

**Transcript for ACE-WIL Town Hall: Connecting the Phase II COWIL Project  
BCcampus webinar held on February 8, 2022**

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HELENA PRINS:

So welcome to our first ACE-WIL Town Hall of 2022. My name's Helena Prins and I'm an adviser here at BCcampus in teaching and learning. I'm also an ACE-WIL member and thanks to Claudia, my membership will be renewed. And I'm also a member of the Professional Development Committee, and I see quite a few of them here today. So it's nice to be in the room with all of you. We really have a fun and full session planned today. The theme is to connect, and we hope that you'll be feeling that you connected with your peers who feel passionate about the same things as you do. So there's quite a few presenters that's going to take the stage today. Just a few housekeeping items. We are recording the session. If you do not wish to be recorded, please do turn off your camera and please remain on mute unless you are asked to speak or share. We have enabled live captioning for you, so please, you can grab that at the bottom of your menu bar. And we will share the slides of the recording afterwards to all registered participants.

So that's it for housekeeping. Next slide. I'm very thankful that I can speak to you today from my home office, which is here on the beautiful and seated traditional territories of the Lekwungen speaking people which include the Songhees and the Esquimalt Nation. Their hospitality make it possible for me to call this beautiful place my home. Many of us make New Year's resolutions, and I really am terrible at that. But seeing that this has been our first Town Hall of the year, it feels fitting that I can make this renewed public acknowledgement just of my commitment to the reconciliation and decolonization work in my personal and professional life. And I know that this is important to my team here at BCcampus, and I'm so thankful for the learning and support to pursue this work. We warmly invite you if you want to acknowledge your land or your commitment to the work in the chat. I'm going to be quiet for 30 seconds so that you can do that. OK. So here is our agenda for today, we will hand it over to Karima, Renée and Julianna for the first 25 minutes of today, and they're going to review some of the Indigenous Resource Hub, and they will also lead us in a special self-location activity.

And we will also have opportunity to connect in a breakout room. And then the second part of today, we are so fortunate to have Hannah, and Hannah was a co-op student. So I think it's really wonderful that we walk the walk, right, that we hired a co-op student. She's now project manager, and she's going to give us an overview of the themes of face to co-op projects. And then we will end with some announcements and we will hear from our lovely president Anna at the very end. So without further ado, I'm handing over now to Karima and her team.

KARIMA RAMJI:

Thank you so much, Helena. I'd like to start by acknowledging with respect the Traditional territories of the Lekwungen peoples where the University of Victoria stands and the Saanich, Esquimalt and WSANEC peoples whose relationships to the land continue to this day. My introduction, my family heritage is South Asian, but I was born and raised in East Africa, and I'm very grateful to the Lekwungen peoples for allowing me to settle on their beautiful lands for the past several years. I currently serve as associate director for International Indigenous and Strategic Initiatives for University of Victoria's Co-op Education

Program and Career Services. I've had the privilege of working with my colleagues, Renée Livernoche and Juliana Nielsen, and Juliana also is a co-op student who has continued to work with us post her co-op work term on this project. And you'll meet them both shortly. These two wonderful people have been working with us on the Indigenous World Resource Hub, a hub that I hope will help us decolonize our practices, strengthen our relationships and inspire us into action as we walk together on our collective journey of reconciliation.

This project was one of the many Co Wil projects funded by the Ministry of Advanced Education and Skills Training in BC. Developing this hub has indeed been a collective effort, and I would like to extend a deep gratitude to colleagues at Okanagan College, UBC, Langara College, SFU, TRU and Kwantlen Polytechnic University for their significant contributions to this project. I'd also like to acknowledge Elder Barb Hulme, colleagues and students at the University of Victoria who served as advisers to us on this project. Now, without further ado, because I know we have limited time on this and we have much to cover, I'd like to welcome Renée Livernoche to take us to the next step of this presentation.

