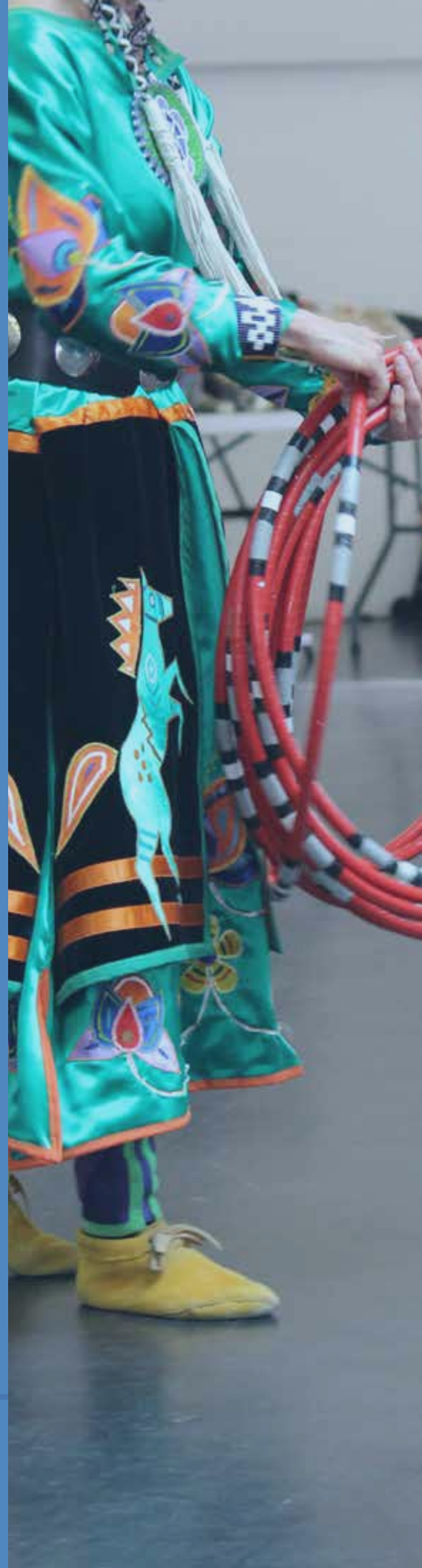




# Montreal Urban Aboriginal Community Strategy NETWORK

2018-2019 ANNUAL REPORT





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# INTRODUCTION

## About the NETWORK

Created in 2008 by the Indigenous community, the Montreal Urban Aboriginal Community Strategy NETWORK supports the ecosystem of individuals and groups committed to improving the quality of life of the Inuit, First Nations, and Métis communities living in the greater Montreal. Our members include individuals, nonprofit organizations, governments and institutions, and some businesses.

With our 900+ members we:

- Share** information &
- Transfer** knowledge
- Prioritize** needs
- Develop** joint projects to address gaps
- Reduce** duplication of services
- Create** and **strengthen** partnerships

We facilitate intentional connections: bringing key groups and people together to work on specific objectives. These spaces are physical and virtual, from multi-stakeholder working committees and seasonal gatherings, to community newsletters and spaces to work alongside one another. The NETWORK also develops and collaborates on a variety of high-impact projects, including research projects, awareness building tools, strategies, and much more. We believe in the power of working together to address complex issues.



# Recognizing the Experts

By us • For us • Owned by us

## Acknowledging and amplifying

The NETWORK ensured that Indigenous people were properly remunerated for their knowledge at the Fall Gathering, also, on the NETWORK homelessness and youth working committees, members with lived experience (i.e. those who have experienced homelessness and Indigenous youth) were often remunerated for their expertise.

We are adamant about amplifying and elevating Indigenous voices during meetings. We focussed on 'passing the mic' to Indigenous participants to ensure that their voices were elevated in conversations and in decision-making. For example, at the Fall gathering, Indigenous voices were invited to participate and share their expertise and knowledge, whereas non-Indigenous guests were invited to observe.



*SYMBOL MEANING: An eagle feather is given to people to honour their wisdom and knowledge.*

## Supporting Indigenous leaders and people

In order to support members of the Indigenous community, a number of Indigenous services were hired for the Fall Gathering including: facilitation by Konwatsitsa:wi Meloche, catering by Chef Swaneige, and translation by Kateri Aubin Dubois. Similarly Indigenous youth were hired to setup the space. Both the Spring Gathering and Fall Gathering had Indigenous vendors and Indigenous artistic performances.

## Indigenous involvement

In order to support and facilitate skill sharing within the community, the NETWORK brought together employees from a number of different Indigenous organizations who offer navigation/accompaniment services to support and coordinate Indigenous-led efforts. This group became a temporary ad hoc NETWORK working committee.

## From the bottom up

In an effort to involve community members in decision-making processes, NETWORK members began the co-creation of the NETWORK's new structure. The session utilized a "world café" format and focused on brainstorming on how the NETWORK's structure can be improved in terms of a) membership structure, b) working committee structure, and c) board structure.

The NETWORK highlighted underrepresented voices by acknowledging lived experiences as a valid qualifier when recruiting and selecting new employees. This challenges colonial hiring methods that too often fail to consider lived experience as valuable and rely more so on non-Indigenous education level and formal work experience as the most important qualifier.

## Next steps for 2019-2020

**Continue to develop** mechanisms that highlight underrepresented voices

**Create a true consultative process** to establishing priorities as identified by the community

**Support the conducting of research** by and for community by creating a community-led research policy

**Support the development** of initiatives by, for, and owned by the community

**Support the ongoing development** of skill-sharing and capacity building for Indigenous members

# Fostering Alliances

*Solidarity • Impact • Reconcili-Action*

## Clarifying roles

The NETWORK created an Indigenous Ally Toolkit to educate non-Indigenous people and groups on how they can use their privilege to listen, shift power dynamics, and take concrete steps towards Reconcili-Action.

