



HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE PAST YEAR

SPRING 2024 - FALL 2025

Presented at The Circle's



All Members Gathering



LETTER FROM OUR CHAIR

JENN MILLER

It is an honour to be a member of The Circle family and I am pleased to continue to serve on the Governing Circle and as co-chair. This year has brought challenges as well as renewal. We said goodbye to long time Governing Circle members Brielle Beaudin-Reimer, Brodie Guy and Marie-Claude Cleary. Tim Fox, my partner in chairing, stepped down as co-chair to make way for new leadership as he serves his last term as a member of the board. Alongside these changes, we welcomed five new members and we head into the next year with refreshed energy and dedication to support this work.

The Circle's incredible staff team, led by CEO Kris Archie, continues to punch above its weight class, curating transformational work that centres the organization's values of curiosity, abundance, reciprocity, accountability.

This work is done alongside our members - Indigenous-led organizations and settler philanthropic partners - who together support The Circle to strengthen our approach in an increasingly complex and challenging context.

Thank you all for your continued contribution to The Circle's mission to transform the philanthropic sector to redistribute wealth, activate wisdom and strengthen organizational infrastructure for the purpose of Indigenous peoples, organizations, communities and nations.

With gratitude,

Co-Chair, The Governing Circle
THE CIRCLE ON PHILANTHROPY

THE GOVERNING CIRCLE

DIRECTORS | JUNE 2024 - SEPTEMBER 2025

CHAIR | JENN MILLER

FINANCE CHAIR | BENJAMIN COOPER-JANVIER

CRYSTAL MCLEOD*

ERICA MCCLOSKEY*

NADIA AHIDJO*

PAUL NAZARETH

RHODE THOMAS

SADIA ZAMAN

SARAH THOMAS*

SONIA LEO*

SUSAN MANWARING

THEA BELANGER

TIM FOX

**newly appointed in June 2025*

Gratitude to all directors of the Governing Circle for supporting The Circle by sharing your time, wisdom and talent. Abundant gratitude to: Brielle Beaudin-Reimer, Brodie Guy, Marie-Claude Cleary who wrapped up their terms this year.

REFLECTIONS FROM OUR CEO

KRIS ARCHIE

Each year Shereen, our Director of Partnerships & Strategic Communications, asks me to sum up our year in three words – and then we host a longer conversation after our Year in Review releases. This year, when the task was prompted, I had to say, *“I don’t think I have it in me to find ones that I would want to share out loud with our members”* – because it’s been a hard year. After I said that, I realized the beauty in knowing that we are not alone in hard times – not personally and not in this work alongside our members. It is this community of members, this network of co-learners, peers and doers, where we practice naming the hard things, saying them out loud, and finding a pathway together while we work to breathe life into a future we can all be more proud of.

It’s no surprise to anyone reading annual reports, talking to peers, fundraising for causes or explaining the daily news to kiddos right now that it’s been a tough year – in the sector, in the world, in each of our lives. I continue to be reminded that in every room we invite people into and enter in this work, grief, loss, sadness and rage are with us, and it’s palpable. In these hard hours, which can become hardened days and years, it becomes more important than ever to also notice where we have ancestral wisdom, matriarchal power, unabashed joy, intergenerational creativity and abundance aplenty as well. It is in this middle space, where we oscillate between both what is hard and what can be life-giving, that we have an opportunity. It is time for us to remember that our connection to Creator, land, language, waters, our families and our ancestors can hold us steady.

This past seasonal round was a year for listening, for leaning into reciprocal relationships and exploring expansion. Our Year of Deep Listening exercise yielded beautiful reminders of our shared journey of learning alongside one another, encouraged our creativity in programming, and reaffirmed our commitment to actioning this wisdom sourced from members. We have also been in reciprocal connection with our Partners in Reciprocity alumni community and have gathered their insights into the challenges and opportunities ahead as we enter a new phase of enabling accountability related to the Declaration for Action.

Through team conversations and our engagements with our Cousins community, we learned this big, beautiful thing: our (Indigenous) peoples' conceptions of accountability are not formed with rigidity, punishment or due diligence embedded. Instead, our view of accountability is about being in relationship — about knowing to whom you belong, who you can turn to for guidance, support, learning and connection — and recognizing that actioning our accountability to one another is a deeply intentional, joyful gift we receive when we are in relationship. For many of our team members, these concepts have been instilled since infancy. We can take for granted that when we talk about accountability with non-Indigenous peoples, the baseline meaning is not aligned to our thinking, doing and relating. This awareness reminded us about the importance of exploration and expansion, and we find ourselves in this invigorating moment of curiosity, creativity and excitement for where we can go together next.

