



**Indigenous, Immigrant and Refugee  
Young Adult Representation in the  
Non-Profit Sector:  
Summary of Interviews with  
Non-Profit Sector Leaders**

July 2018

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# 1. Executive Summary

This Executive Summary provides an overview of the non-profit sector research undertaken by the Vancouver Foundation to study the Indigenous, immigrant and refugee young adult representation in employment and board governance positions in the charitable non-profit sector.

A total of thirty-eight (38) key informant interviews were conducted over the phone with non-profit strategic leaders in four (4) different regions:

- Metro Vancouver;
- Vancouver Island;
- Prince George; and,
- West Kootenays.

Participants were asked questions about challenges and successes related to recruiting and retaining Indigenous, immigrant and refugee young adults for employment and board governance positions, as well as potential recruitment and retention strategies that would enhance inclusion of Indigenous, immigrant and refugee young adults in the non-profit and charitable sector.

Common themes that emerged from the key informant interviews are summarized in tables below. A complete analysis of the interview findings by regions can be found in Section 4 of the report.

*Common Challenges and Barriers to Inclusion*

Employment	Board Governance
Low compensation in the non-profit sector	Time commitment (e.g., focused on school or career)
Lack of skills or experience to work in the field	Lack of training and experience
Lack of funding for organizations to recruit	Lack of interest in board governance
Racism and stigma	Unpaid volunteer position
Challenges in attracting applicants from this population group	Lack of meaningful engagement with Indigenous, immigrant and refugee young adults

*Common Organizational Successes*

<b>Employment</b>	<b>Board Governance</b>
Successful transition from volunteer position to full-time or part-time staff	Lack of successes in recruiting and retaining Indigenous, immigrant and refugee young adults for board governance positions
Positive experience for organizations who hired summer students and interns	Acknowledged the need for more effort to be inclusive at board governance level

*Common Recruitment and Retention Strategies*

<b>Employment</b>	<b>Board Governance</b>
Build relationships with other organizations in the community that serve this population group	Build stronger relationships with organizations working with this population group
Offer training programs and webinars to keep young adults engaged	Get young adults engaged and interested in board governance
Improve hiring practices and work as an organization to be inclusive	Offer training, leadership development and mentorship support for young board members
Support organizations with funding to hire from this population group	Review current board governance policies, procedures and expectations
Connect with employment counsellors and job training programs, as well as attend career fairs at post-secondary institutions for recruitment	Develop a toolkit for the board that includes information on how to recruit respectfully within Indigenous communities, to use proper language, and to be inclusive on board governance

## 2. Introduction

The Social Planning and Research Council of British Columbia (SPARC BC) has developed this report to support the Vancouver Foundation in their continued commitment to enhance youth engagement initiatives in the charitable non-profit sector. Key informant interviews were conducted with sector leaders to gain insights into Indigenous, immigrant and refugee young adults (18-29 years of age) representation in employment and board governance positions in the non-profit sector in British Columbia, including challenges and successes of recruiting and retaining this population group. A total of thirty-eight (38) organizations from Metro Vancouver, Vancouver Island, Prince George and West Kootenays participated in this research.

In April and May 2018, Vancouver Foundation held community consultations with community members across the province to learn about youth priority areas in different regions. The preliminary results of the interviews with key informants were shared with community members during the consultations:

<b>Community Consultations</b>	<b>Dates</b>
Prince George	April 13-14, 2018
Nanaimo	April 20, 2018
Victoria	April 27, 2018
West Kootenays	April 30, 2018
Vancouver	May 3, 2018
Surrey	May 4, 2018

The next section of this report outlines the data collection methodology. The subsequent section provides an analysis of interview findings. The final section The list of participating organizations and interview instrument are included in the appendices.

### 3. Methodology

An interview guide for key informants was developed to understand Indigenous, immigrant and refugee young adult representation in the non-profit and charitable sector (see Appendix B). Participants were asked questions about challenges and successes related to recruiting and retaining Indigenous, immigrant and refugee young adults for employment and board governance positions, as well as potential recruitment and retention strategies that would enhance inclusion of Indigenous, immigrant and refugee young adults in the non-profit and charitable sector.

Key informants from the non-profit and charitable sector were identified, and a total of thirty-eight (38) organizations from four (4) different regions responded to the interview request:

Region	Number of Organizations
Metro Vancouver	10
Vancouver Island	9
Prince George	7
West Kootenays	12
<b>Total</b>	<b>38</b>

In order to reach out to a larger number of organizations, snowballing technique was utilized where key informants were asked if they know any other non-profit strategic leader in their community who could contribute to this research. All interviews were conducted over the phone in the month of April, 2018.

