC's largest urban Indigenous community. It's a methodology Indigenous Peoples have used since time immemorial. This report shows that it's working.

Located on the territory of the Semiahmoo, Kwantlen, Katzie, Kwikwitlem, Qayqayt and Tsawwassen First Nations, Skookum Lab is proud to be one of very few Indigenous social innovation initiatives on Turtle Island (North America).

Skookum Lab is made possible through the generosity of our funders:

Indigenous Services Canada / Services aux Autochtones Canada

vancouver foundation

Vancity Community Foundation

The Skookum Lab is engaging and honouring our Elders and our youth. The photos in this report feature members of our Elders Guide Group and Youth Guide Group.

Our Goal | Making Surrey a great place for Indigenous children and youth

To meet our goal, we commit to:

Listen to how Indigenous children and youth in Surrey experience poverty.

Understand the complexities of systemic barriers that affect our community.

Cultivate collective wisdom and knowledge to address these barriers.

Initiate prototypes that reduce the number of Indigenous children and youth that experience poverty in Surrey.

Build the capacity of community members and organizations to make and advocate for changes for the benefit of our community.

Skookum Lab

PROGRESS REPORT 2018/19

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A Message From SUILC

The Surrey Urban Indigenous Leadership Committee (SUILC) was formed in 2015 to develop a voice for the more than 13,000 Indigenous people living in Surrey. We began with the goal of developing a deeper understanding of the urban Indigenous experience in Surrey.

Our initial findings were a wake-up call. One of the key findings was that as of 2011, 45% of Indigenous children and youth in Surrey were living in poverty—that's 1,730 Indigenous children and youth. We knew we had to do something—but where to start? Indigenous child poverty is persistent, complex, and daunting.

We needed to understand the systems that create and sustain Indigenous child poverty in Surrey and needed a methodology flexible enough that Indigenous wisdom could be at the centre of all our processes. We completed a scan of existing poverty reduction initiatives and methodologies and determined that a social innovation lab had the most promise for real change. We began to work with a social innovation mentor to help us understand the foundations of social innovation thinking and lab design.

Then, in June 2018, a small delegation of SUILC members travelled to Winnipeg to visit the Winnipeg Boldness Project. Boldness is a social innovation lab aiming to improve outcomes for young Indigenous and non-Indigenous children living in the North End of Winnipeg. We were inspired. That fall, we convened the Skookum Lab and haven't looked back since.

We have been inspired by the work of Skookum Lab and thankful for all of the support we've received from our partners, funders, and of course, individual community members. We are excited to implement the prototypes outlined in this report and reduce the number of Indigenous children living in poverty in our community.

Keenan McCarthy & Joanne Mills
Surrey Urban Indigenous Leadership
Committee Co-Chairs

A Message From Skookum Lab Coordinators

Leading the Skookum Lab through our multi-phased approach has been an incredibly rewarding experience.

The personal stories shared by people with lived experience have moved us; the commitment of Surrey's organizations has motivated us, and our Guide Groups have inspired us.

Crucial to the work we are doing, the four Guide Groups, representing Elders, youth, community support workers and caregivers, bring diverse perspectives to the issue of Indigenous child and youth poverty. Initially developed as part of Skookum's research methodology, the groups have taken on lives of their own, strengthening the capacity of community members to become stronger advocates for their interests. Many people are reconnecting with family, making regalia for the first time, working in the community, and attending political advocacy events such as Surrey's Murdered and Missing Indigenous Women and Girls Day of Action. We are committed to supporting the guide groups even further as we move to fully design and implement our prototypes.

By creating successful engagements grounded in Indigenous wisdom and culturally appropriate methodologies, we have identified 16 prototypes to address Indigenous child and youth poverty and inspired our partners to implement immediate changes that will support Indigenous families living in poverty. Most importantly, we are building community.