RENÉE LIVERNOCHE:

Bonjour. Hello. So nice to be here today and to be addressing all of you. Thank you so much for the opportunity. My name is Renée Livernoche on my dad's side, (SPEAKS FOREIGN LANGUAGE) on my mom's side. I trace my roots to the Innu nation in Quebec, to the French settlers of Trois-Rivières and Cap-de-la-Madeleine. However, I wasn't raised with cultural connections or connections to the community due to various reasons with colonization. And also, my dad was in the Navy, and so we got posted back and forth and I was actually born and raised here on the island. So I put my hands up to the local nations here, Lekwungen and WSANEC Peoples. It's been such an honour and a privilege to live here on these lands. Their generosity and inclusion of all of us in this important work has been paramount to my own development and my own weaving of my world views and philosophies. And so I'm deeply, deeply grateful for those relationships. I've played multiple roles in my life up until this point, so I've been a support worker, a youth worker, a job coach, an employability skills teacher.

And now for the last four and a half years, I've been the LE, NONET Experiential Learning Coordinator here at the University of Victoria. And so, yes, I've had the great privilege to work with Karima, to work here in the Office of Indigenous Academic and Community Engagement at the First Peoples House at UVic, and also just an incredible honour to work with Julianna Nielsen this last year. As we've been putting together this real resource hub that's been kind of in the works brewing in our minds and in our hearts for at least a couple of years. So the point, of course, the Wil Resource Hub is reducing barriers to co-op and Wil opportunities for indigenous students. It is to broaden access to co-op and Wil in rural BC and to improve indigenous students' educational experiences and labour market readiness. Those have been implicit kind of internal, like a heartbeat to the work of what motivates us to do this work. And it's multifaceted. It leans into multiple many much of the work that has come before us.

And so it is absolutely valuable that we keep this conversation going and that this work is there isn't one final answer to all of this. There isn't one way to do this. We have as one of our elders here, Victor Underwood with the elders and residents would say that there are multiple right ways to do the right thing. So this is us positioning a solid platform on which we can start to do that work collectively. So next slide, please. I'd like to just briefly discuss and highlight a couple of the resources before I pass it over to Julianna for the activity. But here this is one of the first resources that actually inspired the work that we're doing. And that was I came some time ago with a conversation that I was having with multiple

employers from multiple departments and divisions that were looking at hiring indigenous students. And so it was really about including the students and how do we respond to this? With multiple employers from multiple industries and sectors, we needed to find a way to how do we do this work in a good way?

And so we went to the native student union and just asked the question. And so they came back with these questions about workplace and intercultural training, as well as what does hiring and retention actually look like for these employers? So these questions have been provocative and really quite important and significant. We've received incredible feedback. And part of this work actually inspired the necessity to really branch out and create a much bigger Resource Hub with more resources. And so that's what we're here to briefly talk to you about today, of course. And then so this particular info sheet has really helped position many of the conversations and then we could go to the next slide. And another slide for that is this co-op, indigenous and third-party sponsorship funding for info sheet. Basically, this one is the funding may be available to students through the indigenous funding bodies or partners. However, indigenous funding bodies or partners have different guidelines around the Post-Secondary Students Support Program as it relates to co-op and real opportunities.

So what has happened is that when a student engages in a paid work experience, it tends to trigger duplication of efforts from a sponsorship program. And so it tends to be one of those things that's a non-negotiable for students is to pick up paid work. However, it's something that can be negotiated and something that can be brought back into view that the work experience the student is doing as an academic program and related to their area of study. So it's really this info sheet helps students better position themselves in conversation with our educational coordinators. The educational coordinators have an opportunity to learn more about the programs that are available and that it also helps Wil practitioners become a little bit more aware as to what that conversation looks like for the students that are sponsored either by band council or a third-party organization like the Métis association. And in the last resource, I quickly point out, if we can move to the next slide are these great employer assessment worksheets that are available for students to reflect on their employer's commitments to the TRC's calls to action in equity and diversity.

What does that work really look like and how can we assess this to actually measure the work that's happening? So of course, these are just quick highlights of the work the info sheets that are available for folks to take a look at. But quickly, we'll move next to Julianna's presentation about self-location. This is one of those activities that has gotten lots of traction. So over to you, Julianna.

**JULIANNA NIELSEN:**

Thank you. So on the web page, we have an information sheet and poster that aims to help indigenous students navigate questions about self-identifying and disclosing identity on a job application. The resources explore how and why employers may implement special hiring programs, and the materials also offer boundary-setting strategies for indigenous students who choose to disclose their identities to employers. In self-locating and self-identifying information sheet and poster, also provide a few questions to assist Wil practitioners and students in their reflections on identity and positionality. So in a few minutes, we're going to split you into small groups of three and ask you to practice self-location. Self-locating is a reflective way of introducing ourselves and recognizing our very personal relationships with people, place and power. Looking inward and acknowledging our relationships can be an incredibly transformative process. One where we come to recognize our powers and responsibilities to each other in a way of social, economic and political systems.

We're asking you to self-locate and reflect on your self-location in small groups. We hope to support and normalize this practice in workplace settings. So I'll share my own reflections in just a few moments. There are a few pieces of affirmation, advice and encouragement that I'd like to share. First, I want to acknowledge that it can be very uncomfortable or triggering to reflect on your stories and the positions you hold being here today. I encourage you to share only what you're comfortable to share about yourself and just I want to reiterate that you have the right to share your stories or not to. And I encourage us all to work gently through these conversations, respecting each other's personal boundaries and silences. Second, and in terms of what you might share, I would encourage you to think about your relatives, family histories and the story about how you come to arrive on the territories where you work and reside. In your small groups, you could reflect on the stories your names carry and where you grew up.

It's good to acknowledge those relationships and to go a step further, you could reflect on how your identities intersect and impact on how you live in the world. Third, I think a lot of good can come out of self-locating for the purposes of identifying the responsibilities we have to other people. For me, the question of who I am relates to the question of who I am to other people both in the context of family, community and place. A lot of my good friends who come from a long line of white Anglo-Saxon settlers often get caught up with feelings of shame or guilt for being born in a position of privilege. Likewise, my friends who have immigrated to Canada in the past few years also expressed to me a feeling of discomfort learning the history of displacement on the lands they've come to call home. Thinking through what it means to be a guest on the territories or to hold a position of privilege through the lens of responsibility and care has been helpful for navigating and processing these difficult feelings of shame or guilt and discomfort.

We may not have control over who we are and the legacies we inherit, but we are in control of our commitments and the actions we take. So everyone has their own way to self-locate, but I thought it would be helpful to share how I would introduce myself. I'd also just reflect and say that how you self-locate can change depending on context and comfort. When I self-locate, I try to name my relationships as a way to identify a personal accountability structure, which grounds the responsibilities I carry to conduct myself in a good way. So my name is Julianna Rose Cecile Nielsen. Rose was my paternal great-grandmother who came to Canada through the Bernardo's Child Immigration program. My last name, Nielsen, comes from my grandpa who settled on Kitselas in Kitsumkalum territories, having lived in America after the Second World War. Unlike my dad, who has access to his family histories, my mum's knowledge of her relatives and their stories remains mostly incomplete. She was adopted at birth by a white family living in Nanaimo, and she would come to learn about her birth family later in life.

I'm told that my second middle name, Cecile, was named passed down through women in her family. Her family's Metis, Cree and Ojibwe. And she shared with me the difficult experiences of disconnection and reconnection to family and culture. I grew up in Gold River on Mowachaht territories, and I'm really grateful to the Nuu-Chah-Nulth educators and elders who shared knowledge of language and culture, who left us, kids, with the respect for the land and waters, and who helped us to understand our responsibilities as guests on their territories. Today, I'm a guest on Lekwungen and WSANEC territories, and I feel that I carry a position of privilege where I'm able to pass as non-Indigenous to protect myself where friends with darker skins don't have the option to do so. I feel a lot of responsibility to use this privilege in a good way to help other people, while also recognizing the necessity to undo systems of colonialism, anti-indigenous racism and colorism, which enable the power and privilege in the first place.

I'm not claimed by any particular community, and I'm missing a lot of stories about my relatives, but acknowledging the complexities of my identity has helped me to better understand and respect the relationships they carry being a guest on these territories and working within a diverse campus community. My own process of self-locating has been one of sitting in discomfort and thinking about why I feel a certain way and how I can channel those feelings of sadness and anger into actions and commitments. So ending that there, for now, I would just reiterate the value of recognizing your discomfort and sitting with your emotions. Also acknowledging again how personal and difficult self-locating can be, I encourage you to only share what you feel is safe and OK to share with other people. So on the screen now is a reminder of some of the questions to consider as you self-locate in your small groups. Just being mindful of the limited time you have, you may need to keep it brief. But I encourage you to sit down later this week, either on your own or with colleagues to continue your reflections.

I think we'll be opening their rooms now, and you might have seven to 10 minutes to just self-locate in your small groups.

RENÉE LIVERNOCHE:

OK. Hello, welcome back. Are folks back into the room? Yeah, excellent. Thank you so much. So this is really an opportunity to just open the floor and to get some feedback, an opportunity to debrief how that process was. Something that we can appreciate as that self-locating and self-identifying in regards to employment opportunities puts us in a position where there's a lot to celebrate and a lot to recognize. And then with some complexities and some challenges involved. But I think there's something deeply important and deeply significant for the work of our collective to self-locate and self-identify to be inside of that process. So I just want to open up the floor and see if there are any highlights or thoughts or challenges that folks have identified. How was that experience for folks? Please feel free to raise your hand or put something into the chat or just un-mic yourself. Or no, unmute yourself, I think I should say.

CLAUDIA:

I'll jump in, it's Claudia from Camosun College. Because nobody else is speaking. Celina pops in. We didn't have enough time. Honestly, Julianna was so eloquent and it was just amazing to listen to what you had to say, Julianna. So I have to say, when we hit the breakout room, I was completely overwhelmed and didn't even know where to start because I've just never really taken the time to think about self-location in that way. So for I think I would, my two buddies would agree that we all had a moment of oh dear, I don't think I can do this. But then we started and I got to know my two friends there a little bit better, and that was amazing. So I appreciated that.

RENÉE LIVERNOCHE:

Wonderful, thank so much, Claudia. It's a difficult journey and it takes some preparation and some clarity with how do we start that story? Because once we start that story, how much do we end up sharing? I think almost every time I share my self-location, there's something slightly different that's like Julianna had identified, that's based on context and comfort. Things change. Our identities evolve and become more refined, more defined. Any other thoughts? I see that folks didn't have enough time, but that it was a good opportunity to get to know each other. Awesome. Well, I really appreciate everybody's contributions and participation in that. I'll pass it over to Karima now to wrap it up with some closing thoughts. Thanks, everyone.

KARIMA RAMJI:

Thank you. Thank you, Renée and Julianna. That was very nicely done, and we appreciate all of your engagement, our colleagues. And yes, it is I think a very... I think this exercise allows us to really reflect on who we are and develop that level of comfort and on sharing with others who we are as well. So that definitely has been my takeaway from my experiences on this project. We've been very blessed to have Julianna work with us on this project. She brought the student perspective front and center to this project and was a key developer of the resources that you see today. I am appreciative of the fact that this, you know, there's been very little time to engage in this exercise. But know that today was just a teaser, and we're looking forward to engaging much more deeply with you all on all the resources at an upcoming SPD, ACE-WIL PD event on March 9th. So stay tuned for details on that. I want to just share that this Resource Hub is an active hub. Our work is not yet done. Our team is still working on some videos that we will be uploading in the coming weeks that really bring to life these resources.

So stay tuned. And also, we encourage you to give us feedback on all that you see on the Resource Hub. What would you like to see different work? What else would you like to see? Are there resources that you have that you want to add to the hub and contribute to the hub? So, yeah, looking forward to further conversation on this with you. I just want to thank the ACE-WIL PD committee and the ACE-WIL and ACE-WIL for allowing us to have this brief session with you today. Thank you very much. With that, I'll invite Hannah for part two of this Town Hall.

HANNAH AHLUWALIA:

Great, thank you so much, Karima and Julianna and Renée, for that really amazing presentation. I just wanted to say as well, since this is the first Town Hall of the year, we are hoping to do some more Town Halls focused on the COWIL project. So if there's something that you think specifically would be great to be shared at a Town Hall to do with the Co-op and Work Integrated Learning Initiative projects, you can definitely reach out to me because we would like to continue showcasing the amazing work that's being done across BC. That being said, today for the first Town Hall, I'd like to focus on the Phase two COWIL projects. So as part of phase two, there is 46 projects that have been approved for funding. And what we've done is because we want to encourage collaboration across different institutions as we saw with the Indigenous Hub project, there was a lot of collaboration happening across the province. So to help facilitate that collaboration, I've created a resource called the Themes Dashboard, which is located on the Resource Hub, and Kelsey from BCcampus has just put a link in the chat.

So if you can click on that link. I would like to quickly share my screen if I could get permission, please. So once you got this Themes Dashboard here, what I'd like us all to do is if we scroll to the right side, we can see these slicers here, and this will be a tool for you to quickly be able to search through projects that fall under similar themes. So our four themes of partner engagement/recruitment, program design/development, support for targeted employers or partners and support for targeted students. So for example, if I was interested in anything to do with employers or community partners, I can multi-select this one and this one, and then the spreadsheet will easily show me all of those projects related to that and also the contact information for those people. So this will be a really great tool for us to use going forward in phase two of the COWIL initiative. And it will also be great for our next activity, which will be a breakout room activity. If we can get the next slide, please.

Great, so what we're going to be doing is we'll be using the self-select option for breakout rooms. So the tech team at BCcampus will set up four different breakout rooms for us today. And using that

spreadsheet, we'll be kind of having discussions about the projects under that theme with our colleagues, and they'll just be kind of an informal discussion. You can talk about if you have a project that falls under this theme, maybe you want to go into that breakout room and talk about your project with your colleagues. If you don't have a project under that theme, you're just curious, you can talk about what you'd like to learn, how you want to collaborate across the province. And if you run out of things to talk about, you could just have a nice conversation with your colleagues. So with that being said, can BCcampus Team let me know when the breakout rooms are set up and everyone can start putting themselves into breakout rooms? Good. So you should see at the bottom of the screen options as breakout rooms.

There, you should be able to join your breakout rooms. And if for some reason you are unable to see this option, then just please send a message in the chat and the BCcampus team will put you in the breakout room you'd like to go into. Well, welcome back, everyone. See and make sure everyone's back. So I hope that you had a chance to chat a little bit about either your Co-op and Work Integrated Learning Project or just kind of generally about the projects under that theme and connect with your colleagues. We won't really have a lot of time for debrief at this point, but I would like to draw attention to the Support for Co-op and Wil Initiative Project Page. If you could send the link in the chat, please. So on this project page, I have created sort of a bulletin board where you can share some of your reflections. So if you click on this project page, scroll down a bit, you'll be able to create a post and talk about what your intended impacts are and your goals are for this round of funding.

And definitely check out this page because it has a lot of other resources. The Themes Dashboard that we just discussed is linked on this page as a resource for you going on. OK, and next slide, please. So not to do with my project, but the ACE-WIL Research Committee does have a survey that's active at the moment, and they would really like your responses to the survey. It takes about five minutes. So if you could fill out the survey and it'll be a survey about the research in WIL that you're conducting and the link's in the chat. And now I'll just pass it on to a representative from the PD committee for the next slide here.

MEG:

Hi, everybody. It's Meg. Hopefully, you can all hear me. Great. So I'm just representing our PD committee and we wanted to highlight that we've got a couple of PD sessions coming up and our theme for 2022 is reset, refresh and reimagine. So first one coming up is on March the 9th, and we are so excited to be welcoming back Karima, Renée and Julianna, who are going to dig a little bit deeper into the Indigenous Resource Hub and will engage in some well thinking about decolonizing our practices and strengthening our relationships and that inspire us into action. We're going to engage in a self-location activity again and watch how we can bring some of these amazing resources to life. So that's March the 9th from 9:00 till noon. We'll be sending out a save the date in the newsletter this week. Actually, I think it comes out next week. And then our second session is going to be on SDGs and how we can integrate SDGs into our WIL practice, and that will be on May the 4th with Candy Ho. So we really look forward to having you all attend.

Information on registration will be coming soon and we hope to see you all there.

HELENA PRINS:

Over to Anna for a final word.

ANNA JUBILO:

Hello, everyone just wanted to come on camera briefly to say thank you so much to Karima, Renée, Julianna and Hannah for sharing and facilitation today, and also to the BC Ministry of Advanced Education and Skills Training for the funding provided to engage in these important projects. As well as to Helena, Kelsey, Abigail and Katrina from BCcampus for the support and planning this event and connecting all of you with us today. Also wanted to thank all of you for taking the time to join us today. I hope you do all plan to join us as we delve deeper into the Indigenous WIL Resource Hub project in our upcoming PD event this spring. So please save the dates mentioned by Meghan. I hope you will all have a lovely rest of the afternoon. Thanks, everyone.