## 4. Analysis of Findings

The analyses of key informant interviews are presented by four (4) regions:

- Metro Vancouver;
- Vancouver Island;
- Prince George; and,
- West Kootenays.

### 4.1. Metro Vancouver

A total of ten (10) non-profit organizations from Metro Vancouver participated in the key informant interviews. Those who declined the invitation to participate mentioned that employers do not ask about their employees' backgrounds and often does not have accurate records of such information. They also mentioned the successes of having youth advisory committees in their organizations.

#### Employment

Out of ten (10) organizations, eight (8) organizations currently employed Indigenous, immigrant and refugee young adults as full-time or part-time staff, or as unpaid interns. The types of positions they hold varied, ranging from frontline or entry-level staff (e.g., program assistants, settlement workers, coordinators) to director and managerial level.

#### *Challenges and Barriers to Inclusion*

Metro Vancouver organizations faced various challenges to recruiting and retaining Indigenous, immigrant and refugee young adults for employment positions. Low compensation in the non-profit sector was noted as a top challenge when it comes to employee retention. According to one participant, they are “creating a wage and benefit environment that lets people stay [in their organization] or at least use it as an anchor rather than as their first place” to address this issue. In addition, the difficulty in attracting and finding Indigenous, immigrant and refugee young adults with necessary skills set and abilities to work in the field was mentioned as a major challenge among organizations. This was especially true for recruiting Indigenous and refugee young adults, and for senior leadership positions.

Other notable barriers included lack of staff turnover, issue of creating a culturally safe and welcoming workplace and a structured recruitment process that may be a challenge for people who require a more relaxed interview environment. One organization was in the process of “beefing up their cultural safety” in order to create a workplace culture that is more welcoming. Another noted the challenges with retaining qualified employees: “A challenge to retain is that we have good hires and other people also want them.”

While most organizations felt the lack of diversity in their organization was not a cause for concern, some organizations noted that it is difficult to know what they are missing out. One participant mentioned that they may not have the expertise that these Indigenous, immigrant and refugee young adults bring to the table. Another participant expressed disappointment: “As an organization that is committed to equity, diversity and inclusion and to creating a respectful, safe and caring culture it can be disappointing at times that we are not perceived externally as an employer of choice for these groups.”

#### *Organizational Successes As It Relates to Inclusion*

Many organizations found success in seeing young adults make the transition from being a program participant or a service user, to becoming a volunteer and eventually, being hired on as a part-time and full-time staff. As one participant puts it, “it just it really creates a lot more cohesion across programs, a more engaged staff connected community and a vibrancy with young staff that are really vital for us.” Another participant whose organization has hired Indigenous and new immigrant young adults also reported that “it has been successful when they are performing well in their roles, and their experience, history and insights are shared to help us as an organization learn and grow.”

While some organizations shared successes, one participant noted that the lack of success in their organization may be because their employment opportunities are not being made known to Indigenous, immigrant and refugee young adults.

#### *Potential Recruitment and Retention Strategies for Inclusion*

Metro Vancouver organizations offered the following insights into potential recruitment and retention strategies that could promote inclusion of Indigenous, immigrant and refugee young adults in the non-profit sector in this region:

- Utilize community-specific media to reach out to this population group;
- Partner with Indigenous organizations to recruit Indigenous young adults;
- Attend career fairs at post-secondary institutions for recruitment;
- Offer training and mentoring programs (e.g., learning opportunities, training for advancement into managerial positions);
- Get Indigenous, immigrant and refugee young adults engaged at work (e.g., involve them in the recruitment process, innovative projects);
- Establish long-term ongoing relationship with this population group (e.g., traveling to different communities to share about the work and create relationships, learn through lunch and learn, presentations); and,
- Work with organizations that serve this population group to recruit provincially (e.g., Aboriginal Friendship Centre and other agencies across the province).



## Board Governance

None of the organizations from Metro Vancouver that participated in the interview process had Indigenous, immigrant and refugee young adults currently serving on their board. One participant mentioned that while they have young board members, “[they had] never asked them if they are immigrants or Canadian born.” Another participant noted that they have an Indigenous young adult candidate they are considering for their board.

### *Challenges and Barriers to Inclusion*

For many Metro Vancouver organizations, recruiting young adults for board governance positions was not their current priority for the board. Participants noted top challenges to inclusion in board governance to be lack of readiness as a board to embrace young adult board members and lack of support for young adults in board governance positions. According to one participant, the board should also welcome adults who have an understanding of adult partnerships and engagement of young adults in the decision making process: “board might change its structure or systems to better fit young people rather than [board] having young people to fit it.” One participant offered another perspective: “I think probably a cultural challenge of [young] people viewing the board as a place for the experienced, defined in age and duration, as opposed to experience.”