Through the work of Skookum Lab, SUILC is working toward one of its primary strategic goals to reduce the number of Indigenous children living in poverty. Moving forward, we will need the full partnership of like-minded funders and organizations to be able to implement our prototypes. With additional support, we expect continued success for Skookum Lab and Surrey's urban Indigenous community.

Jeska Slater & Sheldon Tetreault
Skookum Lab Indigenous Social
Innovation Coordinators

INTRODUCING

SKOOKUM LAB

Campfire 2, October 2019 at the Kwantlen
First Nation Longhouse and Cultural Centre.
See page 23.

Why Focus on Indigenous Child and Youth Poverty in Surrey?

Four in 10 Indigenous children and youth in Surrey, BC, are living in poverty. Surrey is home to a growing Indigenous community that is now the largest in the Province. The rate of Indigenous children and youth poverty in BC's second-largest city is among the highest in Western Canada.

This pervasive poverty allows inequities to flourish and keeps Indigenous children at a social disadvantage from their non-Indigenous peers. That's why the Surrey Urban Indigenous Leadership Committee (SUILC) convened Skookum Lab.

Skookum Lab addresses the high rate of Indigenous child and youth poverty in Surrey by uniting people that experience poverty, making their lived experience visible, and honouring the wisdom of the urban Indigenous community. The lab is achieving success using both systems thinking and design thinking to build capacity to engage community, organizations and government agencies in addressing this complex social issue.

The lab anchors its engagement and activities in Indigenous wisdom. This has allowed us to discover the most appropriate ways to address the root causes of Indigenous children and youth poverty in Surrey. We have mapped the critical systems that create and sustain Indigenous child poverty, designed innovative prototypes to disrupt those systems, and are now ready to implement and test these prototypes.

Before SUILC's inception, data about the growing urban Indigenous community in Surrey was sparse. This information deficit resulted in chronic underfunding of Indigenous social services and underdevelopment of Indigenous capacity within the community. Service gaps were having substantial impacts on the health and wellbeing of Indigenous residents.

A Snapshot of Indigenous Surrey

1 Surrey is the second-largest city in BC by population. It is one of the fastest-growing cities in Canada and Metro Vancouver.

2 As of the 2016 Census, 13,460 Indigenous people were living in Surrey.

3 At current growth rates, the Indigenous population in Surrey will double the Indigenous population in Vancouver by 2036.

4 55% of the Indigenous population in Surrey is First Nations. That 55% comes from all over BC and Canada, representing many different nations, cultures, and languages. Just over 40% of the Indigenous population are Métis.

5 Surrey's Indigenous population is young. Almost half (45%) of the population is younger than 24 years old, while nearly 30% are in the newborn to 14 age group.

6 37% of Indigenous children and youth in Surrey live in poverty; that's 1,610 children and youth.

7 41% of Indigenous children in Surrey live with a single parent.

8 85% of Indigenous single parents in Surrey are women.

9 Compared to Indigenous men, more Indigenous women have low-income status despite having higher levels of employment.

10 Indigenous children are over-represented in foster care. The more than 300 Indigenous children in care in Surrey make up 47% of the community's children in care. By comparison, Vancouver has fewer than half the number of Indigenous children in foster care.

11 Only 15% of Indigenous renters in Surrey have access to subsidized housing, compared to 31% in Vancouver. (535 households in Surrey can access subsidized housing, whereas in Vancouver 2,318 Indigenous households have access.)

2016 Census

What is a Social Innovation Lab?

A social innovation lab:

- Creates understanding about a complex issue
- Commits to action and testing solutions ("prototyping")
- Uses systems thinking
- Incorporates thoughtful experimentation as a design principle
- Includes diverse stakeholders including people impacted by the issue
- Intentionally aims to change the systems that create and sustain the issue

Why Social Innovation?

Indigenous child and youth poverty is a persistent, complex, and daunting social policy issue in Canada. It exists in all urban centres. SUILC started addressing the issue by assessing other child poverty reduction initiatives across Canada. We realized that for our efforts to work, we needed to understand the systems that create and sustain Indigenous child and youth poverty. We also needed a methodology flexible enough that Indigenous wisdom could be at the centre of all our processes.

What is Indigenous Social Innovation?

While talk about social innovation is very new in Canada, its methods and approaches share a lot in common with Indigenous ways.

Social Innovation Labs are intended to be different in process and outcome than other, more traditional projects that tackle social issues or challenges. Guided by our overarching commitment to decolonization, justice and equity, we propose that the key difference in our context is our commitment to:

• Centring Indigenous wisdom

• Interventions that change systems

• Community-based problem definition and solutions

• Building community

• Strategic application of resources and effort

• Take risks for the purpose of learning

• Seeking opportunities to learn and scale

These characteristics form the lens through which we make decisions about where we invest time and resources throughout the project, including decisions we may make about prototypes.

Skookum Lab's core guiding principle is centring Indigenous wisdom. Since time immemorial, Indigenous Peoples have been practicing community-centric models to solve complex issues. Our nations are diverse and have distinct practices and protocols. However, there are common threads that we see in Indigenous worldviews that work to bring us together, especially in an urban context. All of our work is grounded in Indigenous values, practices and ways of being.

Relationships are essential to Indigenous worldviews and are reflected in our methodology. The relationships Skookum Lab has fostered bring much-needed visibility to issues that surface when working with individuals. We must create safe spaces to build trust, identify gifts, and foster capacity in our community. Our Guide Groups are a good expression of this in practice.

Skookum Lab is committed to getting the right people in the room early in its processes. By learning together, we can better address the problem and finds leverage points in systems that allow for issues to be dealt with quickly and effectively.

There is a diversity of Indigenous experiences, cultures and languages in Surrey. Skookum centres Indigenous wisdom by conscientiously creating space for community members to express their cultural practices as they build the capacity to pass on their cultural legacy to the younger generation. At the same time, we seek to acknowledge, honour, and privilege the Coast Salish land based First Nations protocols and traditions in our work. This culturally intersectional approach is how we value and respect the diversity within our community.

Social Innovation:
An Indigenous Tradition

In contemporary terms, social innovations are new social practices designed to meet social needs in better ways than currently exist. A relatively new western concept, social innovation has been used by Indigenous Peoples since time immemorial to address complex issues.

"[W]e need to engage in Indigenous processes since, according to our traditions, the processes of engagement highly influence the outcome of the engagement itself. We need to do this on our own terms."

Leanne Simpson
Dancing on Our Turtle's Back: Stories of Nishnaabeg Re-Creation, Resurgence, and a New Emergence

SKOOKUM LAB

Structure and Processes

SUILC

SOCIAL INNOVATION MENTOR

LAND BASED NATIONS

TASKFORCE

LAB IMPLEMENTATION TEAM

GUIDE GROUPS

ELDERS

YOUTH

CAREGIVERS

SUPPORT WORKERS

URBAN INDIGENOUS COMMUNITY IN SURREY

Ecosystem

The Skookum Lab Ecosystem consists of different yet inter-related entities that all contribute to the development and progress of the lab. Key entities include:

SUILC

An Indigenous coalition that convened Skookum Lab, SUILC provides overall guidance and accountability.

Land-Based First Nations

Situated on the territories of the Coast Salish First Nations, Skookum Lab respects the inherent right to self-governance within their communities.

Guide Groups

The lab's four guide groups create safe spaces for people with lived experiences to share their wisdom and create supportive and resilient relationships grounded in culture and Indigeneity.

Social Innovation Mentor

The lab's mentor challenges us to see the systems creating and sustaining Indigenous child and youth poverty and shares with us innovative methodologies for creating meaningful change.

Task Force

A forum for systems entrepreneurs to utilize their insights to guide the lab, ensuring that processes are consistent with the lab's guiding principles.

