

CELEBRATING COMMUNITY BASED RESEARCH



ANNUAL RESEARCH REPORT
2018/2019

NORDIK MISSION:

VISION

Promoting more vibrant, caring and sustainable communities through research, dialogue, analysis and reflection dedicated to the practice of holistic community development.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

- Build Northern Ontario's capacity to conduct research
- Conduct research that contributes to social and economic justice for Northern Ontario communities
- Provide evidence for informed policy and decision-making
- Focus on Indigenous, rural and Northern communities

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DIRECTOR'S REPORT

BY SEAN MEADES, DIRECTOR, NORDIK INSTITUTE

NORDIK Institute was founded to advance linkages between communities and universities, making research accessible and using it to advance the practice of holistic community development. The past year has been defined by many collaborative engagements that exemplify this purpose.

Building community-university alliances is a long and engaged process, requiring time and dedication to learning from mistakes, miscommunications, and each others' shared value and aspirations. We were proud to continue many of these long-standing relationships, including our engagements with the Johnson Farmer's Market, Sustain Algoma, Seedy Saturday and the Social Enterprise and Entrepreneurship Partnership. While the latter received its last year of funding, our previous years of work have laid strong foundations for future initiatives, including a new intake for the SETUP program to take place in January 2020 in collaboration with the CDC of Sault Ste. Marie and Area and the Millworks Centre for Entrepreneurship, and ongoing collaborations with the Timmins Economic Development Corporation on developing post-secondary education opportunities and other community engagements.

While Research Associates and Faculty have been working with ONWAA consistently over the last ten years, this year's research collaboration brought us to seven First Nation communities across Ontario and to the annual regional assembly to investigate the strengths and challenges facing income assistance recipients and administrators in First Nations. Not only do such collaborations contribute to policy discussions and advocacy, they reaffirm our connections to and understandings of real-world community contexts.

This year also saw the development of new partnerships and collaborations with profound possibility to impact community change. The Community Readiness for a Community Foundation project saw NORDIK work with Community Foundations of Canada and a diverse cross-section of the city's social economy and philanthropic sector, laying the groundwork for our region to cultivate the newest Community Foundation in the country. Likewise, our emerging partnership with the Indigenous Women's Anti-Violence Task Force has assisted in building capacity and raising awareness on the issue of violence against Indigenous women. These collaborations have also been profound learning experiences for us in how to be better allies, collaborators, and community development practitioners.

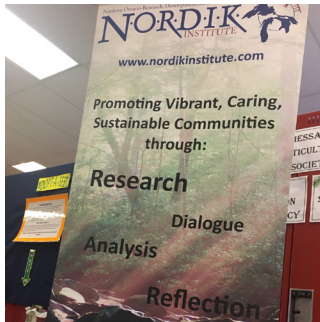
These are but a few of the highlights from our year of ongoing collaborations and interventions to promote social and economic justice in Northern Ontario.

This coming year we are proud to co-host Community Based Research Canada's 8th biannual C2U Expo with our institutional partners, Shingwauk Kinooamaage Gamig and Algoma University. While an occasion to celebrate our work and striving as well as to showcase our beautiful communities to international audiences, the expo is most importantly an opportunity to promote the importance of community-university collaborations, to mobilize knowledge, partnership and resources from across sectors to address the issues that impact our communities most dearly.



IN THE COMMUNITY

NORDIK contributed to several community events this past spring and summer.



Seedy Saturdays

SEEDY SATURDAYS

NORDIK tabled two Seedy Saturday events: the 12th Annual Seedy Saturday which took place on March 2nd at Sault College and was hosted by the SSM Horticultural Society and Seeds of Diversity; and the Seedy Saturday hosted by Central Algoma Seedy Saturday on March 9th at Central Algoma Secondary School in Desbarats. Seedy Saturdays bring together gardeners, farmers and seed savers passionate about gardening, food security and the environment.

SUSTAIN ALGOMA EXPO 2019

On June 1st, NORDIK tabled the Expo, held at the Johnson Township Community Centre in Desbarats. Sustain Algoma Expo is an annual event that promotes living sustainably in Algoma, featuring exciting environmental projects, products and services in the Algoma District.