Many of our non-Indigenous members have articulated that there is a lack of clarity about how they can respectfully work in alliance and support the Montreal Indigenous community. The Indigenous Ally Toolkit therefore covers the basics for this audience; it is meant for individuals and groups to work alongside Indigenous people. It provides tools for those who want to become (better) allies, accomplices, or co-resistors. It highlights, for example, how settlers and other non-Indigenous people can help dismantle frameworks of oppression and elevate Indigenous voices; it aims to rebalance power dynamics in the ecosystem. The toolkit includes steps for proactive allyship, a glossary of terms to use and avoid, and other important resources.

“

*This type of guidance will support truth-telling and growth amongst non-Indigenous people across Turtle Island”*

FACEBOOK USER ON THE  
INDIGENOUS ALLY TOOLKIT

Public response and community feedback to the Toolkit has been phenomenal. To date, the online pdf version has been shared globally and physical copies have been requested across Turtle Island. Similarly, the Toolkit has been featured on many websites and referenced by both teachers and students.

The Toolkit is a living document that is continuously being updated. Furthermore, many non-Indigenous organizations have requested copies of the toolkit and/or workshops or presentations about the content.



**\$12,870**

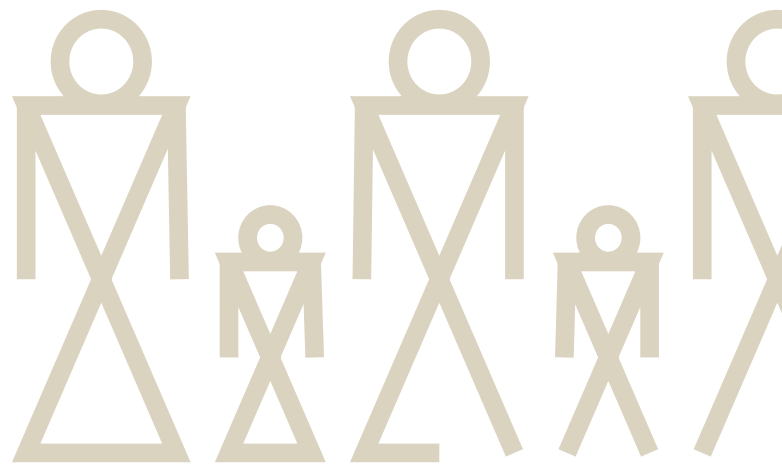
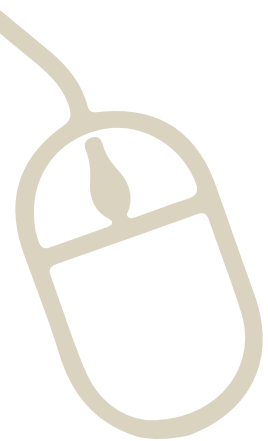
Income generated from the  
Indigenous Ally Toolkit

**400,000+**

people read the  
Indigenous Ally Toolkit

**64+**

websites have linked  
the Indigenous Ally  
Toolkit as a resource



### Educating others

The NETWORK has contributed to building awareness and educating non-Indigenous individuals and organizations on the allyship roles and power imbalances. The NETWORK has facilitated 10 workshops, panels, and presentations in order to educate non-Indigenous individuals and groups, including:

***Institut du Nouveau Monde (INM)'s Summer School:*** In collaboration with the City of Montreal, the NETWORK coordinated a 3-day session with 42 youth (including 15 Indigenous youth) to offer presentations, workshops, and discussion circles that aimed to deepen participants knowledge. Facilitated by the NETWORK and its partners Mikana, Concordia University, and Canadian Roots Exchange, workshops and discussions covered the history of Indigenous peoples in Canada and existing Indigenous-led, decolonial centred initiatives currently in Montreal. By the last session, participants were encouraged to create a mobilization campaign as a means to disseminate their newly gained knowledge.

***RISE Building Capacity in Indigenous Research Symposium:*** NETWORK staff delivered a workshop at McGill University's Indigenous-led event for Indigenous faculty members, students, and community members to discuss ways of building Indigenous research capacity and fostering culturally responsive research environments. The NETWORK's workshop brought together 25 participants to present its position on Indigenous expertise. Indigenous Ally Toolkits were also circulated at this event.

***Canadian Roots Exchange's (CRE) National Youth Gathering, In Search of Miyo-wîcêhtowin: The Future of Respectful Relationships in Saskatoon***

The NETWORK facilitated a workshop on urban Indigenous allyship based on the Toolkit to 25 non-Indigenous and Indigenous youth from across the country.

***Center for Community Organizations (COCO):***

The NETWORK and CRE facilitated a half day workshop to 27 of COCo's organizational members in order to sensitize participants about the historical and on-going impacts of colonization, and to explore current power imbalances and roles to work in alliance with the community.

***Concordia University's First Voices Week (FVW):***

The Indigenous student-led FVW's 4th annual awareness building series at Concordia University invited the NETWORK to host an Understanding Allyship: Panel Discussion. Registration was quickly filled to capacity, and the creators of the Toolkit were able to have a discussion on allyship with over 100 participants in attendance.

The NETWORK participated in a number of other events to present the NETWORK's position, directions, and Toolkit. This included offering presentations to students in post-secondary classrooms, to Ville de Montréal employees, to the Secrétariat aux affaires autochtones employees and Minister, and participating in other panels.



## Next steps for 2019-2020



**Develop more tools** to clarify how research and decisions should be made with us and how services should be delivered



**Connect and support** the Indigenous awareness workshop providers to coordinate efforts and support Indigenous entrepreneurialism



**Continue to advocate** for Indigenous individuals' remuneration for their participation in meetings and events when other participants are there as paid representatives of organizations and governments



## Transforming

Since this year has been one of many transformations at the NETWORK; new working committees were created, some dormant working committees were relaunched, and others were dormant. For example, in November 2018, the three subcommittees of the social services working committee became three independent working committees: Homelessness, Justice, and Circle of care.

## It has to be ripe

The following working committees were less active this year: Art and culture, communications, and health. The Justice and Circle of care working committees were less active this year but remain connected and responsive to needs in their ecosystems. For example, justice working committee members met with the City of Montreal to follow up on their request for by-law reform. Inactive working committees will be re-launched following the restructuring of the NETWORK.



**SYMBOL MEANING:** A qulliq is a traditional seal-oil lamp that provides warmth and light in the Arctic environment. These lamps were such an important fixture of the nomadic Inuit household that “when the family moved, the lamp went along with it”. The qulliq represents light and warmth that comes from bringing together family and community.

## Homelessness . . . . .

The **HOMELESSNESS WORKING COMMITTEE** met regularly throughout the year, continuously updated their action plan, identified priority areas, and shared information to support the wellbeing of the Indigenous community who live in homelessness. The committee has begun recruiting members with lived experience who received remuneration for their participation on the working committee. The committee has focused on articulating and addressing community needs in Milton-Parc/Plateau Mont-Royal, and continue to advocate for more weekend and evening services for community members experiencing homelessness (including safe spaces and front-line support), including services for those who have consumed alcohol or drugs. This year, the homelessness committee commissioned work to update the Cabot Square research documents and tailor it to the Milton-Parc/Plateau Mont-Royal area. Organizational members include:

- NATIVE WOMEN’S SHELTER OF MONTREAL
- CHEZ DORIS
- PROJETS AUTOCHTONES DU QUÉBEC
- EEXO
- OPEN DOOR
- NATIVE FRIENDSHIP CENTRE OF MONTREAL
- ARRONDISSEMENT DE VILLE-MARIE
- ARRONDISSEMENT DU PLATEAU-MONT-ROYAL
- SECRÉTARIAT AUX AFFAIRES AUTOCHTONES
- SERVICE DE POLICE DE LA VILLE DE MONTRÉAL
- PLEIN MILIEU
- SOLIDARITÉ MILTON-PARK L’ITINÉRAIRE

## Education & Employability

The **EDUCATION AND EMPLOYABILITY WORKING COMMITTEE** met monthly, organized the 8th annual MAMU! Employment Fair, and is currently focussed on reviewing its mission, relevance, membership, and objectives. Organizational members include:

MONTREAL URBAN SERVICE CENTRE,  
 FNHRDCQ  
 YOUTH FUSION  
 QUEBEC NATIVE WOMEN  
 CONCORDIA UNIVERSITY  
 L'ITINÉRAIRE  
 VILLE DE MONTRÉAL  
 UQAM  
 NATIVE MONTREAL  
 SERVICE CANADA  
 MINISTÈRE DU TRAVAIL, DE L'EMPLOI ET DE  
 LA SOLIDARITÉ SOCIALE  
 JOHN ABBOTT COLLEGE  
 COMMISSION DE LA CONSTRUCTION  
 DU QUÉBEC  
 COMMISSION DES DROITS DE LA PERSONNE  
 ET DES DROITS DE LA JEUNESSE  
 MCGILL UNIVERSITY  
 COLLÈGE FRONTIÈRE  
 DAWSON COLLEGE  
 LESTER B. PEARSON SCHOOLBOARD  
 OK8API, UNIVERSITÉ DE MONTRÉAL  
 FIRST NATIONS REGIONAL ADULT  
 EDUCATION CENTER

## Youth

The **YOUTH WORKING COMMITTEE** was relaunched in 2018 with all new Indigenous youth members and organizational members. They focused on advising the NETWORK on gatherings and projects, and identifying youth priorities to improve the quality of life of Indigenous people in the greater Montreal. While the Youth working committee is still deciding on which project to prioritize, they are keen on developing a mapping project to locate services and events, and learn about the urban environment through Indigenous-lenses. During her studies, member and employee Dakota Swiftwolfe conducted a research project for the NETWORK to counter narratives and re-Indigenize downtown Montreal, as the basis of an eventual walking tour.

In terms of capacity building, five of the youth members attended the Canadian Roots Exchange (CRE) youth gathering in Saskatoon in November 2018. CRE and Apathy is Boring are organizational members, and the Indigenous youth members of the committee include:

Kortanie Kahwennahawi Raye  
 INUK/KANIEN'KÉHA:KA  
 Brooke Wahsontiiostha Deer  
 KANIEN'KÉHA:KA  
 Dakota Swiftwolfe  
 CREE/OJIBWAY  
 Leilani Shaw  
 KANIEN'KÉHA:KA  
 Chris Lechkobit Carpenter  
 HEILTSUK  
 Emeral Poppe  
 KASKA FIRST NATION

# Strengthening Connections

Dialogue • Information • Hub

## Connecting with the ecosystem

To ensure the NETWORK better supports the Indigenous community in breaking down silos and facilitating information sharing, we regularly connect with our members through monthly bilingual newsletters, press releases, sharing employment opportunities, programs and services, and news articles.

Branding and content conceptualization of the NETWORK was another essential step in our growth. This was done by re-designing and re-launching our website, which promoted transparency, inspired trust, and provided a direct line of communication with our members and partners. Keeping the graphic design consistent throughout our website, key publications, and marketing of events also aided us in becoming a recognizable, visible organization.

Coupled with the fact that all our public documents are released in both English and French, our readership and sharing increased and connected us with the wider general public.

7 articles and news reports on or in collaboration with the NETWORK were published within the year:

CBC NEWS

ESPACES AUTOCHTONE

HOMERUN, CBC RADIO

RADIO CANADA (AUDIO)

RADIO CANADA (VIDEO)

THE EASTERN DOOR

APTN

***SYMBOL MEANING:** A deer antler symbolizes power and protection. Deer are the leaders of the forest; their antlers sense the vibrations of what's to come and warn the herd ahead of time. Haudenosaunee chiefs wear antlers in their kastò:wa (gah-sto-wa) or headdress so that they can do the same for the people.*

## Maintaining connections

Actively connecting with other committees, attending meetings with partners, and holding space at events was another way we maintained connections within the ecosystem.

### EVENTS

The NETWORK attended multiple events on National Indigenous Peoples Day, including tabling at the event at Cabot Square.

The NETWORK was invited and asked to distribute 30 tickets to Indigenous community members for Influence MTL, where Malala Yousafzai was a keynote speaker.

### MEETINGS

*Participated in the Préconsultations de l'OCPM sur le racisme et la discrimination systémique à la Ville de Montréal; Committee for a Homelessness Strategy for the Plateau-Mont-Royal Borough.*

## Connecting and learning from others

The NETWORK has participated in three national gatherings with 22+ urban Indigenous coalitions in order to connect and learn from the approaches, successes, and challenges of other urban Indigenous communities.

We have received tours of centres in Ottawa to inspire changes for Montreal. For example, the thriving Wabano Centre for Aboriginal Health has successfully Indigenous their organization, both structurally and physically and has raised over 15 million dollars to fund construction.

### SURVEYS

Examined the strength of the NETWORK's name with our members who renamed our group The Montreal Indigenous Community NETWORK.

### COMMITTEES

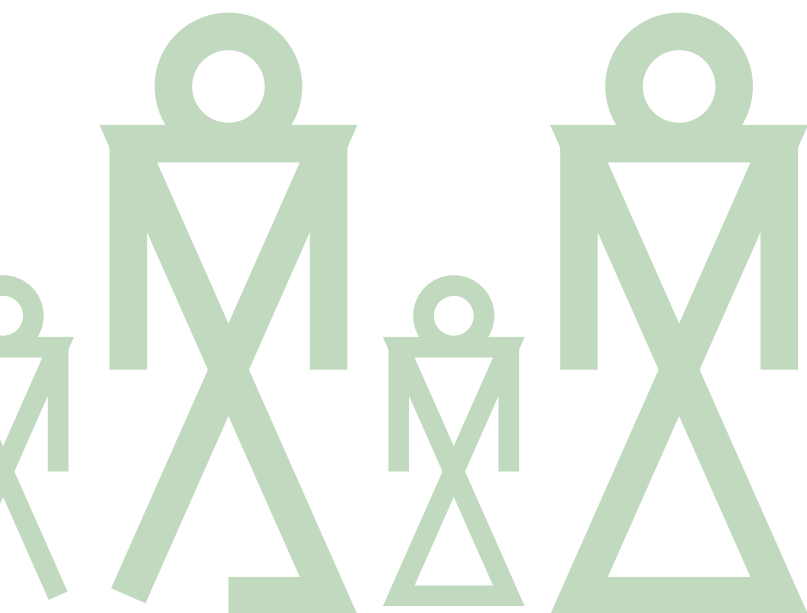
The NETWORK is a part of Groupe de travail en cohabitation sociale, Comité implantation de La Porte Ouverte, Comité vers une Stratégie en itinérance pour Le Plateau-Mont-Royal, Arrondissement Plateau-Mont-Royal holds a chair at the local table of accessibility to the services of CIUSSS and is an occasional member of; Batshaw's Advisory on Diversity in Youth Protective services committee, Ville de Montréal, and Arrondissement Plateau-Mont-Royal et Ville de Montréal.

### NEW PARTNERSHIPS

Amnestie Francophone Québec, Apathy is boring, Esplanade Montréal, Service Canada, SSHRC, Caisse, E&Y.

The managed alcohol programs at the Oaks and Shepherds of Good Hope in Ottawa were also visited with the City of Montreal and the CIUSSS du Centre-Sud-de-l'Île-de-Montréal.

The NETWORK has begun making links with other marginalized communities in Montreal by, for example, attending Gala Dynastie, an annual event that celebrates Black excellence by recognizing Individuals who have contributed to the Black communities in Quebec, and by connecting with its founder to inspire the NETWORK's planning of an awards celebration.



### **Gathering to connect**

After 10 years of offering similar seasonal community gatherings, the NETWORK has made some changes for its second decade. While our previous gatherings were beneficial and brought Indigenous community members together, gatherings will now be more strategic: we will have clear predetermined objectives and bring together specific members who are best positioned to reach the objectives. The Fall Gathering about research was the first with this new design.

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#### **Spring Gathering** *Strategic Directions*

The NETWORK 2018+ Strategic Orientations were launched at this gathering which brought together members from all corners to connect with one another, as well as share updates and information. A video was produced of this gathering by Yändata inc. in order to highlight that gatherings as one of the NETWORK's accomplishments over the last decade. Gatherings are so important for information sharing, relationship building, and strategic planning.

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#### **Summer Gathering** *Election*

In response to the NETWORK's Strategic Directions, a motion was presented at the Spring Gathering to open the position of co-chair to all Indigenous members living in the greater Montreal area. During this Special Summer Gathering, this motion was passed and the election of co-chair was held: Maya Cousineau Mollen was elected!





“

*It means connections and making those relationships, building up community.”*

DAKOTA SWIFTWOLFE ON THE SIGNIFICANCE OF NETWORK GATHERINGS

## Fall Gathering

### Research & Reconciliation

In partnership with the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC), Indigenous people and groups were invited to **participate** and key non-Indigenous partners were invited to **learn and observe**. Indigenous researchers, groups, and individuals were invited to engage in dialogue, reflect upon how research has been done about Indigenous people in the past, and create a vision for how they want research to be done about them. To stimulate discussion, Indigenous participants were invited to share their research experiences: Geneviève Sioui, Kortanie Kahwannahawi Raye, Curran Jacobs, Dr. Janine Metallic, Tina Pisuktie, Dr. Elizabeth Fast, Vicky Boldo, Nakuset, Michelle Smith, Christopher Reid, and Brooke Wahsontiiostha Deer.

This gathering was unique in that it was the **first time** that a government partnered with the NETWORK with the objective of engaging the community to change their system; Indigenous people designed the process, led the discussion, held the space, and provided direction. Representatives from SSHRC actively listened and took notes. This was a great example of how governments can work alongside Indigenous people to (re)concile - by recognizing that Indigenous people are the experts of their histories, realities, and futures, and by “passing the mic” to elevate Indigenous voices in conversations and in decision making.



## Sharing work space

The NETWORK set up a physical office to address isolation and lack of office spaces for startup Indigenous organizations and entrepreneurs. We house NETWORK staff as well as Indigenous start-up groups and entrepreneurs in order to establish coworking and meeting spaces, a mailing address, printing services, and a sense of community.

We are currently housed at Esplanade Montréal, a collaborative co-working space that is dedicated to social entrepreneurship and innovation in Quebec. Current organizations that use this space include: Canadian Roots Exchange, Mikana, Yändata, Concordia University, and DestiNATIONS.



## Next steps for 2019-2020

### **Communicate and connect**

with groups beyond Montreal, as well as with other marginalized communities within the city

Host a gathering for Indigenous people and **friends from other struggles**

### **Share NETWORK updates**

more regularly: photos, quotes, documents, videos

### Focus on **facilitating**

**information sharing** between working committee in order to break down working silos

Host a gathering for **allies, accomplices, and co-resistors**

### **Strengthen brand identity**

including updating the NETWORK's name & logo and strengthen social media presence



# Ensuring a Positive Impact

*Root causes • Systems change • Collaboration*

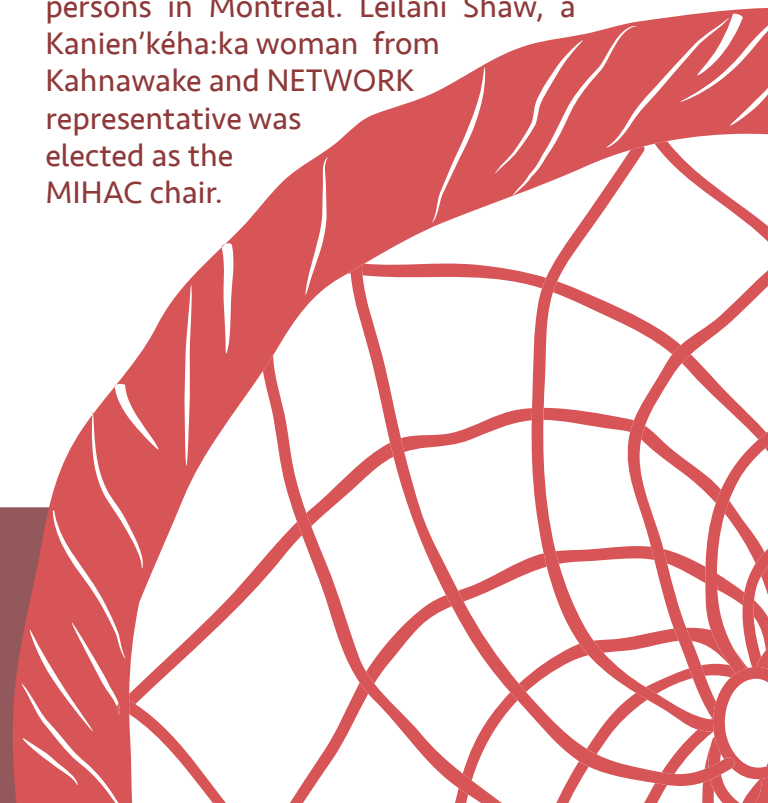
## Changing systems

Each year, the City of Montreal financially supports a pilot project from a NETWORK working committee; this year, the Health working committee's project to hire Health Navigators via the Tiohtiá:ke Health Centre was supported. The Indigenous Health Navigators offered a crucial service to accompany Indigenous people to medical appointments, the emergency room (and more), and supported them in navigating the Quebec health and social services system which remains often inaccessible to the Indigenous community. This culturally tailored service, by and for the community, is the first of its kind in Quebec. The need for a holistic health centre in Montreal that is culturally appropriate for Inuit, First Nations, and Métis continues to be an important gap in the ecosystem that needs to be addressed.

## Table d'accessibilité

Le Centre intégré universitaire de santé et de services sociaux (CIUSSS) and their partners asked the Indigenous community to assess their health needs within the CIUSSS du Centre-Sud-de-l'île-de-Montréal and partner organizations' systems. The Montreal Indigenous Health Advisory Circle (MIHAC) aims to bring about equitable access and outcomes in holistic health (well-being) for Indigenous persons in Montreal. Leilani Shaw, a Kanien'kéha:ka woman from Kahnawake and NETWORK representative was elected as the MIHAC chair.

**SYMBOL MEANING:** *A dreamcatcher contains all four elements necessary to sustain life; earth, water, fire and air. It also represents a medicine wheel.*



## Collaborating and advising

A temporary NETWORK ad hoc working group was created to bring together accompaniment/navigation services by Indigenous organizations since there has been a recent increase in community efforts to increase access to public systems including: **health, social services, judicial, police**, and other public systems.

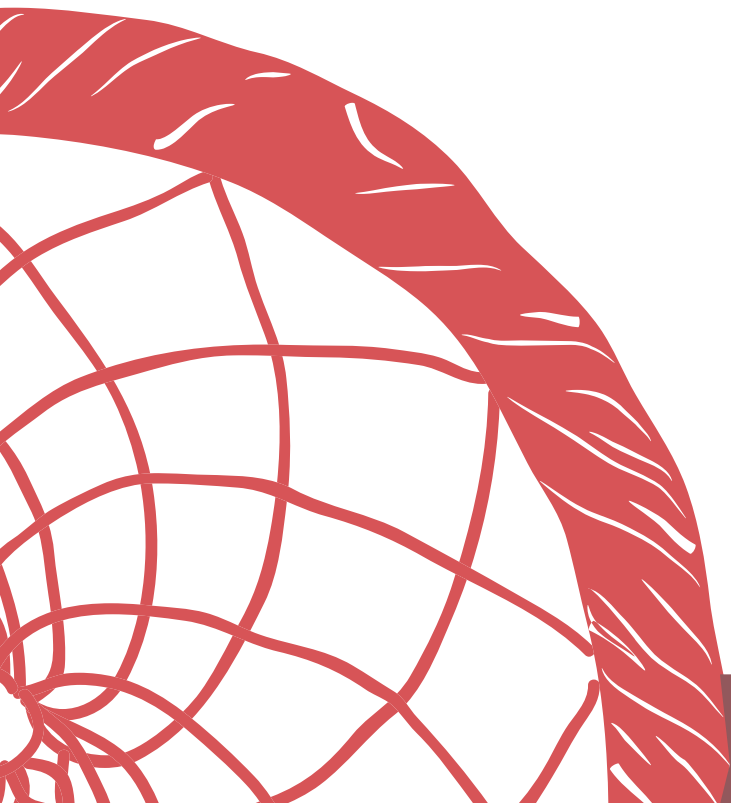
In order for support to be holistic and relevant, the objectives of this ad hoc working group are to:

- 1** Identify what culturally adapted services exist (or are being planned)
- 2** Identify any service duplications or gaps
- 3** Improve coordination/collaboration of the community sector
- 4** Elevate Indigenous-led identification of obstacles and recommendations to improve the public services

To reach these objectives, the members of the ad hoc working group are connected by email and are invited to participate in one or several working members in a longer series. Participants of this working group were not meant to attend every meeting, but rather the topics that are relevant to them. The following Indigenous and four non-Indigenous organizations have been invited so far:

- TIOHTIÁ:KE HEALTH CENTRE
- FIRST PEOPLES JUSTICE CENTRE OF MONTREAL
- MAKIVIK CORPORATION
- SOUTHERN QUEBEC INUIT ASSOCIATION
- NATIVE WOMEN'S SHELTER OF MONTREAL
- NATIVE MONTREAL
- NATIVE FRIENDSHIP CENTRE OF MONTREAL
- PROJETS AUTOCHTONES DU QUÉBEC
- ULLIVIK
- MÉDECINS DU MONDE
- PLEIN MILIEU
- CHEZ DORIS
- OPEN DOOR

A systems map and analysis of Indigenous accompaniment/navigation services was created, and a set of recommendations to fill service gaps and address barriers is currently being drafted. This work will be shared with public sector decision makers and will be incorporated in the eventual Strategy for safety, wellbeing, and belonging of Indigenous people in the greater Montreal (est. 2021).





*[The NETWORK] helps those of us trying to support Indigenous voices here in Canada and understand what's helpful to do and say."*

TWITTER USER ON THE IMPORTANCE OF  
CREATING THE INDIGENOUS ALLY TOOLKIT

## Leading with Indigenous voices

The NETWORK is preparing for the extensive task of creating a comprehensive portrait of needs and solutions that are identified and designed by the community.

The Purpose of this primary research was:

- a.** To acknowledge that Indigenous people are the true experts on Indigenous urban issues and are thus in the best position to identify and lead priorities and solutions for action and;
- b.** To support Indigenous leaders by elevating their voices.

This research was conducted by:

- 1** Examining existing studies and reports on the needs of First Nations, Inuit, and Métis people living in Montreal ;
- 2** Interviewing organizational members of the NETWORK on the needs and challenges of their respective organizations;
- 3** Participating in conversations where community needs were being discussed in the greater ecosystem.

During this time, a work plan was designed to cocreate a community-led strategy for safety, wellbeing, and belonging for Indigenous people in Montreal (est. completion in 2021).

## Planning strategically

The Open Door, which was previously located near Cabot Square, moved to the Milton-Parc / Plateau-Mont-Royal neighborhood. The displacement of this essential resource coupled with a sharp and concerning increase in negative public dialogue, forced the NETWORK to prioritize the immediate focus on homelessness in the upcoming community strategy. The NETWORK participated in a number of meetings with local committees, the general public, businesses and police services, and the borough where these groups tried to address, at full speed, cohabitation challenges between the Indigenous community living in homelessness and the businesses and other residents in the neighbourhoods. Since the NETWORK's concern is for the Indigenous community, it has chosen to learn from the Cabot Square strategy project and focus on the drafting of an Indigenous-led strategy.



*SYMBOL MEANING: Iroquoian style pottery symbolizing story telling, cultural history and creative freedom.*

## Next steps for 2019-2020

Draft a montreal-wide **strategy for safety, wellbeing, and belonging for Indigenous people**, where solutions will be identified, designed, and led by Indigenous groups and individuals.



# Reshaping to Heal & Reemerge

*Transform • Indigenize • Steward*

## Resilience

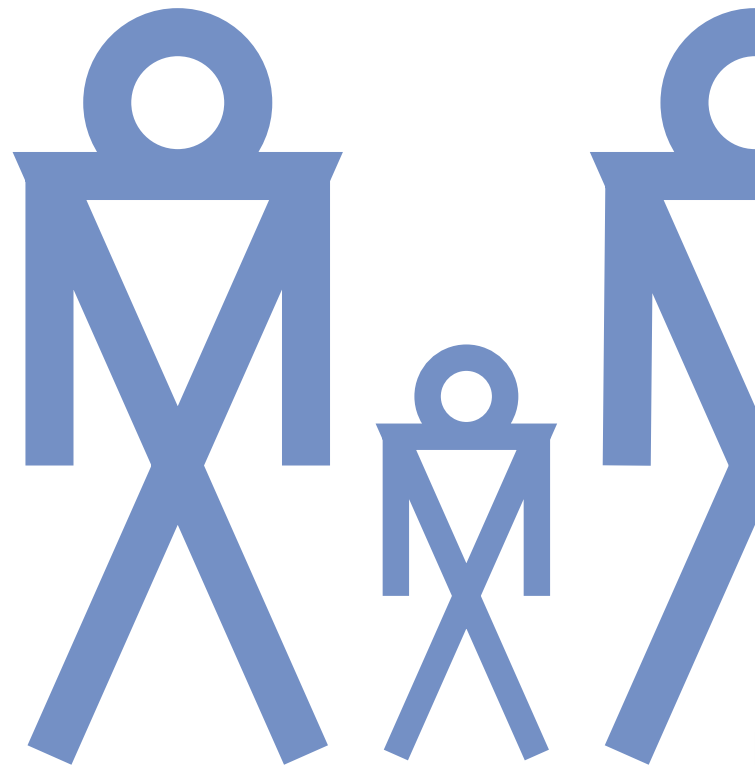
Over the past year, the NETWORK took the time to heal broken dynamics, reconcile relationships, and create healthy dynamics to mediate and prevent any future growing pains as we begin:

Implementing the NETWORK 2018+ Strategic Directions, co-created by our members, and;

Consolidating, transforming, and growing the NETWORK.

The Center for Community Organizations (COCO) was hired to facilitate this process, accompanied by Elder Amelia Tekwatonti McGregor. Meetings and discussions brought together Indigenous members of the Steering committee, and NETWORK staff was invited to select meetings.

**SYMBOL MEANING:** The human figures symbolize family and community, whether they are men, women, children, LGBTQ+, two-spirit, qaigajuariit, angutauqatigiik, and everything in between.



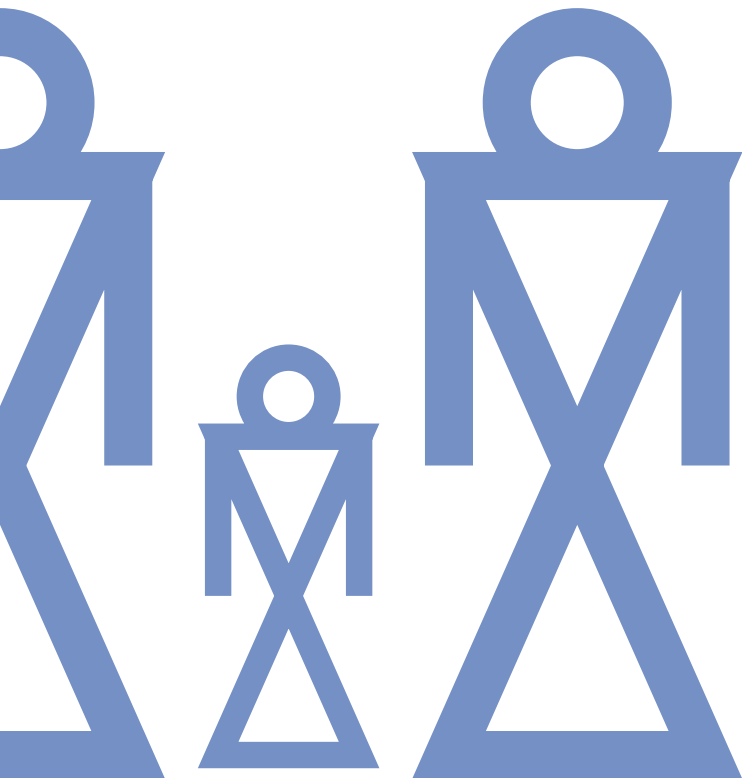


## Getting unstuck, incorporating ceremony, and building internal capacity

We aim to make the NETWORK culturally relevant and attuned to the realities and needs of the Indigenous community.

This year, we also focused on building internal capacity by :

**Growing the NETWORK team** (from 2 to 4 employees) **and consciously attempting to decolonize the hiring process as we add more.** Decolonizing the hiring process was done in an attempt to reflect the richness and diversity of the community and means adapting positions to the aptitude and interests of the individual. It also means recognizing lived experience as an asset, encouraging applicants who are First Nations, Inuit and Métis to apply, and being gender and identity inclusive.



*I hope that in 10 years there will be a lot more [Indigenous] services in Montreal.”*

BÉRÉNICE MOLLEN- DUPUIS,  
PARTICIPANT AT THE SPRING GATHERING

Beginning to offer opportunities for professional development, including:

**Attending the Banff Centre for Arts & Creativity** “Project Management for Indigenous Organizations” program. This program is for project developers, leaders, and managers in Indigenous organizations, to engage in: ceremony, in-person lectures, the outdoors, a creative arts practice, hands-on application of theory, individual reflection, and group activities.

The Bank of Canada’s **Business Development training** at the Wabano Centre, Ottawa.

**Receiving one-on-one facilitation training** from COCo and from freelancer Elizabeth Hunt.

We also aim to offer excellent working conditions, with healthy and happy employees, by: cross-training (learning new skills!), extensive team support, the ability to work from home, flexible work hours, wellness days, as well as individualized career management.

## Consciously restructure

During the co-creation process for the Strategic Directions 2018+, our members asked for transformative, structural changes to make the NETWORK a healthier and more efficient space to convene. In 2019, following the advice from governance experts, lawyers, and accountants, NETWORK steering committee and staff, incorporation was recommended in order to facilitate its growth and sustainability, and offer greater transparency and accountability to its members and employees.

The Steering Committee also agreed that the NETWORK and the community would best be served if the NETWORK incorporated as a nonprofit organization. The Steering Committee will therefore be replaced as a legal board of directors who now governs the NETWORK.

Meetings were held with members to consciously and collectively restructure the NETWORK to evolve and adapt to best serve the needs of Montreal's Indigenous community. The objective was to align our internal and external processes with Indigenous teachings, collective values, and healthy boundaries. While direction had already been received during earlier workshops and surveys about information flow and decision-making, these new discussions focused on who should be part of the NETWORK: membership types, working committee participants, and those governing the nonprofit.