Other challenges included the difficulty of identifying prospective young candidates for board governance positions. In some cases, recruiting for qualified candidates was competitive due to a high demand for Indigenous, immigrant and refugee young adults in senior leadership level to fill board governance positions. One participant noted that even as they had “gone out and recruited specifically for people with lived experiences in Indigenous communities or with First Nations or Aboriginal communities both on and off reserve for [their] board of directors,” the process was challenging.

While organizations lacked young adult representation on their board, most organizations felt that their board was well-represented by people from different cultures and backgrounds. One participant mentioned that having young adults on advisory committees that informs the board mitigated lack of young adult voices on the board. On the possible negative impact from lack of diversity, one participant noted that “there is a limitation when you are looking at increasing your footprint or bringing on new contracts or even identifying partners. The lens is so different.”

### *Organizational Successes As It Relates to Inclusion*

For many organizations, engaging in an inclusive discussion about diversity at the board level is a start that would pave way for diverse board and staffing. As one participant puts it, it is about “preparing [them] to think about things in a way that makes [their] services more accessible, identifying where [they] are not doing the work, who [they] could partner with.” Having a match that is a good fit for the board member and the organization and reaching out to organization’s network for recruitment were also important. Some organizations mentioned that they were working towards inclusion.

In addition, young adults were also willing to serve on a board when asked. According to one participant, “we generally do not find [young] people say that they do not want to [serve on board].”

### *Potential Recruitment and Retention Strategies for Inclusion*

Metro Vancouver organizations suggested a number of potential recruitment and retention strategies that could be implemented to address inclusion in board governance in the non-profit sector:

- Build stronger relationships with organizations working with this population group;
- Engage with Indigenous, immigrant and refugee young adults;
- Recruit young volunteers in the organization who believe in the organization’s mission and values as board members;
- Offer training, leadership development and mentorship support for young board members and recognize their contributions to the board;
- Support non-profit boards with tools and resources on how to identify young adults who are interested in getting involved in board governance (e.g., training and development workshops on how to attract and retain Indigenous, immigrant and refugee young adults);
- Support older board members to help them understand their roles and values of working with young adults;
- Expand the number of board positions to create more opportunities; and,
- Involve Indigenous, immigrant and refugee young adults in the decision-making through advisory committees.

## **4.2. Vancouver Island**

For Vancouver Island, a total of nine (9) non-profit organizations participated in the key informant interviews. One of the reasons offered for declining the invitation to participate in the interview was that their organization does not work with the 18-29 years age group.

### **Employment**

Of the nine (9) organizations, three (3) organizations currently employed Indigenous, immigrant or refugee young adults. Most of them worked as a full-time or part-time employee, or as a paid and unpaid intern. The types of positions they hold were concentrated in frontline positions (e.g., program assistants, settlement workers).

### *Challenges and Barriers to Inclusion*

Vancouver Island organizations identified lack of funding in the non-profit sector as a major barrier to recruiting and retaining Indigenous, immigrant and refugee young adults for employment positions. While new job opportunities were scarce, one participant noted that more people were also “staying in positions longer” resulting in lower rate of turnover in the non-profit sector. In addition, organizations mentioned low pay, difficulty in finding young adults who were interested in the work of the organization, language barriers and lack of skills or experience for young adults as other major challenges. As one participant puts it, “young workers with less experience than more seasoned workers are disadvantaged [in the job market].”

Many organizations reported that they were working towards being an equal opportunity employer. While lack of diversity was not an issue for some organizations, others expressed concerns: “Whenever there is a lack of diversity in an organization, it results in really not seeing things through a lens that is as inclusive as it could be.”

### *Organizational Successes As It Relates to Inclusion*

Some organizations in Vancouver Island had successful hires from this demographic group, which in turn attracted a more diverse clientele to the organization. For example, one participant noted that hiring an Indigenous young adult as a staff to work on their programming helped the organization build connections with the Indigenous communities. Another participant noted how volunteering opportunities for young adults led to full-time or permanent employment within or outside of their organization: “Volunteering is a great way for youth to show their interest and develop their skills.”