We envision increased program offerings, data-sharing partnerships, and story development for advocacy, growing practice, and policy change to benefit Indigenous-led movements, organizations and communities. We feel the revitalization in the philanthropic sector and most importantly, an expanded vision for continued intergenerational redistribution of wealth for Indigenous organizations and Nations as we nurture Aunties Place and the Feast House in the years ahead.

While times are tough, they are also beautiful. It's in the listening, learning and doing alongside one another that we move through these moments to all become a little wiser, bolder, more relational and accountable in the seasons ahead.

We thank all our relatives who are in this shared labour of transformation alongside us. We look forward to inviting your continued journeying in the years ahead.

Kukwstsétselp kwséltkten,



CEO
THE CIRCLE ON PHILANTHROPY

THE CIRCLE TEAM

The Circle team works within a shared leadership model, with each team member's role intentionally aligned to our seasonal pathway, ensuring our work reflects the values and rhythms of each season. [Click here more information.](#)



KRIS ARCHIE
CEO



VALINE BROWN
Director of Member
Engagement & Accountability



CECILIA FEDERIZON
Spring & Summer
Coordinator



DENA KLASHINSKY
Director of Operations,
Governance & Policy



NICOLE LAMY
Fall & Winter
Coordinator



SHEREEN MUNSHI
Director of Partnerships
& Strategic Communications



JEANETTE MOSS
Project Manager
Aunties Place



HALEY LAUTEN
Membership
Coordinator



ALEJANDRA LÓPEZ BRAVO
Manager of Shared
Learnings & Research



KELLY FOXCROFT-POIRIER
Circle Host
in Residence





THE CIRCLE

PATHWAY TOWARD A SHARED FUTURE

THE PATHWAY

We work alongside our members to transform the philanthropic sector to redistribute wealth, activate wisdom and strengthen organizational infrastructure for the purpose of Indigenous peoples, communities and nations. We do this by bringing our presence, participation, hosting and wisdom creation to our shared labour for change.

	BEING PRESENT PRIORITY AUDIENCE	PARTICIPATION PRIORITY SPACES FOR ENGAGEMENT	HOSTING THE PRIORITY FOCUS FOR HOSTING	WISDOM CREATION THE PRIORITY WISDOM SHARING
 WINTER	The Circle on Philanthropy and members who request infrastructure supports	The legal, fiduciary, regulatory environment	Providing operational support to Indigenous organizations, movements and nations to engage in the philanthropic sector	Celebrating Indigenous led practices and policies
 SPRING	To our partners - long standing and emerging	Strategic storytelling for amplifying partnerships that benefit the many	Convening to enrich the reciprocal nature of partnerships between our members and related collaborators	Demonstrating pathways for reciprocal relationships toward transformation
 SUMMER	To current and prospective members	Indigenous led justice and sovereignty oriented spaces	Enabling meaningful engagement that increase supports to Indigenous organizations, movements and nations	Developing mechanisms for engagement and accountability
 FALL	To the people, organizations and movements that come after our time	Shared learning, research and knowledge mobilization spaces	Amplifying peer learning, research and knowledge mobilization for change	Making the shared wisdom for transformation and possibility visible to the whole

PRINCIPLES TO GROUND OUR SHARED LABOUR

	ABUNDANCE enables us to be bold, invite possibilities, see and orient to what is life giving	RECIPROCITY deepens connections for shared work and enables storytelling for shared purpose	ACCOUNTABILITY oriented toward Indigenous wisdoms, worldviews and laws allow us to move toward decolonized approaches in relationship with members, partners and one another to transform the sector	CURIOSITY invites us to learn by doing, to ask generative questions and to trust the wisdom of our community to make us all wiser
--	---	--	---	--

THIS WORK HAPPENS BEST ON A FOUNDATION OF SHARED POWER AND RELATIONSHIP TO PLACE

GRANTS

AND DONORS

FOUNDATIONS (GRANTS)

- DEFINITY INSURANCE FOUNDATION
- ONTARIO TRILLIUM FOUNDATION
- LUSH COSMETICS
- ALL ONE FUND
- MCCONNELL FOUNDATION

DONORS

MONTHLY

- NICK KOOTNIKOFF
- JAMES UHRIG

REPEAT

- EVENINGS AND WEEKENDS CONSULTING INC.