FARM TO MARKET

In addition to tabling events, NORDIK was also involved in collecting and compiling feedback from a community meeting on February 12th about Bridging the Gap between Farm and Market. Hosted by the Johnson Farmers' Market, the meeting brought together stakeholders from across the Algoma agricultural supply chain to come together and explore conversation on production, harvesting, processing, marketing, and branding.

At each event, NORDIK engaged with community members, providing resources dedicated to holistic approaches to sustainable local and regional development.

READINESS FOR A COMMUNITY FOUNDATION OF ALGOMA

The Community Readiness for the Establishment of a Community Foundation feasibility study engaged with stakeholders to develop an understanding of the local philanthropic culture and the gaps that could be addressed by a community foundation in Sault Ste. Marie and Algoma District. A direct response to recommendations from the 2017 Community Adjustment Committee report that precipitated the FutureSSM process, the study was part of a larger six-month strategy by Community Foundations Canada (CFC) to explore the creation of a local community foundation as a potential response to local priorities and funding needs.

In September 2018, CFC commissioned NORDIK to conduct a feasibility study assessing local readiness for establishing such a foundation. Written by Sean Meades, Dr. Lisa Meschino, Zachary Low and April Wesley, the results of the study highlight a significant degree of community interest, areas of stakeholder contribution, considerations for and against the creation of a foundation, and options for any subsequent action to move the initiative forward.

The study highlighted key themes reflecting community interests and desires around the establishing of a community foundation that were identified as informing the next steps to be taken in establishing the foundation, including: the geographic scope of the communities involved in the foundation; the governance approaches that will inform leadership and decision-making; leadership and focus of the foundation; and relationship development.

Subsequent to the report's release in January 2019, a leadership group has emerged that is moving the process of incorporating the Community Foundation of Algoma forward.

NORDIK INSTITUTE, AU, AND SKG TO HOST C²U EXPO 2020

NORDIK Institute, Algoma University and Shingwauk Kinoomaage Gamig, are proud to co-host the Community-College-University (C²U) Exposition, a biannual gathering of Community Based Research Canada, from May 12th to 14th, 2020 in Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario. *C²UExpo 2020: Culture, Place and Resilience*, is a Canadian-led international learning exchange designed to address critical local and global issues. This three-day gathering will bring together about 400 scholars, practitioners, and community members from across Canada and internationally, whose work prioritizes collaborations between academics and communities.

The theme, Culture, Place and Resilience, is rooted in the four pillars of Community Resilience: cultural vitality, social equity, environmental sustainability, and economic diversity. C²UExpo 2020 will showcase innovative models, findings, and best practices of community-campus research initiatives that explore the ways in which culture is valued and embedded in the economic, social and environmental structures of sustainable development and resilient communities. For further details and updates, please go to www.C2UExpo2020.ca





Social Enterprise Support: **Birch Bark Coffee Co.**

STRENGTHENING THE SOCIAL ENTERPRISE ECOSYSTEM

The Social Enterprise (SE) business model is gaining traction in the region, providing innovative approaches to addressing social, environmental or cultural challenges while reinvesting profits above operational expenses back into their missions. The triple bottom line (people, planet, profit) for measuring their success supports the development of sustainable place-based economies, identity and belonging, and individual and community-level resilience.

This past year, Social Enterprise and Entrepreneurship (SEE) significantly strengthened the ecosystem's capacity for social enterprise development in the north Ontario through education and training opportunities. For example, every Small Business Enterprise Centre across the region participated in *Train the Trainer* sessions.

Overall, the project engaged over 1935 diverse participants (SEs, aspiring SEs, Ontario Network of Entrepreneurs members, economic development officers, Community Futures Development Corporations, secondary and post-secondary educators, community leaders, and government representatives – including Indigenous and Francophone communities through 110 education and training events, delivered in 23 different communities. The outputs include the development of 52 new resources (47 bilingual), 8 training webinars and an enhanced bilingual website (seethechange.ca and realiserlechangement.ca).

Two regional Round Tables were held providing crucial opportunities to gather in-person, share and co-generate knowledge and build a network of peers. The Timmins Economic Development Corporation hosted the **Northeastern Roundtable** in Timmins on Feb 27. Barb Stegemann, CEO and founder 7 Virtues based in Halifax was the keynote speaker, sharing her experience of launching and leading a SE to international fame. Barb noted that studies show that nine out of ten Millennials will switch brands for one that supports a cause. Similarly, 60% of North Americans want to support companies that support a cause.

Mark Marsolais of Birch Bark Coffee and Manon Cyr of La Maison Verte shared their successes and challenges of operating a Social Enterprises in the north. Mark's venture is a certified organic, fair trade, ethically sourced coffee company with a mission to help solve water issues in First Nations communities by bringing clean drinking water to all water advisory communities. La Maison Verte, located in Hearst, and operating as a cooperative since the early 1980s creates jobs for women. It has contributed greatly to the regional economy through the production of tree seedlings for reforestation, and more recently the supply of fresh produce to local markets. It now has a retail outlet.



Networking at the Northwestern Round Table

The **Northwestern** counterpart took place in Kenora on March 7, and was organized by the Northwest Business Centre. Shaun Loney was the keynote speaker whose message focused on social procurement as a way to turn government around from being a funder into a customer. Asking the question “Will you agree to save money” exemplified the process in shifting the relationship toward social procurement as a norm. Based in Winnipeg he has co-founded and mentored 12 social enterprises that focus on hiring people who have no access to the labour market.

To address the ongoing challenge SEs face in accessing capital a new partnership was developed between Millworks (the Small Business Centre in Sault Ste. Marie), the Community Development Corporation of Sault Ste. Marie and Area (CDC) and NORDIK Institute. Social Enterprises that Unites Peers (SETUP) supported a cohort of SEs through the business plan development process where they then had access to funding through the CDC.

Workshops and Round Table participants consistently identified the need expand the ecosystem across sectors and cultural and geographical communities by providing more training, development and networking opportunities.

INVASIVE SPECIES CENTRE: BUILDING SOCIAL PROCUREMENT CAPACITY

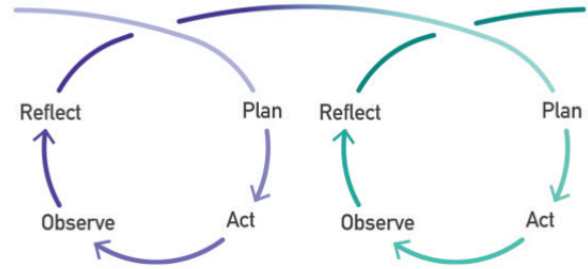
Social procurement is a growth area as governments and other businesses are increasingly contracting social enterprises for their goods and services, with the intention of making a positive social impact. The Invasive Species Centre contracted NORDIK to assess its capacity for social procurement, identify opportunities for increasing its readiness and opportunities for accessing capital. It was the only SE in the region to be funded through the Procurement and Investment Readiness Fund (PIRF), prior to the fund being prematurely canceled.



Entrepreneurial Ecosystems are Knowledge Mobilization Centres



Social enterprises address economic inequities and empower communities



Iterative Community-Based Research

NORDIK RESEARCH FEATURED AT THE 2019 CONGRESS

NORDIK's Research Coordinator, Jude Ortiz, and Research Associate, Gayle Broad presented their paper *Social Enterprise. Entrepreneurship and Innovation: Growing an Ecosystem Through Community-Based Research* on June 5th at the Association for Nonprofit and Social Economy Research (ANSER) conference, part of this year's Congress of Humanities and Social Sciences. The Congress, where 73 scholarly associations hold their annual conferences, took place in Vancouver, B.C. and boasted a record-breaking attendance of over 11,000 this year.

Their research examines how Northern Ontario's Social Enterprise and Entrepreneurship (SEE) partnership has established a broad spectrum of supports and a healthy ecosystem for alternative economies in a Northern, rural and Indigenous region. The paper argues that the strong emphasis on community engagement and the cyclical nature of the community based research methodology has enhanced the sustainability of the network and leads to systemic social innovation. The session paper has been submitted to the Canadian Journal of Nonprofit and Social Economy Research for their fall publication.

ARTISTIC RESEARCH: A NEW INTERDISCIPLINARY FRAMEWORK FOR UNDERSTANDING ITS NATURE AND IMPACT

Drawing on her dual experiential understanding of studio practice and cultural research practice, Jude Ortiz' presentation at the 2018 University Art Association of Canada conference, identified core themes and tangible and intangible benefits of studio practice as research rooted in personalized methodologies. She provided a new interdisciplinary framework that deepens understanding of the complexity, impact and value of artistic research. The event was held at the University of Western University, Oct. 2018.

INDIGENOUS WOMEN'S ANTI-VIOLENCE TASK FORCE



The Indigenous Women's Anti-Violence Task Force consists of a collaborative working group with a host of many women contributing to the collective, which is a grassroots initiative. Current members of the task force include women from Missanabie Cree First Nation, Future SSM, Algoma University, NORDIK Institute, Waabinong Head Start Family Resource Centre and Nimkii-Naabkawagan Family Crisis Shelter. The mission of the task force is to be an Indigenous-led advocate dedicated to restoring and protecting the honour and value of all Indigenous women in Baawaating through culturally safe responses. The Indigenous Women Anti-Violence Task Force is committed to ending all forms of violence.

SEXUAL ASSAULT ROADSHOW

Sexual Assault: The Roadshow was a traveling art gallery in a 20 x 8 shipping container that invited community members in participation and activation within the space. The Roadshow traveled across Ontario on a flatbed truck, visiting 18 communities. At each stop, local artists work with participants to create art that talks back to sexual violence – in all of its forms. While in Sault Ste. Marie, The Roadshow collaborated with the Indigenous Women's Anti-Violence Task Force (IWAVTF). Indigenous-led and founded, IWAVTF was created through an identified need for an increase of Indigenous-led advocates to address the issue of violence against Indigenous peoples after the Murdered and Missing Women's March on February 14th, 2018. During its formation, NORDIK Institute has supported IWAVTF with strategic planning that helped inform their vision and objectives.

PATHWAYS TO PROSPERITY

The *Pathways to Prosperity* initiative held a community consultation session in partnership with NORDIK Institute and the Local Immigration Partnership (LIP) at the Sault Ste. Marie Civic Centre on March 12. The consultation session brought together 37 community members, including business owners, service providers, government officials, and newcomers, to have a series of conversations on attracting and retaining newcomers. Guided discussions highlighted community priorities, community strengths, barriers to newcomers, and recommendations for the future.

NORTHERN LIGHTS COLLABORATIVE

This Collaborative works with youth and organizations from across Northern Ontario centering on youth leadership, storytelling, decreasing youth social isolation, and increasing organizational accountability to youth voices. The project is a collaborative network of youth connections and institutions of which NORDIK has been a partner since its inception. In October 2018, the Collaborative hosted a four day gathering on Manitoulin Island, ON bringing together 1-2 youth from each province in Canada, as well as 25 youth and adult allies from across Ontario to exchange knowledge, host workshops relevant to young people doing community change work, and create a network of youth and adult allies across Canada.



UIYFC

URBAN INDIGENOUS YOUTH FOR CHANGE

Urban Indigenous Youth for Change (UIYFC) has focused on workshops and programming that provide youth opportunities to build relationships with elders, leadership skills and cultural-based learning. Programming for UIYFC into the fall of 2018 included a collaborative elder-led workshop with the Batchewana Learning Centre and the Algoma Rod & Gun Club that allowed Indigenous youth to receive important teachings about the best practices for hunting before learning how to safely use firearms.

Other prominent events include a panel discussion facilitated by UIYFC in partnership with the Shingwauk Residential School Centre featuring filmmaker Tracie Louttit, historian and archivist Krista McCracken, and Wendy Hamilton of Living History Algoma. This panel explored the importance and ethics of storytelling and was followed by an education and reconciliation workshop with Teddy Syrette. At the beginning of 2019, UIYFC collaborated with Algoma University's Visual Arts department to organize a day-long culture camp aimed to examine Indigenous art as resistance. The camp included a panel discussion with Chancellor Shirley Horn, 2-Spirit Métis multidisciplinary artist Rihkee Strapp, and 2-Spirit Anishinawbekwe textile artist Kimberly Pelletier, followed by a screen printing workshop featuring images by Métis artist and art educator Dylan Miner.

INDIGENOUS YOUTH LEADING YOUTH

Following input from the Métis Nation of Ontario and provincial stakeholders, the Indigenous Youth Leading Youth (IYLY) Anti-Racism Project training guide and workshop materials were finalized in 2019 under the leadership of researchers Lauren Doxtater, April Wesley, and later Krista Bissiallon.

While the initial contract anticipated NORDIK to provide training for the first generation of Indigenous Youth Leaders who would spearhead the project, changes at the provincial level led to a scaling back of the project. Alternately NORDIK provided training and evaluation materials that can be used for a smaller pilot delivery to be determined at a future point.

MARRC PRESENTATION AND PUBLICATION

NORDIK Director, Sean Meades, and co-author Deb Pine (CESD graduate and Research Assistant at Maamwesying North Shore Community Health Services) delivered a presentation on February 1st at this year's Manitoulin Anishinaabek Research Review Committee (MARRC) Conference. Their presentation stemmed from their work on the, Investigating the Regional Labour Market for Indigenous Language Teachers, Administrators and Service Providers project that was carried out while both worked for Shingwauk Education Trust and funded by the Ontario Human Capital Research and Innovation Fund. Drawing on interviews and focus groups from a selection of Anishinaabe communities within the Robinson and Manitoulin Treaty areas of Northern Ontario, their research identified needs for Anishinaabe language speakers within the regional labour market and showcased the oft-overlooked demand for indigenous language skills. Discussion also addressed the measures employed by local governments, institutions, and service providers to promote the use of the Anishinaabe language.

In addition to this presentation, this research is the focus of an article by Sean Meades, Deb Pine, and Professor Emerita and NORDIK Research Associate Gayle Broad that has been accepted by the Journal of Aboriginal Economic Development, the journal of the Council for the Advancement of Native Development Officers. ***“The emerging indigenous language economy: Labour market demand for Indigenous language skills in the Upper Great Lakes”*** will appear in the second issue of 2019, due for publication in the fall. The research article challenges dominant perceptions of language-education as lacking local economic utility.

PERSPECTIVES ON INCOME ASSISTANCE IN FIRST NATIONS: MANAGEMENT, DELIVERY AND LIVED EXPERIENCES

Dr. Sheila Gruner and NORDIK Director, Sean Meades with support from Dr. Gayle Broad and Research Assistant April Wesley were contracted by the Ontario Native Welfare Administrators Association to conduct an engagement on income assistance in First Nation communities funded by Indigenous Services Canada.

The purpose was to assess the strengths, challenges and obstacles for First Nation communities in the Ontario region at multiple levels of income security programming and provide recommendations and feedback to support sites as they move social assistance clients to self-sufficiency.

A regional meeting of income assistance administrators took place with the research team in November, and site visits began in January 2019. During community site visits, 25 interviews were carried out, as well as 11 focus groups involving administrators, case workers and leadership, supplemented by 3 phone interviews and 26 completed online surveys. Communities participating in the research included Akwesasne, Sandy Lake, Shoal Lake, Fort Albany, Mohawks of the Bay of Quinte (Tyendinaga), Long Lake #58, and Oneida Nation of the Thames, reflecting a diverse cross-section of experiences and geographic realities across the region. Other First Nations across Ontario participated in the online surveys, a total of 26 being completed and whose data was analyzed before the submission of the final report, with responses from both clients and income assistance administrators or caseworkers.

The need is evident for the material, effective and meaningful implementation of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action, among other policy imperatives that outline similar recommendations and strategic actions to level the playing field between First Nation

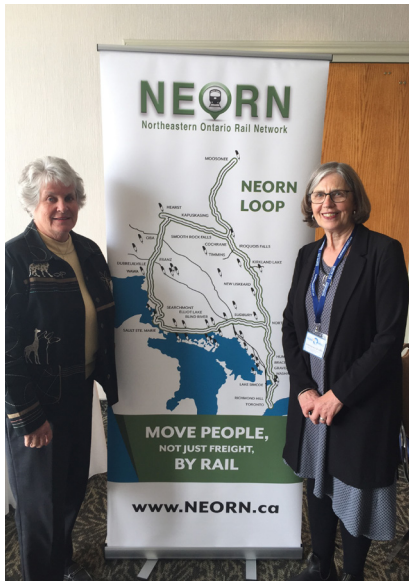
and non-Indigenous communities. The cumulative results of this study indicate a strong desire and justification for further efforts in the area of improving income assistance programming, through building on the successes and experiences of current programming, while paying much more attention to the specific needs of First Nation community members, their families and communities as a whole.

Strengths and assets of First Nation peoples should be recognized and enhanced in social assistance programming, which is already taking place in a number of First Nation communities, yet not fully recognized or measured appropriately (or at all) within the provincial measurement formulas.

Based on findings from the study, income assistance programming (Ontario Works) as delivered in First Nations, has played an important role in ensuring basic needs are covered, but could do more, and could do so differently, with more attention paid to what First Nation members, clients, administrators and leadership are saying about the needs and potential of their members and communities. The importance of local economies and comprehensive approaches to community development and economic development cannot be understated in terms of their relevance to addressing First Nation income and employment needs and moving clients of social assistance towards self-sufficiency. The report emphasized transitional approaches be integrated into income assistance client-centered management and delivery plans, which identifies ways in which links can be made for employment options in communities that strengthen local economies while supporting clients to move from dependency to self-sufficiency.

As one First Nation Income Assistance administrator emphasized: We are meant to live a good life, not one of survival.

COALITION FOR ALGOMA PASSENGER TRAINS



The Coalition for Algoma Passenger Trains has been very busy over the past few months in supporting Missanabie Cree First Nation (MCFN) in its efforts to secure federal funding for passenger train service between Sault Ste. Marie and Hearst. The train will be called Mask-wa Oo-ta-ban which is Cree for Bear Train. This would be a very significant Reconciliation initiative. The Algoma Central Railway (ACR) corridor passes through the traditional territories of MCFN and the territories of other First Nations between Sault Ste. Marie and Hearst, including Constance Lake First Nation and Michipicoten First Nation. These traditional territories have been used for many generations by First Nations for hunting, fishing, trapping and other socio-cultural activities. More recently these have become areas in which First Nations are developing eco and Indigenous tourism businesses, as well as forest management plans and other resource-based undertakings.

The Algoma Central Railway was built over 105 years ago on land acquired with no First Nation consent or compensation. The colonial relationship continued through the entire history of this rail line. Missanabie Cree children were taken on the ACR passenger train to Shingwauk Residential School.

The colonial relationship continued when in late 2013 the Federal government decided to cancel the passenger train subsidy with no free, prior and informed consent as required under the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Aboriginal Peoples (UNDRIP), and no consultation in support of discharging the need to accommodate Aboriginal rights in cases of infringement, as supported by numerous Supreme Court of Canada rulings. The Bear Train initiative is an opportunity for the Federal government to help to correct the unjust acquisition of land and building of the ACR by ensuring that the passenger service plays its important role as essential transportation infrastructure for the regional economic development of the First Nations through whose territories it passes. This is very much in the spirit of Truth and Reconciliation. It puts the MCFN in the leadership, managerial role for an important regional service that was previously an instrument of their colonization--an essential service for the local Indigenous, Anglophone and Francophone communities.

NORGOMA STRATEGIC PLAN

NORDIK provided strategic planning services to the Saint Mary's River Marine Heritage Centre, more commonly known as the M.S. Norgoma, to assist the board with future development and response to requests from the City of Sault Ste. Marie to relocate. Director Sean Meades worked with the board to develop its five-year plan which was completed in July 2018. Unfortunately, efforts to find an alternate location for the ship or to extend its berthing rights were unsuccessful.



SS Norgoma (source: Wikipedia)

CULTURE ACTION TEAM

In 2016, in reaction to bankruptcy proceedings at Essar Steel Algoma and the ‘boom and bust’ cycle of the city’s principle industries, the City of Sault Ste. Marie embarked on a process of charting a new course for its future. A Community Adjustment Committee (CAC) was struck under the leadership of NORDIK’s inaugural Director, Dr. Gayle Broad, to study and make recommendations on how to build a more resilient community. The committee adopted a four-pillars approach to resilience, emphasizing the mutually reinforcing importance of cultural vitality; economic growth & diversity; environmental sustainability; and social equity.

After engaging nearly 5,000 community members and extensive research, the CAC’s summary report advanced recommendations under each of the pillars, and the City created FutureSSM as the body to advance these recommendations, assisted by seven action teams in topical areas such as education, downtown development, and health, in addition to the four pillars. The chairs from each action team serve on the Community Development Roundtable that provides leadership to the implementation and updating of the Community Adjustment Plan. This is supplemented by the Bawaating Advisory Circle which was established to foster dialogue between leadership in Sault Ste. Marie and surrounding Indigenous communities.

In fall of 2018 NORDIK Director, Sean Meades joined the Arts and Culture Action Team for FutureSSM and succeeded Donna Hilsinger as team chair after her election as a City Councillor for Ward 3. Other members of the team include Vice-Chair Dave Mornix, Greg Marshall, Andrea Pinheiro, Ed Turgeon, Kathy Fisher, Helena Huppolaenen, Jasmina Javanovic, Miranda Bouchard, and Russel Raven.

The committee functions as a study/recommendation team to engage with residents, arts and culture sector professionals, artists,

and related stakeholders to recommend to the Community Development Roundtable areas of opportunity to advance the Arts and Culture Sector in the community.

Recommendations flowing from the Community Adjustment Committee report pertaining to cultural vitality included:

- Create a full-time city staff position to act as an advocate and catalyst for the arts & culture sector;
- Update the City Cultural Policy and develop a Cultural Plan;
- Develop a sustainable funding model incorporating both public and private support to develop cultural facilities, organizations, and events;
- Foster a culture of creativity and excellence by celebrating arts and culture, and providing diverse opportunities for creative expression and professional development;
- Market our city as a preferred location for film and digital media production;
- Assist and coordinate efforts to develop and market our artists.

Since the initiation of the action teams, FutureSSM has hired Todd Fleet as its full-time Arts & Culture Coordinator and Jennifer Mathewson as its Film, Television & Digital Media Coordinator, the City of Sault Ste. Marie has adopted a new Cultural Plan, and created a Community Arts Project that created new murals across the city’s downtown with a combination of local and visiting artists.

Former NORDIK Board Chair and previous coordinator of the SEE project, Katie Elliott, joined the FutureSSM team as its Communications Coordinator in August 2018. In December 2018, NORDIK Researcher Lauren Doxtater, who has spearheaded such projects as UIYFC and the Indigenous Youth Leading Youth Anti-Racism Project, joined the FutureSSM team as their Social Equity Coordinator.

FEASIBILITY STUDY OF PROGRAM EXPANSION AT AU-TIMMINS CAMPUS

Stemming from negotiations with Algoma University to renew the Memorandum of Agreement between the university and NORDIK, the institute was contracted to complete a feasibility study examining the prospect of programming expansion at the university's Timmins Campus.

The study included key stakeholder interviews with local employers and an online survey of prospective students targeting area high school students, college students interested in upgrading their diploma to a degree, and members of the general public. The survey received strong response rates from high schools in Timmins and Cochrane, as well as from students at Northern College, particularly among students who were enrolled in programs with exceptional or pathway agreements with Algoma University, such as business or social service worker.

The study was released in September and highlighted a number of recommendations for potential future programming, including on-site or distance delivery of BBA classes and greater promotion of existing programs. While the majority of participants tended to prefer face-to-face on-site delivery of courses, a sizable minority were seeking online courses for the flexibility they offer.

PROMOTING THE VALUE OF PUBLIC LIBRARIES IN NORTHERN COMMUNITIES



NORDIK's work in the field of Social Return on Investment (SROI) with the public libraries of Northern Ontario, has received attention at local, national and international levels. For the second time, NORDIK received the Sault Ste. Marie Innovation Centre's "***Innovative Project of the Year***" award in 2018, for producing a toolkit in collaboration with Ontario Library Services North (OLSN-N), to support small public libraries across the region in demonstrating their value as community hubs (previous recognition was awarded

to the '***Animating the John Rowswell Hub Trail***' project). The project also received attention from '***Municipal World***' with an article written by Marjatta Asu of OLS-N, highlighting the development of a measurement framework and the seven major areas of contribution. An article in Public Library Quarterly (Vol.38, 2019, Issue 3) by Broad, Ortiz & Meades, has resulted in international attention, particularly in academic circles. According to Asu, this work "...opens doors to new conversations and partnerships between municipal and provincial funders, as well as the public library community" (p.27) and NORDIK has already heard back from two communities outside our region, Brockville and Winnipeg, where the research is being taken up in their efforts to maintain and enhance library services.

The logo for the Nordik Institute. It features the word "NORDIK" in a large, blue, serif font with dots between the letters. Below "NORDIK" is the word "INSTITUTE" in a smaller, red, serif font. To the right of the text is a blue silhouette of a map of Scandinavia (Norway, Sweden, and Finland) overlaid on a circular grid pattern. A red compass rose is positioned at the top right of the grid.

THANK YOU TO OUR PARTNERS AND FUNDERS:



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