### *Potential Recruitment and Retention Strategies for Inclusion*

Organizations on Vancouver Island offered suggestions as to how their organizations could be more inclusive in terms of recruiting and retaining Indigenous, immigrant and refugee young adults:

- Build relationships with other organizations in the community that serve this population group;
- Offer adequate pay;
- Support non-profits with multi-year funding to identify, train, hire and advance Indigenous, immigrant and refugee young adults;
- Connect with employment counsellors and job training programs; and,
- Improve hiring practices by implementing standardized procedures to ensure that the job opportunity is open and accessible to diverse population groups.

## **Board Governance**

While some organizations had diversity on their board, none of the organizations in Vancouver Island reported having an Indigenous, immigrant or a refugee young adult as a board member.

### *Challenges and Barriers to Inclusion*

Organizations faced various challenges to recruiting and retaining Indigenous, immigrant and refugee young adults for their board positions, including lack of flexibility in time commitment being identified as a major barrier for young adults. One participant offered the following comment regarding time commitment: “We find that youth are busy unravelling (re)-settlement [in] their own lives and usually under financial duress.” In addition, the fact that board positions were unpaid volunteer positions did not help attract young adults to be involved in board governance and strategic planning. For example, one participant noted that they had “[young adults who] might be great for board positions but [they] have ended up moving into other employment positions.”

Other challenges included lack of experience serving on board, lack of clear set of policies or procedures on board recruitment within organizations to follow, lack of available board positions, and lack of meaningful engagement with Indigenous, immigrant and refugee young adults. According to one participant, “it is knowing where they are hanging out and being able to communicate effectively with those groups of folks and how we can make those connections, and then engaging them in a way that is meaningful for them.”

While many organizations did not experience any direct consequences due to lack of diversity in their organizations, some recognized the need to build relationships with Indigenous and immigrant communities, and to support young adults with leadership skills. Moreover, lack of diversity may have an adverse effect on the organizations’ ability to address the issue of inclusion and reconciliation, and to connect with greater community. One participant noted that “[Indigenous, immigrant and refugee young adults] got networks of people that they then bring to the organization, which then assist the organization in being able to partner more effectively in the community.”

### *Organizational Successes As It Relates to Inclusion*

Organizations reported limited success in recruiting and retaining Indigenous, immigrant and refugee young adults for board governance positions, with no young adults from this demographic group currently serving on the non-profit boards. However, participants expressed that they are working towards being more inclusive of young adults on their boards: “Being able to engage and have dynamic people who are of a younger age is that positive movement forward for our organization in terms of the representation on the board. The diversity is actually greater than it has been in the past but it is still not inclusive of Indigenous or immigrant population.” Another participant also mentioned that their board is currently in the process of developing a strategy for recruiting and retaining Indigenous, immigrant and refugee young adults for board positions.

### *Potential Recruitment and Retention Strategies for Inclusion*

Vancouver Island organizations suggested the following recruitment and retention strategies to include Indigenous, immigrant and refugee young adults for board governance positions:

- Review current board governance policies, procedures and expectations (e.g., include languages about diversity, formalize recruitment strategies through deliberate efforts, establish board mentorship or student positions);
- Reach out to diverse communities and organizations that serve this population group, as well as, universities;
- Offer board governance training;
- Support alternative governance structures such as advisory committees (e.g., youth advisory committees);
- Offer stipends for young adult board members; and,
- Communicate to young adults about the need and the importance of their involvement.

## **4.3. Prince George**

A total of seven (7) organizations from Prince George participated in the key informant interviews. Those who declined the invitation to participate cited small size of the organization and lack of availability as reasons.

### **Employment**

Of the seven (7) organizations, six (6) organizations currently employed Indigenous, immigrant or refugee young adult as full-time and part-time staff, as well as through unpaid internship placements. Most of them worked in frontline or entry level positions, such as administrative assistant and support workers.

### *Challenges and Barriers to Inclusion*

Prince George organizations identified lack of experience and specific knowledge to work in their sector as major barriers to recruiting and retaining Indigenous, immigrant and refugee young adults. As one participant notes, there are “lack of qualified people who are prepared to work for the low monies [they] can provide.” In addition, the issue of racism and stigma, especially for Indigenous young adults, were strongly felt in the community: “We get some applications from people who are Indigenous and because of racism and stigma they have experienced, they are unlikely to identify that in their application.”

Other challenges perceived by the organizations included high turnovers for younger staff, irregular working hours for some organizations, and security clearance for young adults with records. For immigrant and refugee young adults, language presented a barrier in the recruitment process: “There

are some challenges there with the quality of cover and resume and how they are able to present their qualifications and experience if English is an additional language for them. Some that have got the interview were not able to do well enough in the interview as well as they probably could have in the language they are more familiar with.”