ONE-TIME

- KATELYN

SPONSORSHIPS

- VANCITY COMMUNITY FOUNDATION - IN SUPPORT OF ONE DAY'S PAY GRAPHIC DESIGNER



miigwetch



zikomo



thank you



salamat



gilakas'la



takk



haawa



COMMUNITY PEERS

GRATITUDE AND APPRECIATION

We want to pay special tribute to the remarkable individuals who walk alongside us on our shared pathway—whether joining faculty teams, developing curriculum, creating beauty, or helping keep the lights on and the bills paid. Our work simply wouldn't be possible without the people who say “yes” and go above and beyond for The Circle.

AKRAM RAOUF, CPA CGA | FINANCIAL ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT

JADE ROBERTS | ARTIST IN RESIDENCE

HOLLY MCLELLAN | [**HUMMINGBOARD**](#) | YEAR OF DEEP LISTENING & L4A ANALYSIS

DORLA TUNE | YEAR OF DEEP LISTENING

NATALIE ORD | PARTNERS IN RECIPROCITY FACULTY MEMBER

CIRCLE MEMBERS

INDIGENOUS-LED ORGANIZATIONS

4Rs Youth Movement

Aboriginal Head Start Association of BC

Akala Outdoor Education Society

Alberta Inuit Women's Association

All My Relations – Indigenous Society

Anishnawbe Health Foundation

Arctic Funders Collaborative

Arctic Indigenous Fund

Arctic Inspiration Prize

Awi'nakola Foundation

Black & Indigenous People of Colour Creative Association (BIPOC-CA)

Centre for First Nations Governance

Circle of Turtle Lodge

Coast Funds

Coastal Foodways

Compaigni V'ni Dansi Society

Feathers of Hope

First Nations Technology Council

First Peoples' Cultural Foundation

Fondation Nouveaux Sentiers

Future Generations Foundation (formerly NIB Trust)

Gaagige Zaagibigaa

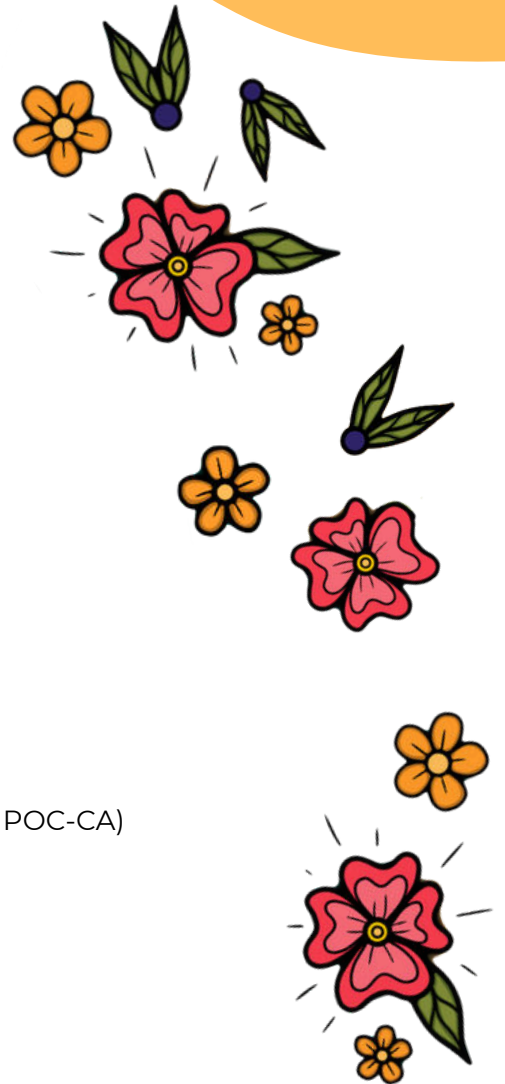
Gord Downie & Chanie Wenjack Fund

Increased ACCESS

Indigenous Clean Energy

Indigenous Climate Action (ICA)

Indigenous Perspectives Society





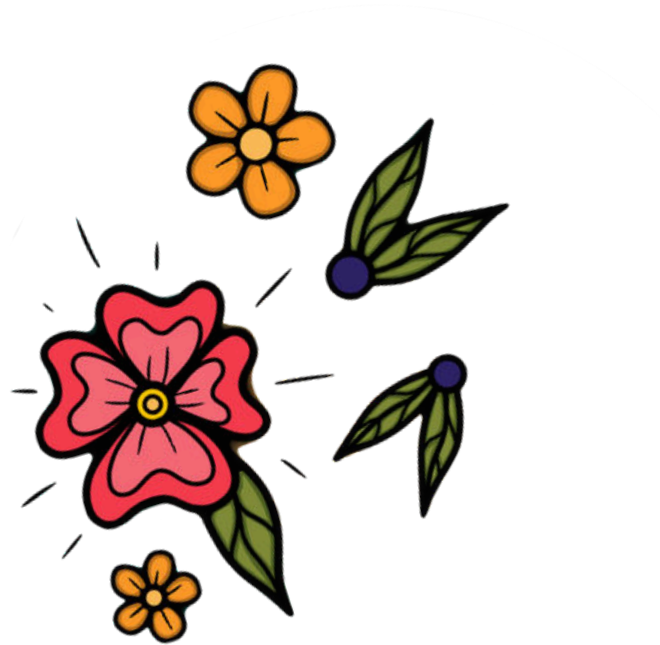
Indigenous Watchdog
Kahnawake Environment Protection Office
Keepers of the Circle
Keepers of the Water
Kihew Awasis Wakamik Cultural Society
Kocihta
Kw'umut Lelum Foundation
Moccasin Footprint Society
National Aboriginal Trust Officers Association (NATOA)
National Association of Friendship Centres (NAFC)
Nationhood Council House
Native Women's Association of Canada
Nawalakw
Nijkiwendidaa Anishnaabekwewag Services Circle
Ontario Indigenous Youth Partnership Project (OIYPP)
Qqs (Eyes) Projects Society
RAVEN Trust
Revitalizing Our Sustenance Project
Right Relations Collaborative
Tamalpais Trust
Sagkeeng Child and Family Services
Savage Society
Sovereign Seeds
Stqeeye' Learning Society
Teach for Canada
Ucwalmicw Centre Society
Ulnooweg Community Foundation
Wanuskewin Heritage Park

CIRCLE MEMBERS

SETTLER PHILANTHROPIC ORGANIZATIONS

All One Fund
Association of Fundraising Professionals - Canada
Atkinson Foundation
Balsam Foundation
Calgary Foundation
Canadian Association of Gift Planners
Canadian Women's Foundation
Community Foundations of Canada
Counselling Foundation of Canada
Donner Canadian Foundation
Dragonfly Ventures
Equality Fund
Hamilton Community Foundation
Inspirit Foundation
Jane Goodall Institute of Canada
Laidlaw Foundation
Law Foundation of British Columbia
Law Foundation of Ontario
Iululemon
Makeway
Mastercard Foundation
Nature United
North Family Foundation
Pathy Family Foundation
Peter Gilgan Foundation
Real Estate Foundation of British Columbia
Rideau Hall Foundation

Sitka Foundation
TD Friends of the Environment
Toronto Foundation
Tree of Life Foundation
Trottier Family Foundation
United Way of BC
Vancity Community Foundation
Vancouver Foundation
Winnipeg Foundation



Lists of our Indigenous and settler philanthropic members are available on our website. [Click here.](#)



THE CIRCLE'S WEALTH REDISTRIBUTION

FRAMEWORK & PRACTICE

Since 2018, The Circle has made a very specific commitment to support Indigenous businesses, venues, people and communities in our procurement. This decision was a simple demonstration to indicate our priorities to serve Indigenous peoples in both our programming and in our purchasing.

We know that many Indigenous organizations consistently, and with clear intention, also make such choices that demonstrate values alignment, a commitment to local vendors and communities as well - and there is often little to no recognition that this is actually a practice of wealth redistribution.

It is such an intrinsic Indigenous way of being—giving back whenever and wherever we can, in every way possible—that it often goes unrecognized for the tangible financial value it brings to the nonprofit and charitable sector. This needs to change.

In 2023, we designed a simple system to screen for two categories - Indigenous and Black or Racialized vendors, contractors, staff, venues, etc. In 2024, we had our first year of regular reports to the board outlining what we call *Redistribution of Wealth* reports.

In 2024, \$1.1 million of Circle dollars were recognized as having been re-allocated to Indigenous and Black or Racialized individuals and businesses with a larger proportion in the Indigenous category. This amount represents just over half of all the organization's revenues and two thirds of its total expenditures for the year.

Similarly, in the first 6 months of 2025, \$653,590 was re-allocated to Indigenous and Black or Racialized individuals and organizations with a larger proportion in the Indigenous category. This amount represents just over half of all the Circle's revenues and over three quarters of its total expenditures for the period.

FOR THE 6 MONTHS ENDED JUNE 30, 2025			
CATEGORY	AMOUNT (CAD)	% OF REVENUE	% OF EXPENSES
Indigenous	\$485,421	40%	59%
Black or Racialized	\$168,169	14%	20%
TOTAL	\$653,590	54%	79%

FOR THE 12 MONTHS ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2024			
CATEGORY	AMOUNT (CAD)	% OF REVENUE	% OF EXPENSES
Indigenous	\$838,505	37%	47%
Black or Racialized	\$342,571	15%	19%
TOTAL	\$1,181,076	52%	66%

We believe that this act of noticing, measuring, and now sharing with others can be a small but important way for Indigenous organizations to tell the bigger picture of their financial redistribution back into local communities and Indigenous, Black or Racialized businesses.

We also call upon all of our settler philanthropic members to consider how they might begin to track the procurement choices of their organizations and tell a more public story about where else their decisions are helping to support the local Indigenous peoples, economies and businesses where they operate.

While this work is simple and can continue to be finessed over time, we wanted to practice what we preach - to do a little bit of sharing with our members about what we're trying and learning - so that others might also join us in this important work of wealth redistribution.

WHAT WE HEARD FROM OUR MEMBERS

YEAR OF DEEP LISTENING

The Year of Deep Listening (YODL) was a parallel series of conversational interviews and surveys held with Indigenous members and settler philanthropic members of The Circle in 2024-2025. The goal of the YODL was to support The Circle as it continues to develop wise programmatic and strategic decisions that are grounded in their members' and partners' priorities, wisdom, and needs.

We are so honoured to have heard from so many members about the ways we currently offer support and how we can continue to provide responsive, impactful programming and opportunities for transformation.

WHAT WE HEARD FROM INDIGENOUS MEMBERS

In the Indigenous member survey and interviews participants were asked about their relationship with The Circle, its impact on their work, and on areas for improvement.

SUMMARY OF OBSERVATIONS AND KEY THEMES

1. Community and Connection: The Circle fosters a sense of belonging and connectedness among Indigenous members, reducing isolation and creating safe spaces for healing and collaboration. Events like "All My Relations" and "Fall Feast" were highly valued for their ability to build relationships and provide personal and professional validation.

2. Impact on Indigenous Organizations: The Circle significantly influences members' organizational practices, including strategic planning, fundraising, and wellness policies. It supports Indigenous-led organizations in navigating the philanthropic landscape, advocating for unrestricted funding, and promoting Indigenous ways of working.

3. Advocacy and Education: Indigenous members are grateful for the role The Circle plays in educating settler philanthropic organizations about decolonized practices, Indigenous wisdom, and the need for wealth redistribution. Programs like Partners in Reciprocity (PIR) and the Indigenous Abundance Accelerator (IAA) were highlighted for their transformative impact.

4. Challenges and Tensions: Participants highlighted reconciliation fatigue, communication gaps, and the challenges smaller organizations face in integrating wellness and reflective practices while in survival mode. They also observed that some settler organizations appeared performative in their commitments, while others struggled to authentically shift their approaches.

5. Recommendations: Key suggestions included strengthening and expanding mechanisms to support funding, enhancing convening opportunities, providing organizational infrastructure resources, updating advocacy strategies, and improving communication to increase awareness of The Circle's initiatives and available opportunities.

WHAT WE HEARD FROM SETTLER PHILANTHROPIC MEMBERS

In the settler philanthropic member survey and interviews participants were asked about their relationship with The Circle, its impact on their work, and on areas for improvement.

SUMMARY OF OBSERVATIONS AND KEY THEMES

1. Shifting the Flow of Philanthropy: The Circle's leadership and consistent efforts are transforming the settler philanthropic sector, resulting in significantly more funds moving to Indigenous led and informed organizations. There has been a clear ripple effect of The Circle's teachings and leadership on their settler philanthropic members' and partners' practices and priorities, leading to better relationships with, and more funding to, Black-led organizations and other equity-deserving groups.

2. People Power Change: The profound personal and professional impact that The Circle has had on individuals working in the settler philanthropic sector is an important driver for transforming settler philanthropic organizations, leading to positive outcomes for Indigenous-led organizations, members, and communities.

- The Circle's leadership generally has a different impact for Indigenous, Black, and Racialized individuals (backing up/feeling seen/sharing solidarity), than white individuals (correcting behaviour/calling in/disrupting).

3. Trusted Voice, Transformative Impact: The Circle has had a deep and broad impact on organizations in the settler philanthropic sector through its offerings, resources, convenings, facilitation, engagement, advocacy, and ongoing consultation. Its added value to members—and its outsized transformational influence on the sector—likely outweighs the formal recognition it receives, including acknowledgment for the toll it takes to continuously take risks and push for change and accountability.

- The Circle is viewed as a highly credible source of knowledge and questions, and could be characterized as a “critical friend” to many of the settler philanthropic sector's leaders.
- Over 80% of interviewees said they reach out to The Circle for ongoing advice.

4. Shared Frameworks, Shared Responsibility: There is great interest among settler philanthropic members and partners for meaningful accountability, reporting and ongoing learning around implementing shared frameworks and tools: The Philanthropic Community's Declaration of Action, The Truth and Reconciliation (TRC) Calls to Action, The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP), The Definitional Matrix (I4DM), Missing Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls (MMIWG) Calls to Justice.

Overall, the YODL initiative affirmed The Circle's alignment with member needs and its role in transforming the philanthropic sector. It highlighted the importance of centering Indigenous leadership, fostering meaningful relationships, and advocating for systemic change. The feedback, insights and recommendations will guide The Circle's future efforts to deepen its impact and support to all members..

LEARNING FOR ACTION

PLANS FOR DATA COLLECTION & ACCOUNTABILITY STRATEGY

As we prepare for the next evolution of The Circle's visible learning, data collection, and accountability strategy, we have reviewed the themes, insights, tensions, and learnings from our recent Learning for Action (L4A) processes. A full presentation of the report was shared with Partners in Reciprocity (PiR) alumni in July 2025.

The PiR alumni feedback, comments, questions, and curiosities have been helpful as we consider the support that our members and signatories may benefit most from, in order to best meet some of The Circle's goals to:

- Move more money to Indigenous-led organizations
- Move more decision-making power to Indigenous people, organizations, and communities
- Improve experiences of Indigenous-led organizations when working with Settler Philanthropic Organizations/Foundations (SPOs)

SUMMARY OF OBSERVATIONS AND KEY THEMES FROM THE L4A LEARNINGS:

PiR has strong evidence of being a uniquely transformational, high-impact investment in the people, teams, cultures, and capacities of SPOs. Through its focus on The Circle's key levers for change: People, Place, Practice, Policy, Protocol. This appears to have led to shifts in moving more money and decision-making power to Indigenous leadership.

"PiR put legs under the idea of what it means to be committed to decolonization, to commit to cultural safety, to anti-racism. It does so in a spacious and generous way, holding you in relationship, which is a real gift, to allow that transformation to go deeper than it would otherwise." –Settler philanthropic member, 2024

There is an opportunity to collect data on these results more comprehensively, concisely, and consistently, as well as intentionally aligned with The Circle's goals and identified levers for change. The collection of this data could be done in a way that continues to provide visible learning opportunities for SPOs, as well as producing valuable data and research for The Circle to understand and communicate its impact, and continue to innovate its approaches for the ultimate benefit of its Indigenous members. Tension observed: SPOs self-reported on L4A questions mostly without needing to provide evidence; would foundations accept the same from grant applicants, grantees or partners?

To meet the full potential of The Circle's vision of Learning for Action, SPOs appear to need to plan for adequate time, resources, intention, and coordination on their end to undergo effective integration and accountability processes. Tension observed: Some PiR participants remarked on time being a barrier, and distinguished the time they need to do their 'regular work' as the reason for not having enough time for 'equity/solidarity work'; creating a misalignment of intention and action.

An ongoing challenge of some SPOs is using (their) proximity (to) The Circle's work to be perceived as allies, absolving themselves of wrongdoing, or not integrating the lessons being taught. Not all SPO Declaration signatories are authentically shifting their approaches." -Indigenous member, 2024

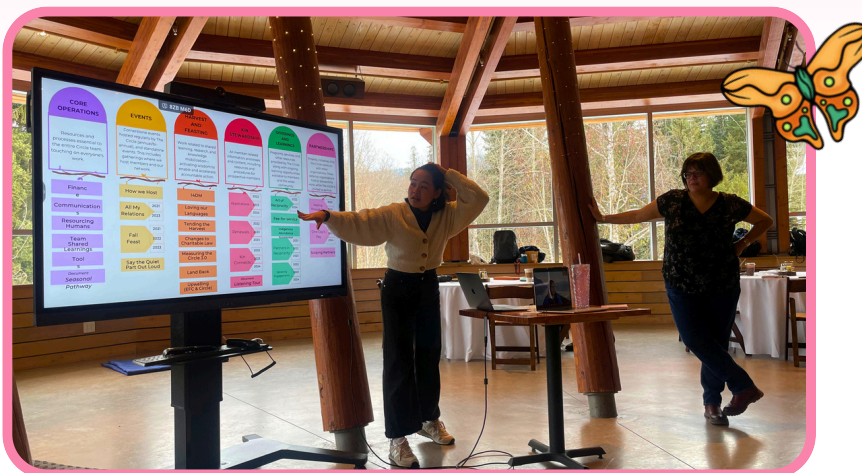
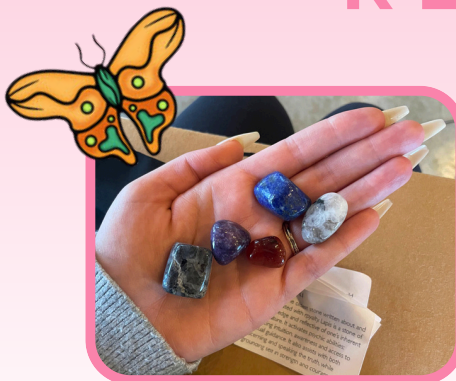
Completing strategic annual accountability processes that are based on implementation of real work and milestones is something that SPOs could commit to, and they have indicated that they have the capacity and willingness to do so. Tension observed: SPOs already have significant overhead costs to moving money, including staff, legal, accounting, investment managers, occupancy, communications, governance, etc, which uses up charitable funds, time, labour, and attention; and they require additional resources to be invested in educating themselves to move money in a better way.

As The Circle continues to strengthen its relationally accountable invitation for action tied to The Philanthropic Community's Declaration of Action, the team will keep highlighting how PiR organizations are deepening their efforts—through changes in policies and practices, strengthened relationships to place, and investments in their people—so they remain prepared to uphold their commitment to thinking and acting differently in service of Indigenous organizations, nations, and communities.

The Governing Circle and Circle team are grateful for the time, energy and ongoing contributions of the 142 PiR alumni and of the 24 philanthropic organizations who made their engagement, participation and labour available for this shared learning journey.



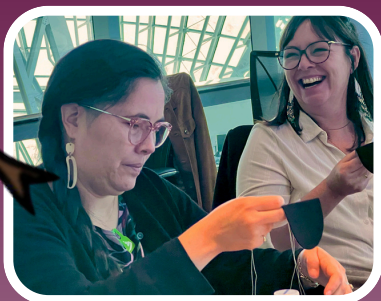
RECIPROCITY





ACCOUNTABILITY





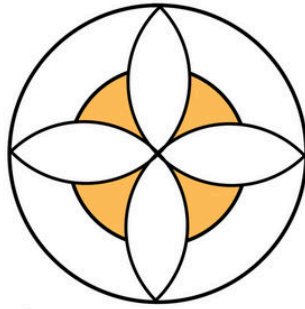
CURIOSITY





ABUNDANCE





THE CIRCLE

gilakas'la
haawa
hay ce:p ǵə
kukstemc
maarsi
miigwetch
salamat
takk
thank you
zikomo