Implementation Team

The Implementation Team includes our on-the-ground people that run our engagements, facilitate our meetings, and ensure decisions get implemented using best practices.

Process

Skookum Lab launched in April 2018 as a three-year funded social innovation lab. It consists of four phases: research, definition, prototyping and implementation. Similar to the circular model of its ecosystem, the lab's phases use a non-linear, emergent process that allows us to revisit past phases or renew the cycle as we dive deeper into prototype development. At key points, we convene Campfires, large, diverse gatherings where we share our work, develop a collective understanding of systems, and create consensus for moving forward.

All of our work is grounded in Indigenous values, practices and ways of being. It is one of our strengths and what makes Skookum unique among social innovation projects.

Where Skookum Lab is Today

Skookum Lab is in the prototyping phase, applying design thinking to the findings from the research and definition phases to develop and test initiatives to address Indigenous child and youth poverty in Surrey.

Guided by Indigenous Wisdom, Committed to Community

To best carry out its work, Skookum Lab adheres to seven guiding principles.

Skookum Lab: Guiding Principles

- Seeking opportunities to learn and scale
- Interventions that change systems
- Community-based problem definition and solutions
- Building community
- Strategic application of resources and effort
- Take risks for the purpose of learning
- Centering Indigenous wisdom

SKOOKUM LAB

Engagement

To learn what would make Surrey a great place to raise Indigenous children and youth, Skookum utilized small group discussions, art and culture-based projects, and facilitated engagement exercises. As well, the lab performed reviews of literature on Indigenous poverty reduction and 2016 Census data. Interviews were conducted, and large, diverse community gatherings were held. In all, more than 1,000 people were involved in the lab's engagements.

Research Team and Ethics

Skookum Lab Implementation Team includes members of Reciprocal Consulting, a leading Indigenous run consulting firm specializing in program evaluation and research. Reciprocal evaluates our processes and outcomes and provides guidance on ethical research practices. The company vetted the lab's processes and methods to ensure compliance with the First Nations principles of OCAP: Ownership, Control, Access and Possession.

Literature Review

The lab reviewed and analyzed existing secondary source material on poverty reduction in Canada, with a focus on Indigenous poverty reduction. As well, Skookum reviewed and analyzed the 2016 Census data about Indigenous people and Indigenous child and youth poverty in Surrey.

Invisible and Isolated

Many Indigenous people experiencing poverty in Surrey feel isolated and invisible in the City. Skookum Lab works to build community and healthy relationships vital to engaging in social innovation processes.

Starblanket Engagements

Starblanket 1

In the first Starblanket exercise, participants were asked, "What would make Surrey the best place to raise an Indigenous Child?" This Appreciative Inquiry-style question allowed Skookum Lab facilitators to take a strength-based, collective impact approach. Eleven Starblankets were created, and there were more than 1,000 responses to the question we posed.

Our approach to facilitating the Starblanket also strengthened local Indigenous community and cultural events. Our intent was to enhance and support grassroots initiatives—not replace or take away from them. The Starblanket exercise identified several overarching values, including unity, family, respect and empathy, that are important for guiding and grounding this work.

Starblanket 2

On National Indigenous Peoples Day 2019, Skookum Lab facilitated a second Starblanket session. The question for this session was changed to allow for a more in-depth exploration of the issue. Facilitators asked, "If you could wave your magic wand and do one thing to address Indigenous Child and Youth Poverty in Surrey, what would you do?" While many participants spoke of the need for more services, others identified further needs.

Key Informant Interviews

The seven Key Informant Interviews Skookum Lab conducted helped build relationships and connections with key actors, community members, and systems change agents.

Five interviews were with "systems entrepreneurs"—people holding positions in Indigenous organizations, schools, and government agencies that can affect change in the systems that perpetuate Indigenous child and youth poverty. Also, two community members were interviewed, sharing incredible stories about their lived experiences and the vulnerability they feel as Indigenous people when interacting with systems in Surrey.

Focus Groups

Skookum Lab held focus groups with 30 individuals representing Surrey School District #36, Xyólheméylh Child and Family Services, Métis Child and Family Services, and the Ministry of Child and Family Development. The focus groups were a chance to connect with support workers, build awareness about the lab's goals, and hear directly from frontline workers about the nature and experience of Indigenous child and youth poverty in Surrey.

Guide Groups

The focus of the Guide Group engagement sessions was to learn what would make Surrey a great place to raise Indigenous children. Four separate guides groups— Elders Guide Group, Youth Guide Group, Community Support Workers Guide Group, and Caregivers Guide Group—were established to ensure a broad range of perspectives on the issue of Indigenous child and youth poverty in Surrey. An essential component of the Skookum Lab ecosystem, the Guide Groups have been the source of the greatest inspiration and learning.

Guide groups could loosely be described as community-based stakeholder groups commonly found in public engagement methods. We, too, intended to have the Guide Groups contribute to our understanding of Indigenous poverty in Surrey and validate our research findings. However, unlike traditional research engagements with Indigenous communities, we never intended for our interactions with Guide Groups to be merely transactional, extractive, or exploitative. We knew we had to work in a different way. We needed to work in a way that honoured the diverse wisdom of the urban Indigenous population while being reciprocal in our programming so we could tangibly give back to the community in the process. We wanted to invest and uplift our community in Surrey that has been so marginalized, isolated from each other, not reflected in the community, and spread out over a wide area. Our intention was that Guide Group participants would be in a stronger, more resilient place than before the lab. We also endeavoured— in a very Indigenous way—to have fun.

As a result, we have focused on non-traditional engagement activities, including creative art-based activities (murals, graffiti, songwriting) and cultural learning opportunities (regalia making, honouring ceremony, drumming and singing). We have also created opportunities to affirm a positive identity and voice (portraiture, activism) and activities that promote stronger personal connections to each other and increase awareness of available community supports (regular meetings, shared meals, facilitated discussions, referrals to services).

Support to the Guide Groups has been resource intensive with striking outcomes. Guide Group participants have reported feeling heard, feeling connected and hopeful, and feeling a sense of purpose. It is not an overstatement to say that the Guide Groups have thrived and are taking on a life of their own. More and more people are interested and seeking to participate. Leadership within the Guide Groups is naturally emerging. There is even momentum to develop an urban Indigenous ambassadors-style program to bring Indigenous experiences out of the shadows and give voice to Indigenous issues like child and youth poverty. The Guide Groups have been a critical factor in the success of Skookum Lab.

> **"We are resilient, We are brilliant, We have to take a stand, Need more connection to the land."**
>
> The chorus of *We Have to Take A Stand,* the song the Youth Guide Group created with Indigenous rap artist JB the First Lady.

Campfire Gatherings

The Campfire engagement is Skookum's indigenized social innovation design lab. By incorporating culture, ceremony, and decolonizing methodologies, Skookum Lab has created a process to centre Indigenous wisdom in the change-making process. Cultural practices were deeply embedded in both Campfire gatherings as we met in a circle around a metaphorical campfire, sang, smudged, and gave gifts to start and close the sessions.

A design lab is a process that convenes key change agents who come together to develop a collective understanding of a problem and create innovative solutions.

Campfire 1

Campfire 1, held in May 2019 at a Surrey School District learning centre, hosted 38 attendees, including key stakeholder groups involved in systems that support, sustain or reduce Indigenous child and youth poverty and community members with lived experience. Guide Groups created and delivered emotional and impactful presentations of their personal stories and journey through poverty.

Campfire 1 objectives included familiarizing participants with Skookum Lab's history, exploring opportunities for making Surrey a great place for Indigenous children and youth, and determining what additional information is needed to help design effective, system-changing interventions.

As well, Campfire 1 created a sense of urgency in addressing Indigenous child and youth poverty in Surrey and prepared participants for the second Campfire gathering in October 2019.

Campfire 2

Campfire 2 was held in October 2019 at the Kwantlen First Nation Longhouse and Cultural Centre. The event engaged 48 participants with a broad cross-section of people representing non-profit organizations, government institutions, and those with lived experience.

Campfire 2 objectives included fostering urgency, commitment and action around Indigenous child and youth poverty in Surrey and developing creative ways to intervene in the systems that create and sustain Indigenous child and youth poverty in the city.

Coast Salish protocols, including a blanketing ceremony honouring the members of the Elders Guide Group led by cultural leaders from Kwantlen First Nation, informed the two-day event.
The ceremony set the tone for the rest of the Campfire: sacred, generous, trusting, loving, and respectful, tapping into Indigenous wisdom and honouring everyone's contributions.

"The whole experience is a source of lasting medicine for me, from the location to the culture, to the Elders and other participants, the energy/synergy…it was an honour for me to attend, contribute, listen and learn."

Campfire participant

Skookum Lab's Key Findings

The Systemic Context of Indigenous Poverty in Surrey

In Skookum Lab's research, the most frequently mentioned theme was Indigenous cultural wellness. Surrey's Indigenous population discussed the importance of fostering connections between Elders and youth, language revitalization, cultural ceremony with families, and relationship building between urban Indigenous peoples, their own, and other, land-based nations. Many participants noted that it was essential to create "a sense of belonging" through the development of Indigenized urban space and place.

Skookum's *Indigenous Poverty Reduction Literature Review* revealed that Indigenous worldviews involve holistic—interconnected—approaches towards wellness or wellbeing. For example, Indigenous peoples do not view economic wellbeing in isolation from other aspects of wellbeing.

That said, economic status is an essential social determinant of wellness and Indigenous people continue to experience stigma, structural racism, segregation and isolation. All of these factors prevent Indigenous people from accessing resources to maximize their socio-economic status and overall wellbeing.

Skookum's research also revealed the many reasons Surrey's Indigenous families are in survival mode and facing many barriers to exiting a cycle of poverty. Interviews and discussion revealed that the lived experiences of Indigenous poverty in Surrey include families not having basic needs met such as affordable housing, access to transportation, culturally safe health services, sufficient income, and food security. Key informants also noted that having children taken into government care causes significant trauma for families and creates additional layers and challenges for families struggling to escape poverty.

Emerging Themes

After the Skookum Lab Implementation Team carried out its community-based research and engagement activities, the findings were published in a report by Reciprocal Consulting, *Community Engagement Findings Summary October 2018 - March 2019*. The following is a summary of the themes from Skookum Lab's Phase 1 (Understanding Phase) research.

Culture

Revitalizing Indigenous culture is essential to fostering connection and pride.

Education

The education system must incorporate more Indigenous knowledge into the curriculum and increase accessibility to sports and arts programming.

Health and Wellness

Improved access and support are critical to Indigenous mental, emotional, physical health, and spiritual health.

Recreation

Youth need support to create safe spaces and gain access to participate in sports, games, and the arts.

Space and Place

There is a strong need and desire for cultural gathering places that are permanent, centrally located, and immersed in culture and teachings.

Services

There is a need to increase services related to poverty reduction.

Advocacy, Knowledge and Awareness

An increase in advocacy, knowledge, and awareness regarding the impacts of colonization and intergenerational trauma is needed.

Leadership and Governance

There is a need for increased visibility of Indigenous people in leadership and decision-making roles.

Phase 2 Action Areas With a Community-Based Problem Definition

In Phase 2 (Defining Phase), the Skookum Lab Implementation Team and the Indigenous Child Poverty Task Force synthesized engagement findings from Phase 1 into five Action Areas:

- Education
- Financial Security
- Family Connection
- Wellness
- Space and Place

The team also established "The 4Cs" which are criteria to assess any new prototype developed through the lab. A community-based problem definition was created for each Action Area. These were presented to change agents at Campfire 2.

The 4Cs

Based on our Guide Groups' wisdom, Skookum Lab developed the "4Cs" as the desired impact areas of our prototypes:

Community Belonging

Connection to Family

Cultural Awareness/ Visibility

Cash/ Financial Security

Prototypes

At Campfire #2, the following 16 prototypes were identified as potential pilot projects in Skookum Lab Phase 3 (Prototyping Phase).

Education

PROTOTYPE #1

Indigenous School—A home for Indigenous learners and families in Surrey

Create an Indigenous school for K-12 students and their families that could build upon the successful AWAHSUK pre-school model and replicate School District 36's successful Indigenous cultural programming.

PROTOTYPE #2

Indigenous Kinship Network Communication Strategy

Develop a strategy to improve the communication to Indigenous parents and students about opportunities for cultural connection and learning within schools and Surrey in general.

PROTOTYPE #3

Scale Successful Indigenous Programs To New Schools

Explore innovative programming opportunities across the school district that could be scaled up through a prototype.

Financial Security

PROTOTYPE #1

Urban Village Co-op

Address both housing and income security through developing an urban village co-op for young families to live together and support each other while building the skills to increase their collective income through entrepreneurship.

PROTOTYPE #2

Surviving to Thriving Income Project

Create a program to increase the income of single mothers by combining a social/ cultural network with training to develop social enterprise initiatives. The program would incorporate childcare, fun, and learning to engage the whole family.

Family Connection

PROTOTYPE #1

See Me Campaign—Shifting

Develop a program based on understanding and compassion designed to shift the perspectives of those working within the government or non-profit social service sector to better serve the needs of Indigenous families while shifting the paradigm from intervention to prevention.

PROTOTYPE #2

Land to Table Traditional Food Program

Establish an all-ages program to increase social connections and obtain the cultural knowledge required to gather, prepare, and eat healthy Indigenous foods.

Wolfpack Caregiver Program

Create a program to increase access to respite, services, and life skills through cultural activities. The program would be based on developing Indigenous capacity to support each other, increase prevention, and minimize the fear and probability of child apprehension.

PROTOTYPE #4

Honouring Our Gifts Single Parents Training Program

Develop an employment program for single parents that would incorporate the whole family in cultural sharing while parents gain employment skills and employment support.

PROTOTYPE #5

Reclaiming our Roots Age 7- 12 Identity Program

Initiate a program for pre-teen children to learn about their Indigenous identity through both fun cultural activities while increasing social connections.

Wellness

PROTOTYPE #1

Skookum Camp

Establish a mobile youth wellness camp in an urban environment offering culturally based learning opportunities and safe services for Indigenous youth.

PROTOTYPE #2

Growing Families—Family-to-Family Peer Support and Connections

Create a program that aims to recreate the traditional Indigenous extended family care network by encouraging family-to-family peer mentoring and support, such as offering transportation to recreational programs, assistance with homework, and connecting parents to services.

Space & Place

PROTOTYPE #1

Many Voices, One Home—SUILC-led Discussion Paper

Develop a discussion paper that pulls together all relevant information into one place, fills in the knowledge gaps and can be used to build momentum and partners for an Indigenous cultural and service hub in Surrey.

Meta

PROTOTYPE #1

Guide Groups

Continue to invest in the Guide Groups as a means of creating the capacity for voice and representation within the populations targeted for interventions.

PROTOTYPE #2

Understanding to Action—Racism Through a Social Innovation/ Systems Lens

Host opportunities to learn from other social innovation labs on how they are addressing the intersection of poverty and racism in their cities, learning about and utilizing systems thinking techniques to develop innovative ways to combat racism in Surrey.

PROTOTYPE #3

Evaluating Successes to Scale-Up

Create an evaluation team as a prototype for existing initiatives that were inspired and implemented by our partners as a result of the labs to determine if the initiatives are successful and if they can be scaled-up.

Next Steps

Skookum Lab has $60,000 to implement three prototypes. Before launching any prototypes, we need to elaborate on the initial design work to ensure it meets The 4Cs. Furthermore, the Skookum Task Force will assess the potential for successful implementation of each prototype by considering the following questions:

- Do we have or can we find the resources to realize the prototype?

- Can we assemble the necessary partners to implement the prototype?

- Will we be able to measure the impact of the prototype, and is it a scale-able concept?

These assessments will happen quickly, with the anticipated launch of at least three prototypes in early 2020.

Campfire 3, a deep dive into the intersection of racism and poverty, will be held in the spring of 2020.

Reflections and Learning

We have done so much with so little. Skookum's core funding from the Vancouver Foundation is $225,000 over three years. We have leveraged all of our partnerships, funding relationships, and personal relationships to make this lab happen. We have had to be creative, innovative, and responsive. However, this is not a sustainable model, and more funding is needed.

Despite financial limitations, Skookum has created a feeling of inspiration, gaining momentum through its innovative, and well-supported, engagements. The lab has also generated a sense of urgency, moving people, organizations, and decision-makers to action. Our research has identified areas that require deep dives and where the lab's resources and efforts can best be applied. Through our research and engagements, Skookum Lab has developed 16 prototypes to address Indigenous child and youth poverty. We anticipate the implementation of three of these prototypes in early 2020.

Our developmental evaluation has demonstrated that we are remaining true to our principles as we do this work, and the community is responding in kind. The formation of the Guide Groups has engaged grassroots community leaders, built community capacity, and fostered robust connections. This kind of engagement can be built upon, and the impacts and relationships can last beyond the life of the lab. Our partners are already asking to utilize Skookum Lab's infrastructure to address their pressing social policy issues.

Further, Skookum Lab also has the involvement of a range of systems people that can effect change. A good example is the BC Ministry of Social Development and Poverty Reduction that established a new full-time Indigenous navigator-style position as a result of information from Skookum Lab. We look forward to working with the Ministry to ensure the success of the position and evaluating the potential to replicate and scale similar initiatives. Other partners, such as Surrey School District #36, are also taking immediate steps to implement new initiatives based on their involvement in Skookum Lab. These initiatives are a result of relationship building through the lab, developing a strong foundation for the systems change work that is needed, and meeting our commitment to building community.

Skookum Lab participants have expressed gratitude, inspiration, and empowerment resulting from our innovative processes. They have also emphasized the opportunity that exists from the momentum we have built. Now it is our collective responsibility to act. We cannot be complacent with the success we have had. Our goal is to disrupt the systems that are creating and sustaining Indigenous child and youth poverty in Surrey. Skookum means strong, powerful, and brave. With the support of strong leadership, powerful methodologies, and a brave community, Skookum Lab will succeed.

Thank You

Indigenous languages have words that go beyond thank you. It is in this spirit that we extend our sincerest appreciation to all who have made Skookum Lab possible.

Land Based Nations

The SUILC and Skookum Lab acknowledge that our work takes place on the traditional territories of the Semiahmoo, Katzie, Kwikwitlem, Kwantlen, Qayqayt, and Tsawwassen First Nations.

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Rosaline Heinel

Eileen Lindner

Valerie Mary Manson

Ruby Marks

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Diane Hulin

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SUILC

SUILC consists of representatives from:

Aboriginal Community Career Employment Services Society (ACCESS)

City of Surrey

Seven Sacred Fires Society

First Nations Health Authority

Fraser Health Aboriginal Health

Fraser Region Aboriginal Friendship Centre

Fraser Valley Aboriginal Children and Family Services Society (Xyólheméylh)

Indigenous Wellness Training Society

Kekinow Native Housing Society

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Whess Harman, Skookum Lab Logo, https://www.whessharman.com

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Strong. Powerful. Brave.