While some organizations had diverse staff members, lack of diversity among staff was an issue for other organizations. Participants noted lack of cross cultural understanding between clients and staff, as well as lack of different cultural perspectives due to not having a diverse staff. As one participant expressed, “we are not as diverse as we could be and would like to be.” At least one participant indicated that they are actively addressing the issue of diversity in their organization.

#### *Organizational Successes As It Relates to Inclusion*

Organizations varied in the level of successes they had experienced in regards to recruiting and retaining Indigenous, immigrant and refugee young adults for employment positions. Many organizations offered employment opportunities for young adults in this demographic group, and also supported their staff in moving forward in their careers (e.g., professional training, promotion to senior leadership position). According to one participant, “[they] are really happy to finally be able to offer employment to some Indigenous people in different roles that better reflect their [clients].”

#### *Potential Recruitment and Retention Strategies for Inclusion*

Organizations from Prince George shared the following insights into how recruitment and retention of Indigenous, immigrant and refugee young adults can be improved:

- More funding to offer competitive wages;
- Be open and understanding of other cultures;
- Encourage applications from underrepresented groups in job postings;
- Provide support for managers and coordinators responsible for hiring;
- Keep young adults feel empowered;
- Offer training programs and webinars to keep young adults engaged; and,
- Diversify programming to appeal to this population group.

#### **Board Governance**

Of the seven (7) organizations, a total of two (2) organizations in Prince George reported having Indigenous, immigrant or refugee young adult currently serving on board.

### *Challenges and Barriers to Inclusion*

Organizations in Prince George identified one of the major challenges of recruiting and retaining Indigenous, immigrant and refugee young adults for their board as time commitment for them to serve on the board. Participants noticed that young adults are often more focused on their school or careers, and cannot commit to the amount of time required to serve on the board: “This age is too early for them. They are more focused on their careers, rather than doing some volunteering job, particularly in this kind of position.”

In addition, participants mentioned that lack of training and experience impedes Indigenous, immigrant and refugee young adults from making meaningful contribution as a board member. Organizations were often looking to recruit people in senior positions within their organizations or companies for their board. Other challenges also included keeping Indigenous, immigrant and refugee young adults interested in joining the board: “I think having candidates decide to join the board is probably the biggest priority because if somebody was interested in joining the board who came with that diverse background, they will be welcomed.”

While most organizations did not face direct consequences due to the lack of diversity on their board, some participants reflected on what their organizations may potentially gain from having an Indigenous, immigrant or refugee young adult as a board member: “We miss some richness and some other perspectives that we do not have otherwise.” Having young adult board members can also help bridge the generation gap: “That will be a magic team like young and experienced coming together, especially with technology. We need that kind of people to come on the board.”

### *Organizational Successes As It Relates to Inclusion*

While organizations felt that there are more diverse representation on their board, participants acknowledged that more effort needs to be made to engage Indigenous, immigrant and refugee young adults to get involved in board governance: “I do not think I have made a real effort at [recruiting young adults] because of time.” According to one participant, organizations should focus on passion of young adults to get them involved in the community: “We are always planting seeds to get that generation.”

### *Potential Recruitment and Retention Strategies for Inclusion*

Prince George organizations offered the following strategies for board recruitment and retention to be inclusive of Indigenous, immigrant and refugee young adults:

- Be open;
- Build relationships with communities and organizations working with this population group;
- Provide opportunities for young adults to learn about what it takes to be on the board;
- Actively recruit young adults to join the board (e.g., targeted approach); and,
- Continue to look into the issue of diversity in the organization, expectations for board members, and current recruitment and retention practices.

## 4.4. West Kootenays

A total of twelve (12) non-profit organizations responded to the key informant interviews in West Kootenays. Organizations have offered contacts in their networks for further outreach.

### Employment

Of the twelve (12) organizations, one (1) organization currently employed Indigenous, immigrant or refugee young adults. Young adults in this demographic group mostly worked part-time and in frontline positions, such as a community support worker.

#### *Challenges and Barriers to Inclusion*

Organizations in West Kootenays faced different set of challenges when it came to recruitment and retention of Indigenous, immigrant and refugee young adults for employment positions. Organizations had small number of Indigenous, immigrant and refugee population in the region, and even smaller number of applicants from this demographic group: “The challenges we are in rural BC, so we do not have populations to draw on. Not a lot of immigrants who live here. First Nations population in southeast BC is not as large as other parts of Canada. The pool from upon which to draw on is much smaller.” Another participant noted that they do not receive applications from Indigenous and immigrant communities, and further suggested that “potentially [they] are not advertising in the appropriate areas.”

