

A FRAMEWORK ...



For Creating a National Indigenous Women Entrepreneurs Ecosystem



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A Building Futures production by:



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Acknowledgement

As it is for any research project, success is dependent on the valuable contributions both directly and indirectly of many people and institutions.

We would like to say thank you to the many contributors that have met with us and shared their thoughts and experience. To the many authors of studies scanned in the last six-months. To the panelists who have contributed their knowledge and experience in our Foresight panel discussion.

To the INAC team for their encouragement, support and contribution, thank you.

To my colleagues Karen MacKenzie, the program's future Executive Director; to David Harries the Proteus President and Foresight Advisor; to Shane Webster who operates our studios and makes us look good on video and audio, thank you for your valuable inputs and support.

Guy Dancause, CEO
Proteus Canada Institute
Idea Connector Network

What is Foresight?

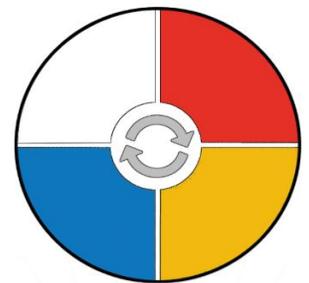
'Foresight is looking ahead at the big issues, the world of change that we're facing - looking ahead at what might happen that is good and what might happen that is not. Foresight is not about finding the right answers, but about making sure that people who are involved and interested come together in an open dialogue and express in their own ways, with their own biases, assumptions, and interests the issues of importance to them.'

David Harries, Ph.D., P.Eng.
Foresight Director
Idea Connector Network (ICN)



CONTENTS

	Page
Introduction, the Project	4
The National Indigenous Women Entrepreneurs Ecosystem (NIWEE)	5
The Knowledge Transfer Program	7
Four Steps of the Framework Production	8
Step One -- Horizon Scanning, Preparation	
a. Inventory of available Start-up support programs	9
b. One-on-one consultations	11
c. Scanning of reports	12
d. Public survey	13
Step two: The “What if” question	18
Step three: Panel one Proceedings	20
Step three: Panel two Proceedings	23
Impressions	24
Recommendations	25
Concluding Remarks	26
Making the Future with Foresight	27
Appendices “A”, “B” and “C”	28



In Brief

The benefits of having more Indigenous women-led-businesses are substantial for their own wellbeing, for their families, their communities and for Canada's growth. Yet, there are so many hurdles they must overcome, gender and Indigenous women issues, including biases, racism, poverty and lack of support. Plus many require practical knowledge, ongoing support and funding to launch and grow their businesses.

As one means to help overcome these hurdles, the Idea Connector Network (Proteus Canada Institute - a not for profit Indigenous Corporation) will launch a unique initiative, the creation of a National Indigenous Women Entrepreneurs Ecosystem. We will launch this initiative in October 2018 with two simultaneous pilot projects, in the cities of Edmonton and Sudbury.

The program will rest on 5 pillars:

1. Increasing the number of Indigenous women in business
2. Supporting Indigenous women in starting a business
3. Facilitating sustained collaboration between Indigenous Women Entrepreneurs and non-Indigenous groups and individuals active in the entrepreneurship/business space (corporations, economic development groups, business associations, women's group, government agencies and financial institutions).
4. Improving access to finance for Indigenous women entrepreneurs.
5. Increasing Indigenous women capabilities to access leadership positions

The plan calls for the creation of "Hubs" in selected municipalities or rural areas. These "Hubs" are to be linked online forming a National Indigenous Women Entrepreneurs Ecosystem. We define a "Hub" as the gathering (in a specific community or region) of entrepreneurs, funders, corporations, government agencies, advisors and supporters interested in supporting Indigenous women seeking to launch their business and to engage in commerce. Foundational to these Hubs are Indigenous cultures and traditions.

Indigenous women interested in launching their small business will be provided a 5-month holistic program. The program will require 10 to 12 hours per week on average. It will integrate workshops, self-directed e-learning, e-simulations, group projects, networking, active coaching and mentorship. Collaborative learning is the cornerstone of this program and participants will accelerate their own learning by being part of a support circle of 15-women per learning group. Ongoing purposeful mentorship will be provided for a total of 12 months.

The program delivery cost per participant is estimated at \$6,000. Participants will be enrolled in the program at no cost to them.

The National Indigenous

Women Entrepreneurs Ecosystem (NIWEE)

An ecosystem describes a landscape that nurtures and sustains growth and prosperity. NIWEE is founded on the belief that to ride the entrepreneurial roller-coaster successfully, Indigenous Women (IW) require practical knowledge, opportunities, respectful and engaging relationships with the business community and various levels of government, funding and supportive and purposeful mentorship. Within NIWEE are local “HUBS” or circles that reflect and engage all the participants and partners and respond to local opportunities.



A lesson to be learned comes from nature, as this short video clip demonstrates a few changes in thinking has the power to be transformational.

go to: [Wolves](#)

The Challenges

The NIWEE represents a model or pathway that reflects Indigenous culture. The HUB approach recognizes local Indigenous culture, norms and practices and that together with local industry, governments and communities will form the foundation for relationships required for nurturing start-ups and enabling prosperity and sustainability.

1. Fear of entrepreneurship resulting from financial insecurity, poverty, naysayer family and friends, skeptics who won't do it themselves and who don't want IW to do it. The little voice in the head of some that keeps saying: don't do it, you're not capable and you'll never make it. Not to mention that starting a business can be a lonely and a daunting experience.
2. Many training tools are available in the market place to would be entrepreneurs – most programs are delivered in capsules and disconnected.
3. In addition to gender challenges Indigenous women often face biases, racism, poverty and a lack of support. In addition, she needs to identify business opportunities; to network in the right business circles; to talk with experienced mentors; to learn the rules of the game and to build and foster critical business connections.
4. Start by mapping the ecosystem; create an inventory that indicates who the participants in the ecosystem are and how they are connected. **Encourage sustained entrepreneurial activity and collaboration on a local and regional level.** Listen to entrepreneurs and avoid developing programs in a vacuum. Anticipate economic and social life disruptions and help hub members prepare to make the most of the opportunities they create.

Crossing the Divide

However, to bring corporations and would be Indigenous entrepreneurs to work together the divide between Indigenous peoples and Mainstream society will need to be crossed.

It's a given that Corporate Canada leaders will need to set aside biases and learn about the vulnerable position Indigenous women are in today due to the systemic discrimination they have experienced for tens of decades. These leaders will need to "think outside the box" if they are to gain insights on the Indigenous holistic way of thinking and doing. At the same time, we must recognize that it will be a challenge for Indigenous women who have grown to mistrust mainstream society to open themselves to market place realities. A situation that is further exacerbated by the fact that Corporate Executives tend to move in different circles than most Indigenous Women, the values and preferences of both groups are different from each other, providing a partial foundation for distrust within the relationship.

However, the biggest challenge will be with corporate leadership, the C-Suite who for decades have had as their mandate a focus on maximizing profits quarter after quarter with too little account taken of the well being of people, the environment and the planet. Forward thinking leaders recognize that there are now powerful reasons to embrace longer-term thinking if new pathways to more sustainable, more equitable societies and economies are to emerge.

The gift corporations will receive by actively supporting NIWEE will be to learn about alternative ways to address emerging challenges. Forward thinking business leaders who are interested in identifying new solutions for the medium and long term can benefit from their introduction to the Indigenous peoples' concept of "Abundance" in their search for new pathways to success.

Consequently we are proposing the adoption of the following narrative

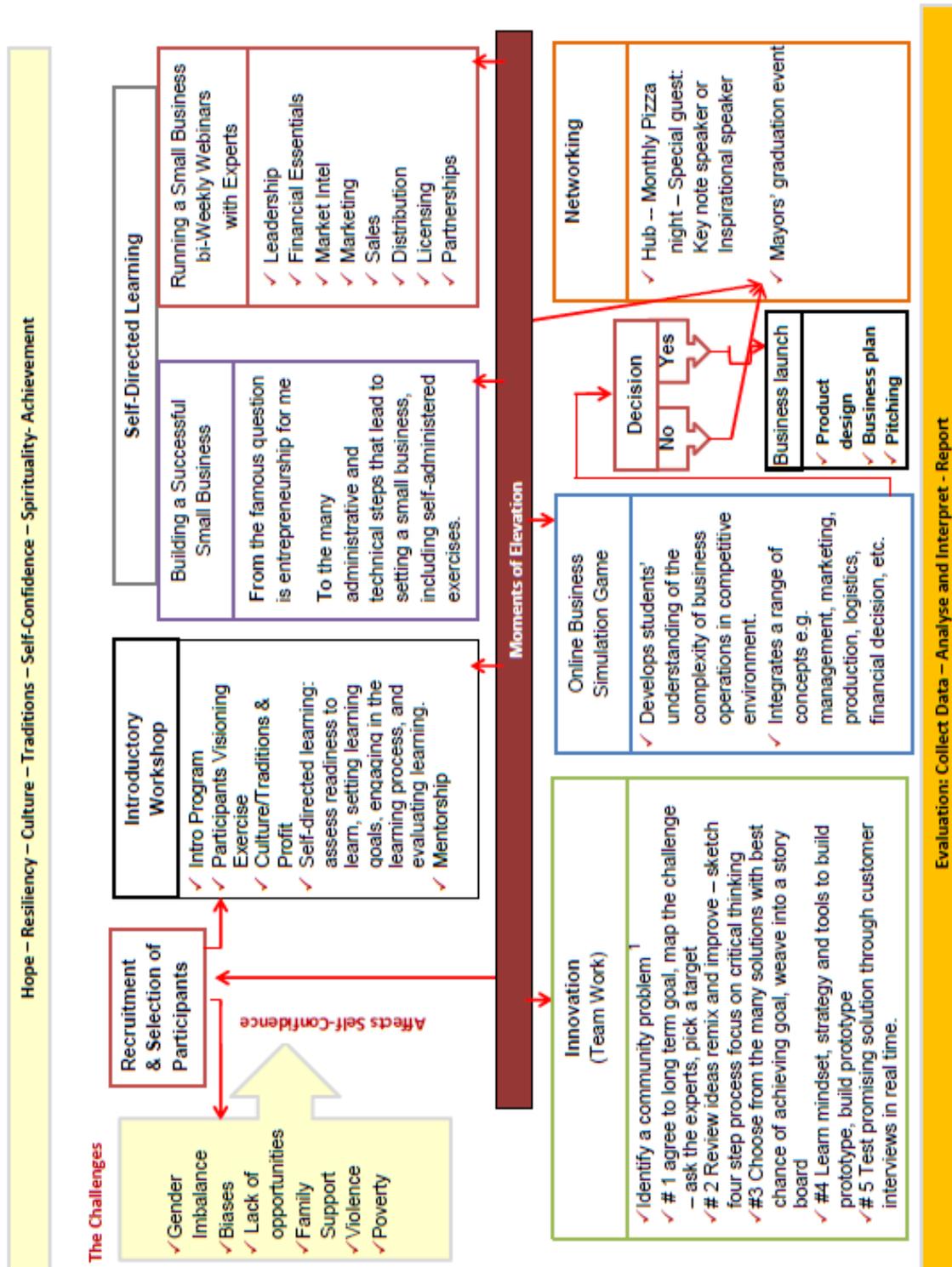
A NIWEE is a landscape that supports and nurtures the growth and development of Indigenous women as business leaders. It's a unique opportunity that can enable them to become instrumental in leveling the business playing field. It combines the best aspects of Indigenous culture such as "Collaboration, Respect for Mother Earth and Abundance". And, it will create partnership opportunities with the potential to become more than the sum of their parts.

A NIWEE is an opportunity to redefine what successful business and success in business looks like. It will help people to understand that business can both make money while having strong ethical values and a positive impact on both people and the planet.

A NIWEE is an opportunity for Indigenous business women to be bold, to propose simple, practical processes and to share with companies.

The success of a NIWEE will be measured by the improvement to Indigenous women's well-being and that of their families and communities. As well, it will provide successful business women with an authoritative voice with a compelling narrative on the future for Canada and its world.

The Knowledge Transfer Program



1. e.g. How could coffee shop revenue be increased?

4 STEPS to Framework Production

Late summer 2017, it was decided that the project would have 4 steps in preparation to the Foresight Panels, followed by the writing of this report. The steps are as follows:

<h1>1</h1>	<p>Key Support Programs -- In 2016 - 2017 ICN ran a small pilot project that very successfully matched Indigenous entrepreneurs with substantial business, deep experience and the right industry background with the specific needs of the program's selected interns. As we moved forward with this pilot project we discovered a "Gap", despite their talent and strength, many Indigenous women were powerless when it came to launching their own small business.</p> <p>Starting late summer 2017 we launched the first step to exploring gaps in the market place. We started with the sketching of a concept based on our own knowledge and experience. The concept was then put to the test through a series of consultations and research. As the process moved forward we also explored various existing training programs available in the market place. In time the concept evolved through several iterations. Its latest version is reflected in this Framework report. See Page 9</p>
<h1>2</h1>	<p>One-on-One Consultations -- Various groups were consulted between early November 2017 and early March 2018. The aim of the consultation was to help assess how best to empower a greater number of Indigenous women to launch their small businesses. Over the years we at ICN have interviewed, for the purpose of our programming on Indigenous Entrepreneurship, dozens of Indigenous women business owners. But through our one-on-one consultations we also wanted to explore the effectiveness of available resources and to identify potential missing links. See page 11 and Appendix "A"</p>
<h1>3</h1>	<p>Scanning of reports -- The scanning of various study reports has enabled us to draw on insights from existing research, perspectives and data on economic development and women's role in formal and informal economies. As well as on the potential impact of women's economic empowerment and for the private sector to make a difference.</p> <p>It's interesting to see that many studies report the lack of capital and mentorship as the key challenges facing new entrepreneurs, however a post-mortem of some 250 corporation published CB Insights in Feb 2018, shows that for 42% of companies the number one reason for failure was attributable to their lack of serving market needs. See page 12 and Appendix "B"</p>
<h1>4</h1>	<p>Public Survey – 81% of survey respondents identify with the need to create sustainable economic opportunities for Indigenous women. They (86.96%) see Corporate Canada playing enabler role in helping Indigenous women launch and grow their business, but respondents also want Corporate leadership to take the time needed to learn about Indigenous peoples, their cultures, their traditions and about ways of doing things.</p> <p>Of all the survey results perhaps the most striking statistic is 34.8% of respondents replied "other" to the question on employment with no explanation or descriptions. More interesting statistics can be found by exploring the survey responses. See page 13</p>

Inventory of key Start-Up Support

There are a few key sources of practical knowledge made available to Indigenous women in addition to our own Idea Connector video collection delivered in the last 8 years on challenges and opportunities facing entrepreneurs.

- ✓ NWAC in partnership with British Columbia Canadian Centre for Aboriginal Entrepreneurship and its Best initiative (Business & Entrepreneurship Skills Training) have recently agreed to deliver a 2 week/10 day/70 hour program on Entrepreneurship across Canada to participants that are Under-employed or Unemployed using a recently trained network of twenty facilitators,. Mentoring will be provided for a period of six months
- ✓ INAC through the AFIs delivers ABED. It works with Indigenous entrepreneurs and its partners to provide a range of services and supports that promote the growth of a strong Indigenous business sector in Canada. Support will vary depending upon the needs of the client, the availability and sources of funding, the eligibility of costs, the economic benefits, and the project viability. ABED helps Indigenous entrepreneurs, communities and organizations to achieve their business goals.
- ✓ AWE (Alberta Women Entrepreneurs) is a not-for-profit organization dedicated to enabling women to build successful businesses. In addition to in-classroom skills training, AWE provides services to women including advising, financing, mentoring, and network development.
- ✓ Similar organizations to AWE and the YMCA located in other parts of Canada do offer similar training (in person and online), networking, mentoring opportunities and business services, but they tend to cater to mainstream women and often the training offered ends with trainee having learned to prepare a business plan.
- ✓ CCAB offers services to Indigenous corporations that includes business mentorship, procurement tools and financing knowledge.
- ✓ There is a network of Accelerators and Incubators pay for services programs across Canada. They vary in length, usually less than a year – they are fast-track programs enabling entrepreneurs to tap into experienced mentors and guidance to help secure funding. These programs are focused on mainstream entrepreneurs
- ✓ Banks such as BDC offer video and text presentations on challenges facing entrepreneurs as well as consulting services.

In addition there are institutions like Keyano College in Alberta and Algonquin College in Ontario that offer entrepreneurship focused education programs. Suffice to say, all organizations have the same background research that targeting Indigenous entrepreneurs is critical for building economic security for individuals, families and communities. The segment of Indigenous women recognizes that they are the foundation for transforming their lives and those of their

families. Delivery is mostly classroom based with webinar options. Outcome of most is a business plan with/without access to seed funding rather than business launch and business growth.

The vision of creating a National Indigenous Women's Entrepreneurial Ecosystem (NIWEE) is a significant differentiator. It builds prosperity on so many levels; from the individual Indigenous women; to the engagement and building of relationships built on mutual respect and trust; removing the silo approach; engaging local governments whether Indigenous or municipal; on-going, supportive mentoring and importantly; accessing financing from a variety of sources. The model recognizes and respects local Indigenous culture and traditions and is not an add-on. This local approach is through a HUB with a local guide, facilitator, navigator that supports each of the participants and partners. The model is fluid and organic and leads to sustainable growth.

Note: The NIWEE Program easily fits as an extension or complement to all Start-up programs available in the market place.

One-on-One consultations

Group and individual consultations took place between early November 2017 and early March 2018. The aim of the consultation process was to help assess how best to empower a greater number of Indigenous women to launch their small businesses. Over the years we at ICN have interviewed for the purpose of our own programming on Indigenous Entrepreneurship dozens of Indigenous women business owners. But through our one-on-one consultations we wanted to explore the effectiveness of resources presently available to would be entrepreneurs, as well as to identify the missing links. It must be noted that the information acquired through this process is based on anecdotal, statistical, experiential and personal evidence. We can summarize what we have learned as follows:

- Indigenous women typically face a unique set of serious challenges to business success including lower educational attainment, higher unemployment, greater poverty, chronic health and medical conditions, lower life expectancy and frequent domestic as well as social violence.
- Indigenous women lack opportunities and the ways and means, including mentorship, to identify these opportunities
- Indigenous women-led start-ups frequently lack timely access to sufficient capital.
- Support to Indigenous women in business is uneven and disconnected.
- Programs promoting Indigenous women entrepreneurship are typically short-term, small scale and too-narrowly community based.
- Mainstream entrepreneurship and innovation organizations and processes tend to be ill suited to Indigenous women.
- There is no national entrepreneurship ‘ecosystem’ with a specific focus on Indigenous women’s circumstances, needs and aspirations.
- Micro-enterprise is the characteristic of most Indigenous women-led firms, but it is often ignored or of low priority in policy, business partnerships and established corporations.
- Best practices in supporting Indigenous women entrepreneurship are few in number and late in deployment.

The benefits of having a greater number of Indigenous women launch and grow a business in Canada are known. Studies show diversity of opportunity is essential. It is in Canada’s best interest to support entrepreneurial Indigenous women.

There are no national Indigenous women entrepreneurs’ networks in Canada; while numerous networks support the interests of non-Indigenous business women. Two more networks were added to the existing mainstream networks in 2017. In February 2017 Prime Minister Trudeau and President Trump agreed to create ‘The Canada-United States Council for Advancement of Women Entrepreneurs and Business Leaders’ and in the fall of 2017, a Women Chamber of Commerce was established.

One response to this situation is ICN’s proposal to create a “National Indigenous Women Entrepreneurs Ecosystem.” The proposed ecosystem (national network) would be sustainable and would include Indigenous women, groups of organizations, including start-ups, government agencies, the private sector and a coordination office. All members would be encouraged to work together to create fertile environments for Indigenous women to launch, nurture and scale companies for an increasingly connected world. Each participating start-up would focus on innovation, marketing, sales, communications and on launching and growing a business. **See Appendix “A” for list of people consulted.**

Scanning of Reports

The scanning of various study reports has enabled us to draw on insights from existing research, perspectives and data on economic development and women's role in formal and informal economies. As well as on the potential impact of women's economic empowerment and for the private sector to make a difference.

There are some 150 Accelerators and incubators in Canada; however, men lead the majority of businesses supported by these organizations. There are the odd Indigenous businesses that make use of the services however, it's likely that many would be Indigenous entrepreneurs or business owners would have some discomfort with the Mainstream linear way of thinking. Others would fear they would need to drop their Indigenous teachings to adopt Mainstream practices.

It's interesting to see that many studies report the lack of capital and mentorship as the key facing new entrepreneurs, however a post-mortem of some 250 corporation published by CB Insights in Feb 2018, shows that for 42% of companies the number one reason for failure was attributable to their lack of serving market needs.

Statistics demonstrate that Indigenous women have made progress in the last three decades, today more Indigenous women are well educated and more are business owners. But more needs to be done. Indigenous Women need help to develop marketable skills; they need opportunities to develop financial literacy and to acquire practical knowledge on starting and running a business. They also access to capital, credit and other resources including support like coaching and mentorship to start a business.

Reports by the Business Council of Canada and McKinsey & Company point to the private sector needing to be involved in empowering women and in helping them become entrepreneurs and grow their businesses. McKinsey says that economically empowered women help the private sector fulfil their own aspirations for growth and profitability. They show that companies that have invested in women are benefiting considerably or expect they soon will. To the McKinsey survey question "How did such engagement with women generate higher profits for your company? They responded: - 66% increase in pool of skilled and accessible labour- 59% enhanced brand and reputation – 58% creation of new markets or expansion of existing ones – 57% Increased ability to attract talent in developed economies – 40% improved relationships with governments and regulators.

In the Breakthrough Challenge, authors John Zeit and John Elkington with the support of Sir Richard Branson make the case for the need of business leaders to move from short term profit to a need to connect the entrepreneurial drive to succeed with the needs of growing numbers of people and a planet under pressure.

It's an interesting argument one that fits well with Indigenous principles of Collaboration, Respect for Mother Nature and Abundance – business can still make money while having strong ethical values and a positive impact on both people and the planet.

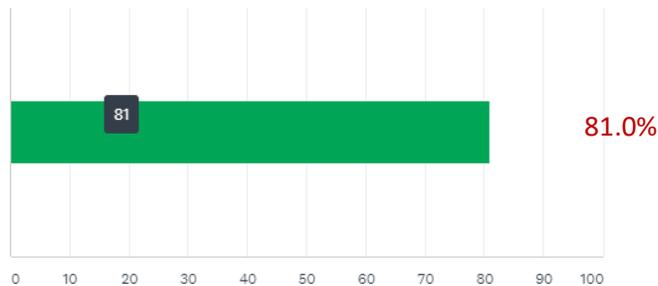
This situation provides Indigenous women a unique opportunity to become breakthrough leaders, instrumental in leveling the business playing field. If positioned right with a program that helps Indigenous women sharpen their business skills and if women are invited to bring to the fore their Indigenous knowledge much could be accomplished. The wellbeing of Indigenous women, their families and communities could be improved. Indigenous women would become an authoritative voice with compelling persuasive narrative that sketches the future we must now create in Canada and in global world where people, the planet and profits can survive. **For list of reports see Appendix "B"**

STEP 1 The Survey

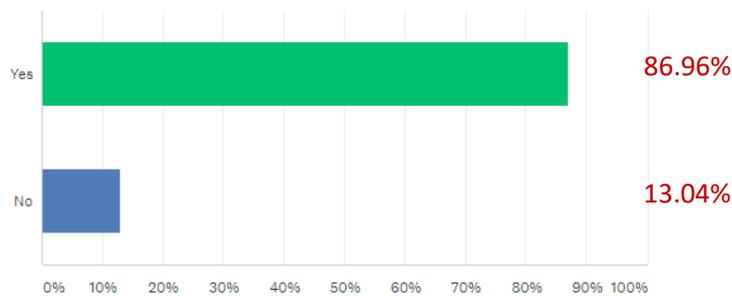
Summary of Comments

Answers

Q.1. How important to Canada is the creation of sustainable economic opportunities for Indigenous women, their families and their communities?



Q2. In your opinion is there a role to play by non-Indigenous Canadians, corporations, economic development groups, business associations, women's group, government agencies, financial institutions, civil societies in creating economic opportunities for Indigenous women Interested in launching or growing their business?



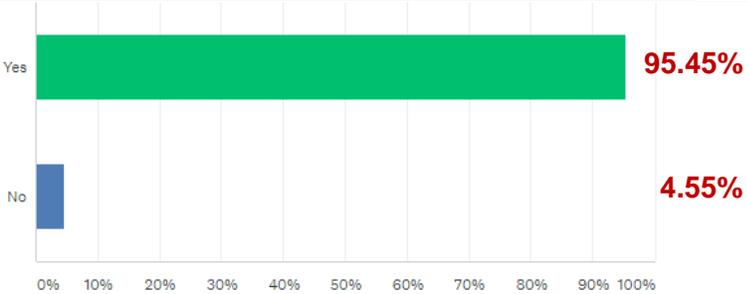
If YES -- What is that Role?

Most survey respondents see a role for corporations and other groups

- ✓ Respondents see corporations and others as potential enablers. People that can make things happen like providing business opportunities, markets and education/training. It is suggested that business offers themselves as role model and provide access to their supply chain, as well as provide business partnership opportunities and support. It's also suggested that people need to take the time to listen to what Indigenous women before offering 'Solutions' to creating a base for growth, development and sustainability.
- ✓ Indigenous women want corporate people to take the time to learn about Indigenous peoples, their cultures, their traditions and about their ways of doing things. Most surveyed would welcome the development of relationships that offer inclusion, mutual respect and trust. Indigenous women are proud. They have demonstrated their strengths over the last centuries. Women need access to resources to grow and improve their

	<p>wellbeing and that of the families and communities. Money is needed to fund good ideas but they don't want money to be simply thrown at "problems".</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ While a few respondents felt that non-indigenous Canadians should not be involved in any Indigenous women's drive to launch a business. They see themselves as being able to access markets without assistance from others. And, they wish to attain their dreams on their own.
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<p>Q3. Outside of government, who is most likely to support this type of initiative?</p>	<p>Many survey respondents made suggestions, however the answers didn't provide a clear path to the required funding. Summary of recommendations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Private corporations , Financial Institutions, Angel investors and Economic development groups ✓ Indigenous and non-Indigenous Women's groups ✓ Tribal Councils, First Nations, their economic development services, their elected officials and community members ✓ Public at large and Grassroots communities. ✓ Indigenous Associations ✓ The Participants themselves
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<p>Q4. Should corporate Canada play a greater role in fostering economic opportunities for Indigenous women entrepreneurs?</p> <p>If YES -- How should they support it</p> <p>If a company has no need to access Indigenous lands should they nonetheless support Indigenous women entrepreneurs?</p>	 <p>Summary of recommendations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Corporations should support entrepreneurial Indigenous women with training, start-up funding, mentorship, be a source of knowledge and resources and ongoing support. They should provide easier access to their supply chain, as well they should adopt a purchase-local policy. Corporations should also learn about the Indigenous way of doing business. ✓ Corporations should facilitate opportunities to connect Indigenous with non-Indigenous business, and enable
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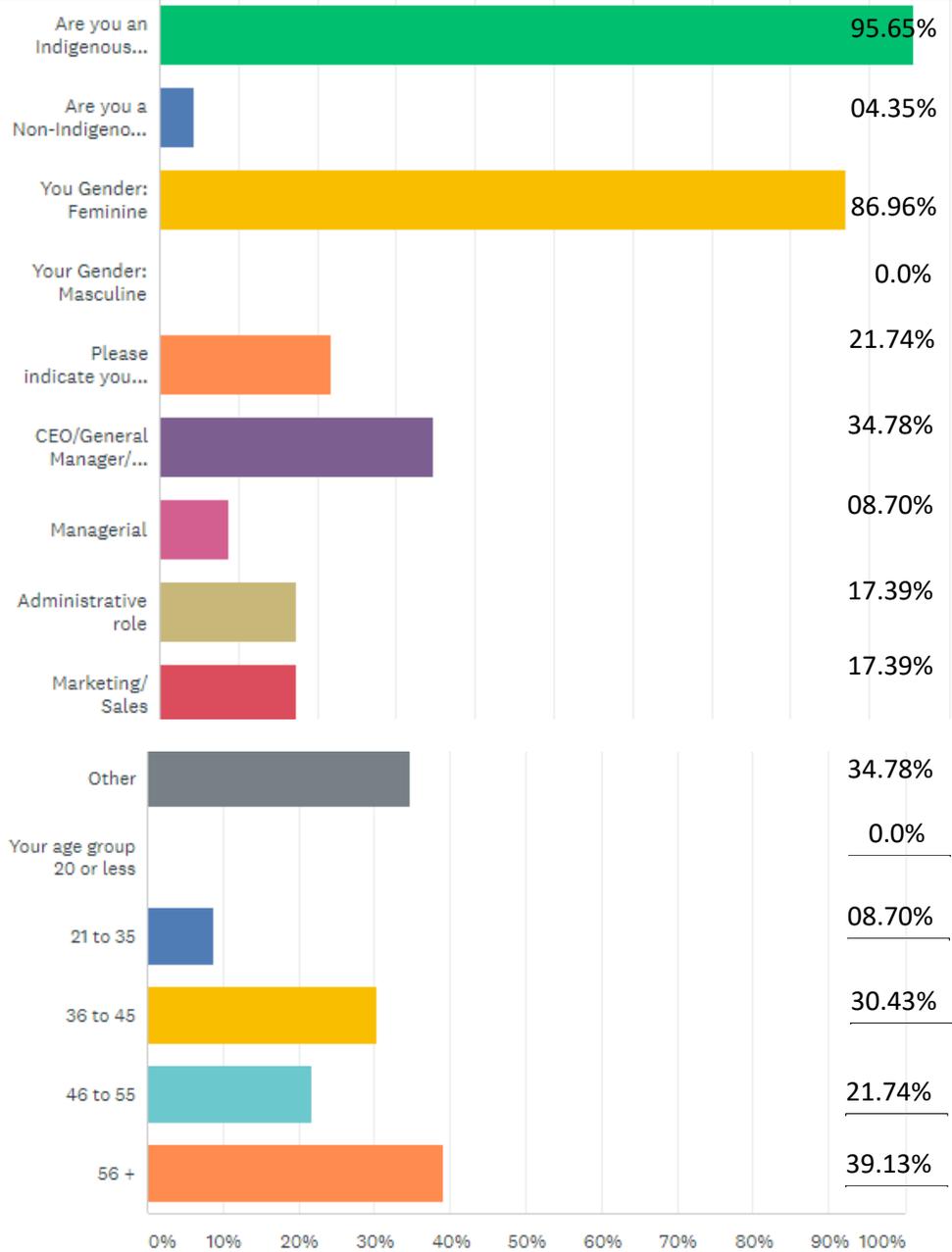
	<p>opportunities for building partnerships and open doors in the public square for Indigenous women entrepreneur looking to market their products.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Yes, they can learn how we do business as Indigenous women. They can offer this as a good way to show their willingness to tangibly support the community. They can build relationships which may access services or products that we sell. It would be a good way to engage and build relationships with Indigenous women. ✓ A corporation that provided support, grants and forgivable loans to Indigenous women could promote a turnaround in Canada in dealing with the marginalization experienced by our women.
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<p>Q.5. How might companies benefit from fostering economic opportunities for Indigenous women entrepreneurs?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Companies will benefit from new business ventures through partnerships in developing business opportunities they don't currently know about or have access to. ✓ Corporations joining forces with local business, municipalities and other economic development organizations and Indigenous women entrepreneurs will strengthen the overall economy while empowering women, their families and communities. ✓ They will offer new perspectives and a new narrative for improved relationships between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples. ✓ They will learn the implications of the fact that buying decisions are made primarily by women ✓ Network building and bridge building for future purposes by learning from and about each other ✓ More skilled workers ✓ They will be seen as 'leaders' in an area seriously lacking in support. ✓ They will be seen to be making an honest effort towards
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	<p>reconciliation of Canadians with Indigenous peoples.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ They benefit by employing local peoples, giving independence to Indigenous women their children will benefit by seeing that financial independence is a possibility. ✓ As with women entrepreneurs in the general population, Indigenous women offer diverse approaches to doing, thinking, solving problems and offering services which are different from their male counterparts and would benefit corporations.
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<p>Q.6. How would local government (e.g. Regional, Municipalities and Cities) benefit from fostering economic opportunities for Indigenous women entrepreneurs?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Enabling the development of local talent that stays within the community. The women benefit as does her family who then contributes to the local economy and workforce. ✓ A population with a lack of employable skills ends-up in a poverty cycle. It often results in a high need for state-provided services to deal with poor health, low education levels, increase in social issues such as violence, abuse of alcohol/drugs, and an increase in crime. ✓ When there are more economic opportunities for under-represented peoples, everyone benefits. More economic opportunities result in more disposable income and more taxes. ✓ It gives the local business builders and future entrepreneurs a sense that our local government is tangibly interested in helping the average Canadian. It demonstrates ‘we aren’t just voters but an integral part of the future of Canada’. ✓ As contributors to the economy, women become self-sustaining citizens, not a burden to society. They would also be role models to their families and communities. ✓ Less welfare, less use of food banks, ✓ I think we have been left out too long and this is the time to promote First Nations women in business.
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Q.7. Please, tell us about yourself. The information will be none-attributable



Remark: Of all survey results, perhaps the most striking stats 34.78% of respondents replied “other” with no explanation or description.

STEP 2 The Panels

The Process

It was decided at the outset to make every effort to make the project Canada-wide, the participants sector diverse, the discussion framework flexible, and foresight-sensitive. As well, to promote wide-ranging discussion, each set of Panel members were offered eight questions under the guidance of a Moderator, each question's brief session concluded with a summary reflection by ICN's Foresight principal.

The question sets were developed as follows:

- ✓ For the 17 April eight, research, dialogue, preparation of drafts and decisions carried on for two months.
- ✓ For the 24 April eight – significantly reflecting the proceedings of 17 April - development, discussion and decision were completed in five days in order that Panelists and the Moderator could become familiar with the questions before the event.

For list of registered participants see Appendix "C"

The First Panel

On Tuesday April 17, from 12:30 pm to 2:30 pm EDT the first panel took place. The panelists were connected live online from different locations across Canada while the Moderator and the Foresight Advisor were in ICN's Ottawa studio.

The Panelists

	<p>From Edmonton, Alberta Karen MacKenzie, MBA — entrepreneur Is a proud Cree-Métis woman and the Co-Founder and President of MacKintosh Canada, an Indigenous owned, international consulting company. Business ownership along with academic and senior management positions has led Karen to this important crossroads in our collective societies where co-creation of the future is both important and enabling.</p>
	<p>From Ohsweken, Ontario Tuesday Johnson-MacDonald — entrepreneur She founded and owns Tap Resources and Associates a business delivering diverse conferences that showcase the Indigenous culture. Her company was recently awarded with two awards for Best Conference in 2017. The Canadian Event Society's 'Best Conference 2017 Award' in Canada for the World Indigenous Peoples Conference on Education. TAP is the first Indigenous Event Management firm to win this National title.</p>
	<p>From Ottawa, Ontario Jennifer David — entrepreneur Jennifer (Chapleau Cree First Nation), a skilled and <i>experienced communicator, project manager, planner and facilitator</i>, is committed to creating and portraying an accurate and positive narrative of Indigenous people in Canada. Jennifer is a Partner NVision Insight Group.</p>

	<p>From Listuguj, Quebec Victoria Labillois, MBA — entrepreneur A Mi'gmaq entrepreneur, Victoria owns Wejipeg Excavation; owns rental properties; co-owns Wejuseg Construction, and is an active partner in other joint ventures. Victoria served the Indigenous public service, working at the Band, regional and national levels.</p>
	<p>David Harries, P.Eng., Ph.D., Foresight Advisor David is a Fellow of the World Academy of Arts and Science, he is President of the Proteus Canada Institute; Past Chair of Canadian Pugwash and a Foresight specialist. He specializes in the use of Foresight methods to promote improvement in human security, which includes food, education, health and wellbeing.</p>
	<p>Denise-Anne Boissoneau, LL.B. Moderator Legal Indigenous Policy Consultant has extensive experience in the public and not-for-profit sectors; consulting senior management and recommends both law and culturally based solutions. Denise-Anne is from the Ojibwe First Nation.</p>

The panelists and online participants were asked to explore this overarching question:

“What if ... a collaborative Indigenous Entrepreneurial Ecosystem was created to develop, build capacity and provide a better support to aspiring Indigenous women entrepreneurs?”

To initiate the dialogue the topic was explored through a series of sub-questions, like:

Which challenges most resonate with you and why?
Which challenges would you title differently, and or deserve more detailed expression?
Are there other more important/influential challenges?
What challenges exist, that should be addressed, in ways and means for Indigenous women to identify and develop business relationships/ partnerships with established mainstream corporations?
What supports exist now that do help Indigenous woman access ‘anchor customers’ and new markets?
How important would it be for Indigenous women entrepreneurs to be provided additional opportunity to connect to Indigenous or non-Indigenous experienced business leaders, who can provide advice at key pivot points and help mold core management competencies?
What should the private sector, the three main levels of government and Indigenous governments do to promote substantively and sustainably to encourage the participation of more Indigenous women in business?
Is it reasonable to think that creating a National Indigenous women’s Circle that provides training, mentorship, capacity building, facilitation and ecosystem support could play a major role in helping build fertile environments in urban and/or rural centres for Indigenous women looking to launch, nurture and scale a business?

- ✓ In discussion use ‘opportunities’, rather than ‘challenges’ to better encourage personal and professional ‘confidence’ that progress is achievable.
- ✓ Aspiring entrepreneurs must acknowledge that work-life balancing is difficult, especially in the beginning.
- ✓ Building relationships, and, renewal of them when moving from being an employee to entrepreneurship, with friends and family who can and will help is an overarching requirement.
- ✓ Be willing to question everyone and everything through the lens of *your* specific concerns and circumstances. Knowing who is available and willing to respond is a priority task. ‘just talk’ among Indigenous women is both useful and inspirational: Seek tangible support from other Indigenous women.
- ✓ Many to most formal, established academic and vocational programs do not cater – by design and default – to Indigenous women’s often uniquely demanding circumstances.
- ✓ Current formal education and training structures and templates are very dated. The needed reforms must include ways and means for Indigenous women to participate and contribute equitably; that reflect their ‘growth path’.
- ✓ Mainstream lenses for Entrepreneurship are inherently unwelcoming; capitalist, win-lose, overcoming scarcity and deficits. The mandate, for Indigenous women, should focus on creating abundance.
- ✓ Dreaming is fine, if with others and wisely informed.
- ✓ Entrepreneurship is time-consuming, not only because ‘everyone’ is busy, but also because others’ ignorance and bias takes time to overcome. It is ‘best practice’ to always keep detailed files of activities and relationships and resource.
- ✓ Networking needs to be prepared for, done transparently, and whenever possible promote mutual and or reciprocal benefit. There are several networks available, e.g., AWBEN, but since all have a unique focus, choosing which to approach and how is an important requirement.
- ✓ Attract/ draw others into ‘the circle’ you participate in.
- ✓ The priority focus should be on ‘the community.’
- ✓ Government bureaucracy/paperwork/process is an inescapable burden, especially for Indigenous women Entrepreneurs. It is unlikely to become less of a burden, but remain a major time and opportunity – and financial -cost to deal with.
- ✓ Yes: an ecosystem, with the ‘circle’ at the heart of its networked hubs.
- ✓ “Encourage (new) engagement”, “Invite (everyone’s) observation”, “Demonstrate (performance) with action.



1st Panel Discussion Synopsis approx. 10 minutes

To the left is a video collage of the first panel discussion.

To view

<http://ideaconnector.net/2018/04/15/foresight-framework-report-for-creating-a-national-indigenous-entrepreneurs-ecosystem/?preview=true>



1st Panel Discussion Full

To the left is a video of the full panel discussion.

To view

<http://ideaconnector.net/2018/04/15/foresight-framework-report-for-creating-a-national-indigenous-entrepreneurs-ecosystem/?preview=true>

The Second Panel

On Tuesday April 24, from 12:30 pm to 2:30 pm EDT the first panel took place. The panelists were connected live online from different locations across Canada while the Moderator and the Foresight Advisor were in ICN's Ottawa studio.

The Panelists

	<p>From Edmonton, Alberta Karen MacKenzie, MBA — entrepreneur Is a proud Cree-Métis woman and the <i>Co-Founder and President of MacKintosh Canada, an Indigenous owned, international consulting company.</i> Business ownership along with academic and senior management positions has led Karen to this important crossroads in our collective societies where co-creation of the future is both important and enabling.</p>
	<p>From Ohsweken, Ontario Tuesday Johnson-MacDonald — entrepreneur She <i>founded and owns Tap Resources and Associates</i> a business delivering diverse conferences that showcase the Indigenous culture. Her company was recently awarded with two awards for Best Conference in 2017. The Canadian Event Society's 'Best Conference 2017 Award' in Canada for the World Indigenous Peoples Conference on Education. TAP is the first Indigenous Event Management firm to win this National title.</p>

	<p>From Whitby, Ontario Melanie Martin — entrepreneur Is the founder of Webrite Design Solutions, a website design and development company. She has a well-rounded business background within small businesses and enterprise organizations, as well as over seventeen years of experience in sales and online marketing. She speaks at conferences throughout Canada on building a foundation of marketing knowledge. Melanie is Anishinaabewi, her first nation is Thessalon, located along the NorthShore of Ontario. Melanie is Makwa clan."</p>	
	<p>From Listuguj, Quebec Victoria Labillois, MBA — entrepreneur A Mi'gmaq entrepreneur, Victoria owns Wejipeg Excavation; owns rental properties; co-owns Wejuseg Construction, and is an active partner in other joint ventures. Victoria served the Indigenous public service, working at the Band, regional and national levels.</p>	
	<p>Moderator: Denise-Anne Boissonneau, LL.B.</p>	<p>Foresight Advisor David Harries, P.Eng., Ph.D.</p> 

The panelists and online participants were asked to explore this overarching question:

“What if ... a collaborative Indigenous Entrepreneurial Ecosystem was created to develop, build capacity and provide a better support to aspiring Indigenous women entrepreneurs?”

To initiate the dialogue the topic was explored through a series of sub-questions, like

<p>If... Indigenous Women Entrepreneurial Ecosystem “Hubs” were created in selected urban or rural centres, what would you expect the program to accomplish?</p>
<p>If an Indigenous Women Ecosystem “Hub” was to be set-up in your community how would YOU want to make use of it?</p>
<p>What if Hubs were linked together to form a National Indigenous Women ecosystem in support of growth and well-being?</p>
<p>What do you think SELECTED CANDIDATES would expect from the program?</p>
<p>What best practices would promote better mutual understanding among Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples who share an interest in launching businesses and doing commerce?</p>
<p>How important is awareness of the ways and means of penetrating the market place and generating revenues in the EARLY stages of the start-up?</p>

Appropriate selection criteria are crucial. What should these criteria contain: e.g personal determination, education, resource support?

How could the ongoing evaluation of participants' performance fairly reflect their non-program life challenges?

Proceedings Panel no. 2 (April 24, 2018)

- ✓ The circle in each a networked hub must be 'safe' place to express feelings, ask questions, explore ideas, sound out others one knows and trusts without obstruction due to bias, inappropriate assumptions and selfish interests.
- ✓ Share stories and aspirations to promote and strengthen inspiration.
- ✓ Work together on building business literacy and opportunity awareness and share the knowledge. Many voices; "Bundled arrows".
- ✓ Canada is many parts and (business) settings. Connections constructed across regions, territories and provinces are valuable resources and building blocks.
- ✓ Establish a national (annual?) Conference on Indigenous women's success stories and lessons learned.
- ✓ Be prepared to summon up the courage needed to come to your hub expecting and confident that you will be both heard and listened to.
- ✓ Do 'best practices' exist? Good and wise ones always do. The wisest: Build a respectful and trusting relationship before beginning business discussions so it is more likely 'they' believe 'I' can and will perform. Another: Practices have to keep up with changing context.
- ✓ Absolutely essential *at the* beginning: A (strategic) plan addressing cash needed for start-up and time to establish revenue generation. A good plan depends on business 'literacy' for planning and bookkeeping.
- ✓ Focus on the less threatening *Invitation* criteria, rather than *Selection* criteria for hub establishment. Invite participants, mentors, and resource people with wording that reflects each hub's uniqueness.
- ✓ Establishing and expressing the metrics for success in the program and for the program require careful consideration and will be appropriate only when 'surveillance' is

continuous during, on completion and after the program. Time, effort, money, family well-being, sacrifice, and durability of enterprise are important elements.



2nd Panel Discussion Synopsis approx. 10 min.

To the left is a video collage of the first panel discussion.

To view

<http://ideaconnector.net/panel-2-national-indigenous-women-entrepreneurs-ecosystem/?preview=true>



2nd Panel Discussion Full

To the left is a video of the full panel discussion.

To view

<http://ideaconnector.net/panel-2-national-indigenous-women-entrepreneurs-ecosystem/?preview=true>

Impressions

- ✓ The short Question sessions were successful in promoting continuing discussions, and the post-session reflections after each appropriate.
- ✓ The two Panels with the same four participants – with one exception – demonstrated the power and value of relationship-building. Discussion in Panel 2 was more spirited, forthright and enthusiastic than in Panel 1 when ‘getting to know you’ held sway.
- ✓ Words matter, because language is culture. Some cultures do not have words for some things/conditions that others do. Some cultures have different meanings for, or perceptions of the same *English* word. Activity in every hub must reflect this communications sensitivity.
- ✓ All of the seven Panelists support the concept of hubs, carrying out of a pilot project, and would tangibly support one were it feasible in terms of time and location as mentors and resource persons.
- ✓ Foresight focused on the ‘present’ context can be a useful foundation for designing and shaping a different and better one in the future.

- ✓ Entrepreneurial opportunities for Indigenous women definitely exist, but, once identified, they have to be 'seized' and committed to. This involves sacrifices in other life and family activities.
- ✓ 'Provincial'/'territorial' Canada is not inherently supportive of a national ecosystem for Indigenous Women entrepreneurs.

Recommendations

1. Set up a library/repository of accessible ways and means and organizations that support and are of use to Indigenous women interested and engaged in business. This part of an Entrepreneurs' ecosystem should be regularly reviewed for currency and completeness.
2. Create ways and means and organizations nationwide that promote Entrepreneurship to young and aspiring Indigenous women. An annual national Indigenous Women's Career Fair and or Summit should be a centrepiece of this initiative.
3. Identify and activate innovative ways and means to bridge the gaps that distance, varied governance, social challenges, and legacy systems present to Indigenous women aspiring to a career in business.
4. Design a 'new' Canadian paradigm for education, training and experiential learning that serves all Canadians equally. It should draw on only the appropriate aspects of existing academic, vocational and certification structures and processes and tangibly account for Indigenous women's social, cultural and community circumstances.

Concluding Remarks

ICN believes that the dialogues and research reported above make a powerful case for establishing a National Indigenous Women Entrepreneurs Ecosystem (NIWEE). Its creation will offer all Canadian a means to promote opportunities for Indigenous Women which if seized will benefit everyone in the spirit of reconciliation.

In the spirit of reconciliation we also recommend that the Proteus Canada Institute adopts a “Vision” statement to anchor the foundation of its NIWEE program. The statement should reflect reconciliation principles like:

- ✓ promoting gender equality,
- ✓ equality of opportunities,
- ✓ well-being and economic prosperity for Indigenous women in the 21st century
- ✓ Cooperation and collaboration as equals between Indigenous women and non-Indigenous peoples, institutions, corporations,
- ✓ Encouraging respectful dialogues between all those willing to engage and build relationships of “Trust” over time.

The NIWEE should be a destination program aimed at increasing the number of Indigenous women in business and at increasing women capabilities to access leadership positions. At end of term women who have participated in the five month program and who are interested in launching their business should have...

- ✓ Received the knowledge and support necessary to develop their own project,
- ✓ The know-how to market test their solution/product,
- ✓ Developed their business plan, and
- ✓ The confidence and know-how to pitch investors

They should also have received on an on-going basis for twelve months the necessary coaching and mentorship needed to launch their businesses.

Facing the Future with Foresight

The Idea Connector Network (ICN) in collaboration with its not-for-profit partner, the Proteus Canada Institute brings people together to anticipate the future by developing plausible visions of what it might bring, so that preparations to deal with possible threats and to exploit possible opportunities can begin immediately.

Whether you are a strategic leader in a private sector organization looking to develop joint ventures with an Aboriginal community, or an Aboriginal community leader looking to expand the economic boundaries of your community to generate economic progress, the ICN can help you develop frameworks specific to your needs, whether they be:

- ✓ Improving knowledge and understanding of important trends and drivers,
- ✓ Identifying attractive business options for potential development,
- ✓ Creating and engaging in collaborative research programs.

We work with organizations, large and small, which strive for excellence and innovation. ICN has the practical tools, the research strengths, and the programs which will help you highlight the critical insights that deserve attention to promote success.

For more information, contact
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One-on-One Consultation

- ✓ **Erin Corston**, NAFC,
- ✓ **Shannin Metatawabin, Mark Dokis**, NACCA,
- ✓ **Irene Compton** Minwaashin Lodge.
- ✓ **Sandi Boucher** Author and motivational speaker,
- ✓ **Jaime Kobel** National Gallery,
- ✓ **Susan Scotti, Vallerie Walker**, Business Council of Canada,
- ✓ **Sandra Schillo and Stephen Daze** (Innovation and entrepreneurship) Telfer School (Ottawa U)
- ✓ **Rocky Sinclair, Errol Wilson, Jason Wilson**, Alberta Indian Investment Corporation
- ✓ **Jaime Miller, Morgan Bramford**, City of Edmonton
- ✓ **Gerald Cunningham, Darren Caillou, Sherry Cunningham, Dorethy Anderson**, Metis Settlement General Council
- ✓ **Jim Sanderson, ADM, Bev Therrien, Joanne Pawluk**, Western Economic Diversification
- ✓ **Lisa Tchir, ADM, Kevin Ramnarine**, Status of Women Alberta
- ✓ **Gillian Brown, Kristina Mibdo**, Indigenous Relations, Government of Alberta
- ✓ **Michele Perret**, Stantec
- ✓ **Curtis Haley**, ATB Entrepreneur Centre
- ✓ **ICN ADVISORY** Committee

Study reports scanned, include:

- ✓ Aboriginal Entrepreneurship In Canada (3 modules) Published Feb 14, 2017 by BDC and NACCA
- ✓ The Reconciliation Landscape
- ✓ The Power of Parity: Advancing Women’s Equality in Canada, McKinsey and Company June 2017
- ✓ Regional Clustering Model for Aboriginal Women, WEC February 2011
- ✓ Building Entrepreneurial Ecosystems, CMF Trends February 23, 2016
- ✓ Kaufman Foundation: Six Strategies for Building an Entrepreneurial Ecosystem, Oct 19, 2015
- ✓ Startup Business Failure Rate by Industry
- ✓ Series on what needs to be known about failing startups (Forbes, 2015)
- ✓ Statistic reports on Birth Outcomes among First Nations, Inuit and Metis populations, Women in Canada- A Gender-based Statistical Report (First Nations, Metis and Inuit Women and others – Statistic Canada 2016 and 2017
- ✓ Recommendations to Strengthen Ontario Through Women’s Entrepreneurship and Innovation
- ✓ BC Entrepreneurial Ecosystem Survey Summary (2016)
- ✓ Supporting and Growing Women Owned Business (Canada-United States Council for Entrepreneurs & Business Leaders)
- ✓ Harvard – What an Entrepreneurship Ecosystem Actually Is
- ✓ Creating a new narrative: Empowering Indigenous Women Through Entrepreneurship
- ✓ The Effectiveness of Entrepreneurial Motivational Training Programme Among University Students
- ✓ The Role of Small and Large Business in Economic Development
- ✓ Gallup: How Large Corporations Can Spin Small Business Growth
- ✓ Cultural Competency – Working with Aboriginal Peoples: A non-Native Perspective
- ✓ Entrepreneurship Development for Women Entrepreneurs: An Update of What Works
- ✓ Deep Centre Series: A Lynchpin in Canada’s Economic Future; Accelerating Canada’s Start-up Ecosystem; Global Best Practices in Business Facilitation
- ✓ The Top 20 Reasons Start-ups Fail
- ✓ Women Entrepreneurs: Financing and Growth
- ✓ CCAB: 2016 Aboriginal Business Survey
- ✓ The Business of Empowering Women
- ✓ Success Fueled by Partnership
- ✓ Trust and Distrust: New Relationships and Realities

Registered Participants for Panels

First Name	Last Name
Zachary	Gutfreund
Kathleen	Larocque
Carrie	Batt
Guy	Dancause
Reni	Han
Don	DeVon
Arlene	White
Jennifer	Boudreau
Noreen	McAteer
Erica	Stevenson
Corey	Mattie
Jill	Morton
Tessa	Danelesko
Victoria	LeBillois
Jennifer	David
Tuesday	Johnson-MacDonald
Karen	Mackenzie
Denise-Anne	Boissoneau
Jeff	Potkins
Georgina	Underwood
Lana	Garbitt
Francesca	Croce
Jules	Naoumi
Tabitha	Munroe
Marlene	Paibomesai
Cate	Morris
Chantelle	Desjarlais
Manisha	Khetarpal
Rob	Rollingson
Ginger	Auger
Glenna	Henderson
Kathleen	Larocque
Natalie	Bomberry

First Name	Last Name
Marsha	Smoke
Catherine	Debassige
Felicia	Standingontheroad
Sarah	Mitchell
Shirley	Kelley
Adela	Arey-McCarthy
Shirley	K
Glenna	Daisey
	Fletts
Shari	Caudron
Pauline	Bird
Anna	Thomas
Diane	Collins
Glenda	Louis
Debbie	Tabor
Melissa	Yellowknee
Colette	Lerat
George	Kourakos
Veronica	Auger
Jules	Naomi
Tabitha	Munroe
Shari	Caudron
Pauline	Bird
Sandra	Schillo
Stephen	Daze
Julie	John
Nina	Smith
heri	Jacobs
Dawn	Willoughby
Susan	Garbett
Melissa	Stevenson
Victoria	Bomberry
Jill	Thayer