## Next steps for 2019-2020

**Incorporate and set up the NETWORK as a nonprofit organization**, including the development of internal procedures and policies that ensure healthy and transparent working environment

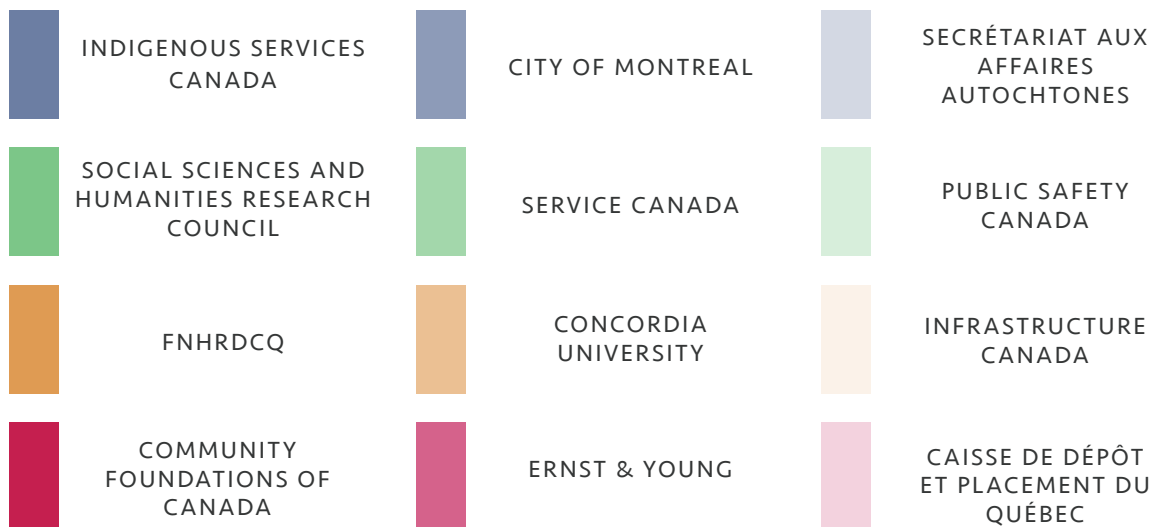
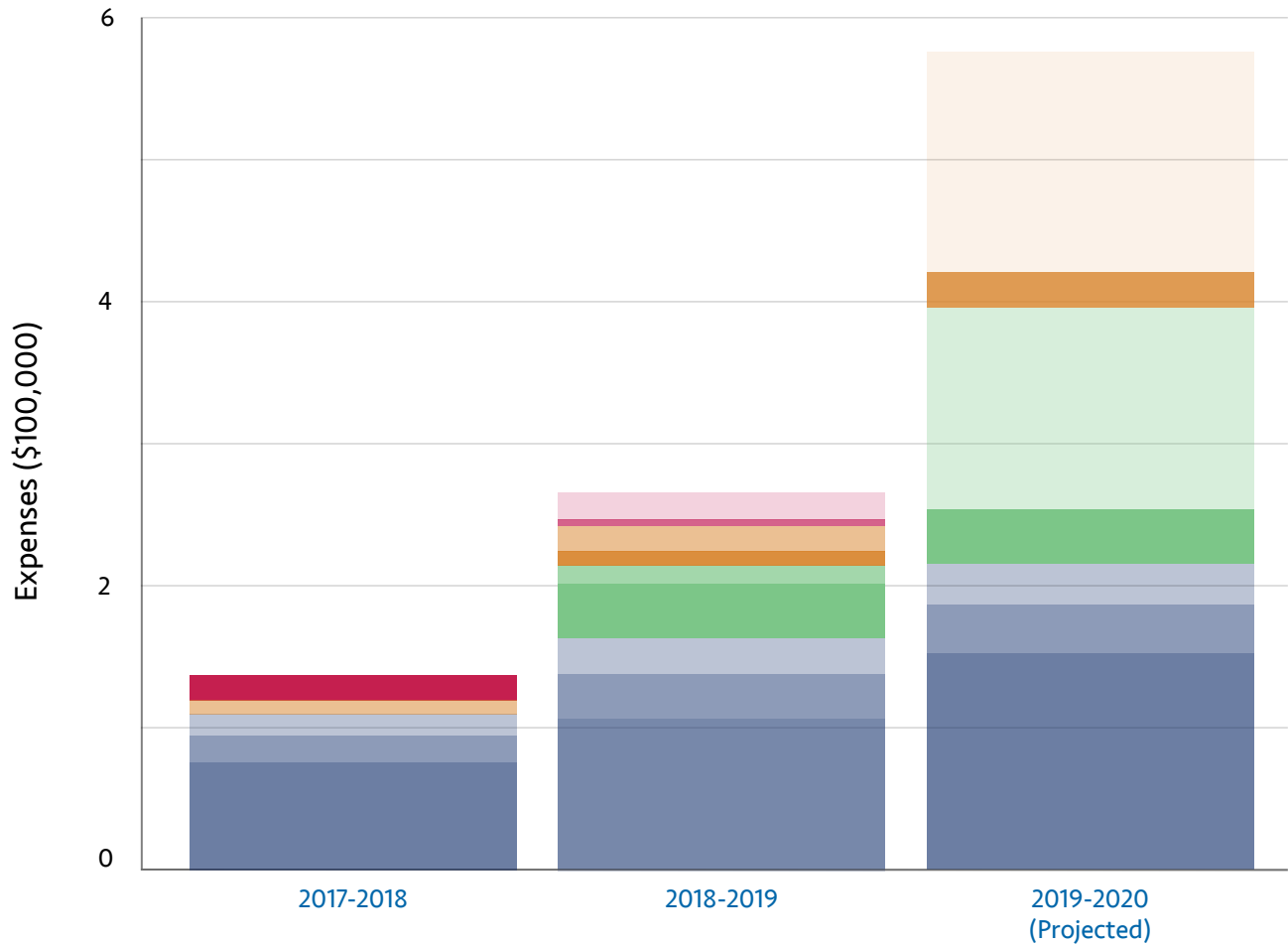
**Offer training and professional capacity building for Board of Directors** to better understand and meet their roles and responsibilities

**Diversify income streams**, including setting up a fee-for-service option to generate revenue and/or cover the direct costs of services

**Restructure NETWORK committees** to maximize collaboration and better facilitate the flow of information about systems change between groups

**Take the time to celebrate incremental achievements**, publicly document and share the big achievements, and develop a process for annual celebrations by hosting a recognition gala for changemakers as part of the NETWORK's 10-year celebration.

# Financials





RÉSEAU  
pour la stratégie urbaine  
de la communauté  
autochtone à Montréal



Montreal  
Urban Aboriginal  
Community Strategy  
NETWORK

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