Other challenges included small size of the organizations, funding limitations and lack of education requirement to work in the field. There were also stigma surrounding Indigenous population in the region due to Sinixt First Nation not being recognized by the government: “We find people are reluctant to identify as Indigenous. There is a lot of work that is being done now in this region around Indigenization.”

Most organizations felt that more work needs to be done around inclusion of Indigenous, immigrant and refugee young adults. One participant noted, “we still have a lot of work to do there. The fantastic thing is there are a lot of new immigrant families coming to our area that has really been increasing. We have talked a lot as an organization and strategic planning about how we can evolve that piece and our commitment to Indigenization and how we engage in reconciliation piece.”

#### *Organizational Successes As It Relates to Inclusion*

Organizations in West Kootenays region experienced varying levels of success in terms of recruiting and retaining Indigenous, immigrant and refugee young adults as employees. Some organizations faced challenges in recruitment due to low staff turnovers or lack of qualified applicants. However, other organizations that hired Indigenous and immigrant young adults as summer students reported a positive experience: “Definitely with our summer students. We have had success in hiring Indigenous students, which has been great.”



### *Potential Recruitment and Retention Strategies for Inclusion*

West Kootenays organizations offered the following suggestions for recruiting and retaining Indigenous, immigrant and refugee young adults as employees in non-profit organizations:

- Support organizations with funding to hire from this population group;
- Post job postings in places where it will be visible (e.g., schools, employment centres, circulate among the network);
- Build relationships with the Circle of Indigenous Nations (COINS), and other Indigenous groups and immigrant serving organizations to recruit Indigenous, immigrant and refugee young adults;
- Attract Indigenous, immigrant and refugee young adults to diploma and degree programs at college and universities to increase pool of candidates; and,
- Work as an organization to be inclusive (e.g., include a language about diversity in the organization policy, provide training to staff).

### **Board Governance**

Of the twelve (12) organizations in West Kootenays, one (1) organization reported having Indigenous, immigrant or refugee young adults serving on their board.

### *Challenges and Barriers to Inclusion*

Organizations in West Kootenays identified major barriers to inclusion of Indigenous, immigrant and refugee young adults in board governance as time commitment required to serve on board and organizations' lack of connection with Indigenous, immigrant and refugee communities. According to one participant, young adults are often busy in school or working full time so they cannot commit to an unpaid volunteer position that takes up a lot of time. Another mentioned that "[they] reached out to people [they] already know and [their network], as far as [they] know, is not connected to [Indigenous, immigrant and refugee young adults]."

In addition, some other challenges perceived by the organizations were geography (e.g., rural and remote, challenges with travelling), small Indigenous, immigrant and refugee population, and lack of openness in the board. It was also about young adults' lack of interest in board governance: "I think in the West Kootenays, it is identifying [young adults]. A lot of youth want to be involved in our organization but are not interested in governance."

Many organizations expressed concerns about lack of diversity on their board. Organizations mentioned missed opportunities: "I think there is always a loss when you do not have representation. We are not doing the work to our fullest ability when we do not have that representation." Another participant noted, "my intellect tells me that we are missing out by not having those populations at the board level."

### *Organizational Successes As It Relates to Inclusion*

While many organizations noted lack of success in recruiting for young adults, especially of Indigenous, immigrant and refugee background, to serve on their board, some organizations reported successes of having diverse representation on their board over the age of 30. Overall, participants expressed the need to be forward looking in terms of inclusion: “Conversations are changing, which is good.” The inclusion of Indigenous, immigrant and refugee young adults with lived experiences in the board governance helps organizations to be culturally responsive and serve populations in culturally appropriate ways.

### *Potential Recruitment and Retention Strategies for Inclusion*

West Kootenays Organizations suggested the following recruitment and retention strategies for inclusion of Indigenous, immigrant and refugee on board governance positions:

- Develop a toolkit for the board that includes information on how to recruit respectfully within Indigenous communities, to use proper language, and to be inclusive on board governance;
- Include recruitment and retention strategies as part of board planning;
- Increase awareness in post-secondary schools and communities around the benefits of joining the board (e.g., host a workshop);
- Build relationships with Indigenous groups, as well as organizations that serve newcomers (i.e., dedicate time and resources to building relationships);
- Work to create a culturally safe place for Indigenous, immigrant and refugee young adults (e.g., demonstrate inclusion, language); and,
- Get young adults engaged and interested in board governance.

