

AUGUST 2020

Indigenous Entrepreneurship Roundtable Summary

ROUNDTABLE PARTICIPANTS

Bev Latter

Alberta Women Entrepreneurs

Delaney Lothian

National Research Council Canada

Dusty LeGrande

Mobilize Waskawewin

Evert Poor

Aksis YEG

Jacquelyn Cardinal

Naheyawin

Jamie Bourque

Multipel Inc.

Marnie Suitor

AKSIS Yeg

Micah Cawfoot

Caw and Crow

NEEDS

- A Need accessible entry into tech and entrepreneurship.** There are historical, economical, and educational barriers to entry into the entrepreneurial space.
- B Need Indigenous mentors.** The Indigenous community has historically lacked known role models and mentors from the founder and professional communities in the business space, especially those who are open to offer insightful information and key learnings for success like personal productivity and confidence building.
- C Need access to physical tech resources such as computers and internet access.** Internet access is limited on reservations, making it difficult for founders to connect with potential founders to access resources, information, and mentors.
- D Need effective support for Indigenous entrepreneurs and awareness of these support systems.** There is difficulty in finding effective and available Indigenous business resources.
- E Need for non-Indigenous to educate themselves on the Indigenous communities, history, protocols, and land acknowledgements.** Indigenous diversity and inclusion is different from other diversity and groups and should be treated accordingly.

- F Need more funding entities for Indigenous founders.** There is difficulty acquiring funding for new ideas even in Indigenous-only programs. The low funding leads to decreased competitive advantage in the market.
- G Need to reform the perspective on the Indigenous entrepreneurial potential.** Racial stigmas put on the community such as the perception that indigenous solutions cannot serve a broader market, limits the opportunities in the business community.
- H Need equitable value to Indigenous-owned assets.** Having assets is important for pushing projects forward. Metis lands for example, are not considered “desirable assets.”
- I Need service providers to remove systemic and institutional barriers.** Acknowledging the historical, economical, and educational barriers to entry into the entrepreneurial space.
- J Non-Indigenous persons need to take personal responsibility for the EDI work.**
- K Need for more established networks** (not just hubs) for indigenous founders.
- L Need for Indigenous founders and startups.** There are 83,750 Indigenous people in Edmonton. The Indigenous demographic is the fastest growing segment in Canada and should therefore benefit from the knowledge of the need for Indigenous founders and startups.
- M Need to decolonize the colonial data narrative.**

RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1** Educate the community tech and entrepreneurship communities by putting together helpful business resources.
- 2** Work with Indigenous consultants and liaisons to inform the Indigenous community on helpful resources.
- 3** Indigenous entrepreneurs can engage the Indigenous community as mentors and guides to offer support as well as share resources.
- 4** Content owners in the ecosystem should understand and take the Indigenous perspective into consideration.
- 5** Intellectual property owned by Indigenous founders should be managed by Indigenous business leaders and experts who understand the value propositions of the founders.
- 6** Indigenous mentors from corporate Canada can educate and help others from the community to navigate the corporate world and how to overcome barriers to entry.
- 7** Learn and understand the Indigenous community, who the Indigenous are, and Indigenous history as well as the traditions and protocols.
- 8** Participate in different respective ceremonies, as each Indigenous community varies. Also understand the land acknowledgements and why it takes place.
- 9** Have Indigenous representation within your organization to assist with building sincere relationships and outreach.

- 10** Get familiar with Indigenous communities and values to create a more welcoming environment. Also, feel welcome to bring your own culture as it's not one sided and we want to learn from each other.
- 11** Indigenous mentors should be matched with Indigenous mentees for the sake of commonalities, shared and lived experiences, shared knowledge, and Indigenous focused resources.
- 12** Lead with complete transparency. Do not carry out activity for the Indigenous community without Indigenous persons leading it as well.
- 13** Remain actively involved with the Indigenous community through Indigenous events etc.
- 14** Share knowledge in actionable format for other organizations beyond just research and information gatherings.
- 15** Organizations should educate themselves on the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada: 94 Calls to Action and present back to the community with some concrete actions.
- 16** Aim to 'build' rather than 'find' Indigenous entrepreneurs.
- 17** Help Indigenous communities define entrepreneurship in a different way by answering the questions of: "What is Indigenous defined entrepreneurship?"
- 18** Adopting the UN's thinking around FPIC guidelines (free, prior and informed consent) for gathering data and principles of OCAP (Ownership, Control, Access and Possession) for data stewardship.