## 5. Key Considerations for Next Steps

This exploratory research has helped define the problem of low representation of Indigenous, immigrant and refugee young adults in non-profit organizations. Our research affirms anecdotal evidence that, despite being the province's fastest growing youth and young adult populations, Indigenous, immigrant and refugee young adults are underrepresented in the non-profit sector and face barriers to influencing change within the non-profit sector.

With a view to reducing barriers for Indigenous, immigrant and refugee youth, interview participants identified several strategies that can help. Some of the key recruitment and retention strategies gleaned from the interviews included supporting organizations with funding to hire and engage young adults in their work, and offering young adults with opportunities to develop their leadership skills. In addition, feedback received through interviews and meaningful conversations with over 200 individuals from the sector and young people themselves helped Vancouver Foundation realize what role they can play as a funder to help support and advance the conversation on racial equity within the non-profit sector.

Throughout April and May of 2018, these results from the key informant interviews were shared by Vancouver Foundation in their community consultations with non-profit organizations and Indigenous, immigrant and refugee young adults in four (4) communities in British Columbia: Metro Vancouver, Prince George, West Kootenays and Vancouver Island. The feedback and input from participants revealed gaps and opportunities for non-profit organizations to support Indigenous, immigrant and refugee young adults in participating in employment and board governance.

Acting on this research, Vancouver Foundation has launched a new granting opportunity, 2018 Youth Granting under their new LEVEL initiative. Informed by the findings from this research and community consultations, the new initiative seeks to level the playing field by empowering young Indigenous and racialized immigrant and refugee leaders to amplify their voices in matters important to them and to bring new ideas and fresh perspectives to shape policy and systems. LEVEL Youth Granting will allow charities and other qualified donees across the province to engage young people from these populations in staff leadership and board governance. Through LEVEL, Vancouver Foundation seeks to support the leadership of Indigenous, immigrant and refugee youth and the non-profit sector to create opportunities for these young people in three ways:

**LEVEL — Youth Public Policy Program:** to support young Indigenous and immigrant and refugee leaders to develop and pursue policy solutions to address the issues that affect them and their communities. More information will be available by the end of 2018.

**LEVEL — Youth Organizing:** to support and work alongside young immigrant leaders to engage in grassroots social change through activities including community organizing and political advocacy. For the remainder of 2018, we will continue to advance the #LostVotesYVR campaign, advocating for the extension of municipal voting rights for permanent residents in the City of Vancouver. The next campaign will be informed by the work that comes out of the Youth Public Policy Program.

**LEVEL — Youth Granting:** to promote youth leadership within the non-profit and charitable sectors by creating pathways for staff and governance leadership for Indigenous and racialized immigrant/refugee young adults.

For more information about LEVEL and its granting opportunity, please visit:

<https://www.vancouverfoundation.ca/grants/level-youth-granting>

Given the emerging nature of these three new programs at Vancouver Foundation, continued with the pronounced lack of Indigenous, immigrant and refugee youth participation in the non-profit sector, it is important to apply a developmental evaluation lens to seeing the impacts of these new programs. It will be especially important to engage participating youth in the evaluation of these programs as it unfolds. This will help to ensure that programs are meaningfully shaped by and for Indigenous, immigrant and refugee youth.

## Appendix A: List of Participating Organizations

Region	Organizations
<b>Metro Vancouver</b>	Options for Sexual Health
	Association of Neighbourhood Houses of BC
	Immigrant Services Society of BC (ISS of BC)
	MOSAIC
	David Suzuki Foundation
	Ecojustice
	Vancouver Art Gallery
	Kiwassa Neighbourhood House
	Affiliation of Multicultural Societies and Service Agencies of BC (AMSSA)
	Vancouver Foundation
<b>Vancouver Island</b>	Victoria Immigrant & Refugee Centre Society
	Nanaimo Food Share
	Nanaimo Family Life Association
	Nanaimo Art Gallery
	Ready to Rent
	Vancouver Island Symphony
	Life Cycles Project Society
	Boys and Girls Club of Central Vancouver Island
	Intercultural Association of Greater Victoria
<b>Prince George</b>	Canadian Mental Health Association - Prince George
	Big Brothers Big Sisters of Prince George
	Community Arts Council of Prince George
	YMCA of Northern BC
	The Prince George Activators Society
	Phoenix Transition Society
	Immigrant and Multicultural Services Society
<b>West Kootenays</b>	Castlegar and District Community Services Society
	Kootenay Boundary Community Services Cooperative
	Kootenay Native Plant Society
	AIDS Network Kootenay Outreach and Support Services (ANKORS)
	Nelson and District Women's Centre
	Friends of Kootenay Lake Stewardship Society
	Living Lakes Canada
	Freedom Quest Youth Services Society
	West Kootenay EcoSociety
	Columbia Basin Environmental Education Network
	Nelson Cares Society
	Nelson Community Services

# Appendix B: Key Stakeholder Interview Instrument

## PURPOSE

Thank you for taking the time to speak with me. As you may be aware, the Social Planning and Research Council of BC (SPARC BC) has been contracted by the Vancouver Foundation to conduct research on Indigenous, immigrant and refugee young adult (18-29 years of age) representation in employment and board governance positions in the non-profit sector.

This research is important because of the changing demographics in British Columbia with growing Indigenous, immigrant and refugee young adult population. According to Statistics Canada, the number of non-permanent residents that include refugees between the ages 15 to 24 more than doubled over a 10-year period from 15,470 in 2006 to 34,985 in 2016.<sup>12</sup> Similarly, there has been an increase in Indigenous youth population over the same period from 34,770 to 45,125.<sup>3</sup> Despite the growth, anecdotal evidence suggests that these groups are underrepresented in employment and board governance positions in the non-profit sector. This research aims to understand current organizational challenges and successes of recruiting and retaining Indigenous, immigrant and refugee young adults in non-profit employment and board governance.

This interview will take approximately 20 minutes. I will focus our discussion on those areas in which you have the greatest knowledge and expertise. If you are not familiar with any of the questions, please let me know and we will continue onto the next question. I should also mention that your responses will be summarized along with those of others to ensure personal anonymity.

Also, we would like to record this conversation so we do not miss anything. Participating is an entirely voluntary process and you may skip any questions you do not want to answer and end the process at any time.

### 1. Do you agree to take part?

a. Yes: Continue to the next question

b. No: Thank you for your time (questionnaire closed)

<sup>1</sup> 2016 Statistics Canada Census data. Citizenship (9), Immigrant Status and Period of Immigration (11A), Age (12) and Sex (3) for the Population in Private Households of Canada, Provinces and Territories, 2016 Census.

<sup>2</sup> 2006 Statistics Canada Census data. Immigrant Status and Place of Birth (38), Sex (3) and Age Groups (10) for the Population of Canada, Provinces, Territories, Census Divisions, Census Subdivisions and Dissemination Areas, 2006 Census.

<sup>3</sup> 2016 Statistics Canada Census data. Aboriginal identity population by both sexes, age 15 to 24, 2006 counts, Canada, provinces and territories, 2016 Census.

2. What is the name of your organization and your position?

3. Can you share with me any other senior strategic leader in your community who could contribute to this research and provide their contact information?

## INDIGENOUS, IMMIGRANT AND REFUGEE YOUNG ADULT EMPLOYMENT

4. Can you tell us whether you currently employ any Indigenous, immigrant and refugee young adults?

a. If so, what level of employment do they hold? (Please select all that apply)

- Full-Time Employment
- ¾ Full-Time Employment
- ½ Full-Time Employment
- ¼ Full-Time Employment
- Paid Internship
- Unpaid Internship

b. What types of positions do they hold? (e.g., manager, coordinator, project assistant, etc)

5. What challenges does your organization face in regards to recruiting and retaining Indigenous, immigrant and refugee young adults for employment positions?

6. Has there been any negative consequence for your organization due to lack of diversity in your organization to recruit and retain Indigenous, immigrant and refugee young adults as employees?

7. What successes has your organization experienced in regards to recruiting and retaining Indigenous, immigrant and refugee young adults for employment positions?

8. Ideally, what recruitment and retention strategies would you like to use to enhance inclusion of Indigenous, immigrant and refugee young adults in your organization?

## INDIGENOUS, IMMIGRANT AND REFUGEE YOUNG ADULT REPRESENTATION IN BOARD GOVERNANCE

9. Can you tell us whether you currently have any Indigenous, immigrant and refugee young adults serving on your board?

10. What challenges does your organization face in regards to recruiting and retaining Indigenous, immigrant and refugee young adults for board governance positions?



**11. Has there been any negative consequence for your organization due to lack of diversity in your organization to recruit and retain Indigenous, immigrant and refugee young adults on your board?**

**12. What successes has your organization experienced in regards to recruiting and retaining Indigenous, immigrant and refugee young adults for board governance positions?**

**13. Ideally, what recruitment and retention strategies for board governance positions would you like to use to enhance inclusion of Indigenous, immigrant and refugee young adults in your organization?**

**14. Is there anything else you would like to share with me today?**

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME**