

PR Creative Economy & Innovation Initiative

Creative Economy Development Report and Sector Strategy Road Map, 2019

ABSTRACT

Powell River is currently enjoying unprecedented economic development opportunities by focusing on economic diversification efforts in the Creative Economy. This report provides an introduction to the Creative Economy and sets out the outcomes of a targeted sector development strategy looking at the Creative Economy's growth potential for the Upper Sunshine Coast. The second half of the report lays out a map on how to act on the strategy. The work was carried out by the Powell River Creative Economy and Innovation Initiative between June and December 2018.

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Executive Summary

Introduction

The targeted sector development strategy (the road map) identifies an economic pathway for Powell River that will help stimulate the Creative Economy and build capacity for entrepreneurial growth and innovation. The road map has been developed in accordance with the intent and guidance of the Sustainability Charter, the Integrated Community Sustainability Plan, the City Corporate Strategic Plan and the 2015 Powell River Economic Development Strategy. The road map will allow the Municipality and community leaders to take concrete action on economic programs and initiatives that directly stimulate the Creative Economy and work to form a solid entrepreneurial culture on the Upper Sunshine Coast. The road map was prepared following a three-stage process involving literature review, research and analysis of socioeconomic data, a citizen engagement and consultation process that engaged 260 SMEs, entrepreneurs, independent workers, residents, creatives, youth and other stakeholders through an online survey, open houses, events, focus groups, interviews, and strategy formulation and development. The initiative engaged another 3,444 individuals through its social media platform.

Current Situation in Powell River

Powell River has for the past couple of decades been transitioning its economy away from goods production to services, which is altering the community's job and economic base towards a more diversified economy. Being aware of the precariousness of this economic shift, Powell River has over the years engaged a series of community development efforts, including the formation of an Economic Development Strategy in 2015. Embedded in the strategy is a strong focus on Powell River's cultural sector along with an overarching recognition of needing to foster innovation and entrepreneurship in its region. Powell River has a long history of valuing its cultural assets as an integral part of a healthy and sustainable community. These cultural assets were traditionally intertwined with Powell River's identity as a Company Town. While the identity and economic drivers of the past have shifted away from goods production as the main economic driver, valuing the town's cultural assets remains, which has formed a strong collective basis for economic development in Powell River. This led to a series of community conversations in late 2017 and early 2018 to explore the economic growth potential of engaging the nascent growing Creative Economy in a proactive way. As a result five community partners¹ came together to form the *Powell River Creative Economy and Innovation Initiative* (the Initiative) as the prime vehicle to carry out the work associated with planning and implementing the sector development work of stimulating the Creative Economy in Powell River.

The Creative Economy Road Map

The creative economy road map is framed around the City of Powell River's long term Vision Statement and three main strategic goals specific to the works of the targeted sector development strategy for the Creative Economy. Associated with each goal are 1-2 concrete projects and associated action items and timelines. These projects were selected based on their ability to deliver on both the strategic goals and the vision of the 2015 Economic Development Strategy while ensuring that future development efforts for the Creative Economy are grounded in Powell River's existing cultural assets.

¹ The qathet Regional District, the Tla'amin Nation, Vancouver Island University, the City of Powell River and Powell River Educational Services Society

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1. Introduction

The rise of the Creative Economy in British Columbia is reflective of the larger, global economic shift occurring within the global economy, where societies are moving from a focus in mass production of goods to local ideas, innovation, creativity and self-sustainability (Howkins, J. 2001). Unlike “creative industries,” which focus on the arts and culture², the Creative Economy is not limited to specific sectors and is used to describe economic systems where creativity is prominent throughout the whole economy and addresses cultural, social and economic elements of community health and development embedded in one simultaneous process. This change is expected to be as big and as challenging as the transformation in the 1700s from agrarian to industrial societies (MPI, 2009) and will greatly shape the communities we live in, affect what we do, how we work and where we live – including here in Powell River and the Upper Sunshine Coast.

Having dealt with transitioning from that of a traditional BC mill-town to a more diversified economy over the past couple of decades, and being aware of the precariousness of this economic shift, Powell River has come to see the necessity to proactively engage the Creative Economy and the opportunities this will provide for the city. In so doing, five community partners³ came together to form the *Powell River Creative Economy and Innovation Initiative* (the Initiative) as the prime vehicle to carry out the work associated with planning and implementing the sector development work of stimulating the Creative Economy.

What is the Powell River Creative Economy & Innovation Initiative?

The Initiative is essentially a sector development project that seeks to respond to Powell River’s growing innovation demands by mapping growth opportunities in Powell River’s existing cultural sector and creating viable strategies for how best to stimulate and support the growth of the creative economy and the creative class⁴ (Florida, R. 2002). The long-term strategic goal of this initiative is to grow a responsive entrepreneurial culture that creates impact and sustainable solutions in response to the ongoing challenges Powell River is facing, while creating the opportunity for new jobs and business growth in the Creative Economy.

Background

In the fall of 2017, local leadership and economic development stakeholders in Powell River came together to discuss the development of a tech/innovation hub in the proposed Townsite Market⁵, which at the time was projected to open in 2018 (now open). Developing a tech hub was initially seen as a strategy to attract tech businesses and start-ups, which would address the City of Powell River strategic goals around “Business Community and Development” (City of Powell River, 2015)⁶ - focusing on the City’s sub strategic goals of “Business attraction and retention,” “Placemaking and branding of Powell River” and the “Development of programming around entrepreneurship and social entrepreneurs.”

² DCMS Mapping Document, 2nd edition, <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/creative-industries-mapping-documents-2001>.

³ The qathet Regional District, the Tla’amin Nation, Vancouver Island University, the City of Powell River and Powell River Educational Services Society

⁴ The creative class is a socioeconomic class identified by American economist and social scientist Dr. Richard Florida, Rotman School of Management, UofT. According to Florida, the creative class are a key driving force for economic development of post-industrial society and economies in the States. Florida argues that the creative class is socially relevant because of its members’ ability to spur regional economic growth through innovation (2002). https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Creative_class

⁵ A food and artisan market located in Townsite, Powell River and created in the spirit of New York’s Chelsea Market, NYC

⁶ Focus Area 1: Business and Community Development: 1. *Re-establish an active business retention and expansion program.* 2. *Align Investment Attraction and Trade with the BRE programs.* 3. *Develop place making tools with a focus on brand messaging, and an expanded focus on attracting skilled immigrants and investor-immigrants.* 4. *Establish a robust program around entrepreneurship and social entrepreneurs*

Once engaging existing entrepreneurs and key-players in the cultural sector, the participating parties recognized the need for a wider community engagement and that there was much yet to learn and understand about the project before moving into “brick and mortar.” In response, the group widened its circle to also include members of the Creative Class/Cultural Creatives to better engage conversations about the nascent Creative Economy in Powell River, which was starting to be understood as an strong undercurrent for the types of economic activities Powell River wants to engage around tech, innovation, social and cultural enterprises and entrepreneurial development in general. This led to the recognition of the need to first create an overall targeted sector development strategy concerning the growth of the Creative Economy in Powell River, which subsequently led to the formation of the *Powell River Creative Economy and Innovation Initiative* to serve as a vehicle for the work ahead. The Initiative then embarked a comprehensive research and engagement process that would:

1. review development efforts over the past 8 years (with a focus on the cultural sector),
2. tie in the City’s 2015 economic development strategy, add the market potential of Powell River’s cultural sector ripe for growth and innovation,
3. map the Creative Economy players⁷ to understand more about the growing market segment of the Cultural Creatives and growing number of entrepreneurial minded newcomers to Powell River in relations to the potential development of an innovation hub,
4. uncover the market potential for entrepreneurial support services in Powell River in regards to programming needs and physical space needs by innovators, change makers, freelancers and entrepreneurs among the Cultural Creatives.

The goal of the work was to lay the foundation for the development of a strategy on how best to stimulate the growth of the Creative Economy. The plan will serve as a roadmap for the Municipality and other community leaders and stakeholders on how to act on opportunities for growth within the Creative Economy, that contribute not only to new infrastructure, investment and business activity, but also to broader community wellbeing. The following report was prepared following a six months community engagement and planning process (June - December 2018) and provides an overview of the work done to date, including summarizing the outcome of its research with conclusive sector development recommendations leading to the Creative Economy Roadmap.

2. Methodology

The work of the Initiative is rooted in the ABCD methodology (Asset Based Community Development) with the purpose to uncover how Powell River’s current assets in cultural and knowledge based industries serve as drivers for sustainable and inclusive economic development. We focused particularly on how existing assets provide a basis for economic growth that recognise the unique socio cultural context of our region. To do so, we carried out a number of planning and research activities, which were:

1. **Literature Review:** including reports on past local economic development strategies, reviews of the cultural sector and community led social planning initiatives.
2. **Public Engagement and Generative Storytelling Strategy:** engagement and primary research through hosting open houses and public events and through the production of original content for engagement.
3. **Cultural Sector Asset Review:** including primary and secondary research on Powell River’s current cultural sector stakeholders and their relevance in the Creative Economy.
4. **Innovation Hub/Coworking Market Research:** secondary research of Provincial and International stats and trends in the industry as well as primary research on the local target market.

⁷ Asset Directory separate from this report

2.1. Literature Review

The Literature Review comprised of an analysis of City-led economic development reports, regional social planning documents, citizen-led community development forums and a scan of Provincial, National and International reports and articles pertaining to the Creative Economy. There was an emphasis on scanning materials for information on impact initiatives, tech and social enterprise operating within the Creative Economy. This included 14 local City and Regional reports (see reference section).

2.2. Public Engagement Strategy

The purpose of the public engagement strategy was three-fold:

1. To serve as a *vehicle for research* on the local market demands for entrepreneurial support initiatives (programming, coworking, innovation hub) in the Creative Economy.
2. To serve as an *educational tool* to raise awareness of the relevance of the Creative Economy to Powell River in general.
3. To serve as a way to *increase engagement* and facilitate interconnections between stakeholders in the cultural sub sectors.

To achieve this, the Initiative engaged multiple channels at once (see below), including developing original content (Generative Storytelling) in the form of stories, articles, and presentations as educational tools on the Creative Economy⁸. This original content ensured that we had something to engage the public with at Open Houses and Events to indirectly serve as “programming,” while also populating our digital channels.

2.2.1. Digital and Social Media (Website, Social Media, Email List):

The initiative chose to create an integrated social media platform, including a website and MailChimp mail-out campaigns. Combined, these channels serve as a “space-holders” and as a disseminator of resources, updates and original content on the creative economy in Powell River, along with links to two key-electronic surveys on the physical and programming needs of potential Hub users for our primary research on the hub and coworking market potential.

2.2.2 Generative Storytelling Strategy: The social media platform served to strengthen local digital engagement and dissemination of information on the nascent Creative Economy paradigm and its relevance to Powell River through profiling local entrepreneurs, change makers, innovators who engage either the creative economy or whose work represents the economic shift that Powell River is undergoing. The website currently features 10 original stories created by the Initiative.

2.2.3 Open Houses: The Open Houses served to attract and engage the general public in the work of the Initiative. They provided us with an opportunity to receive input and ideas into the potential development of a future innovation hub, including an opportunity for the public to visit the site of the proposed Hub.

2.2.4 Pilot Coworking Sessions: Six Cowork Weekly sessions were hosted by the Initiative in a private residence for six weeks in a row (October - mid November 2018) to assess the space needs and behaviours of coworkers.

2.2.5 Community Events: The initiative hosted two larger community event. A **Tech Talk** by Graham Truax from Innovation Island in September 2018 (attended by 40 community members) and the annual **Holiday Mixer**, which provided an opportunity for networking and for the Initiative to thank everyone for their contributions and to give an update on what to expect in 2019 (attended by 50 community members).

⁸ https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1QIQeoLHze5G_hmx4VcqtzxdYM_gSjiiJulyvydRoLAHc/edit?usp=sharing

2.3. Cultural Sector Review, Asset Directory and Mapping

Powell River has a long history of valuing cultural assets as an integral part of a healthy and sustainable community. These cultural assets were traditionally intertwined with Powell River's identity as a Company Town. While the identity and economic drivers of the past have shifted away from raw resource extraction as the main economic driver, the valuing of the town's cultural assets remain and have formed a strong collective basis for economic development in Powell River.

Reflecting this, the Initiative undertook a comprehensive data collection and review of existing assets and new growth indicators for local industries with close cultural sector-ties. We did this by reviewing existing documents and hosting targeted stakeholder focus groups. The professions and industries in focus were: *Artists and Artisans, Arts and Culture Organizations, Arts and Culture Spaces, Festivals and Cultural Events, Digital Media/Communications, and Knowledge and Tech based businesses/activities.*

New (within past 5 years) initiatives, activities, organizations and key-stakeholders were captured and listed in an asset directory (separate from this report) and particular attention was paid to how these new sub-sector activities intersect and create spin off activity leading to new areas of growth that can be leveraged and further developed through programming and targeted support. (See section 3.3. for details).

2.4. Innovation Hub Industry Market Research

The Innovation Hub Industry research activities focused on gaining a greater understanding of the general market trends and developments in the Innovation/Tech Hub and Coworking industry along with uncovering the local demand for entrepreneurial support initiatives with relevance to stimulating the creative economy. The research had a particular focus on physical space combined with programming. The research comprised of:

1. Interviews and meetings with individual stakeholders
2. Multi-stakeholder focus groups
3. Public electronic surveys available through our website and social media platforms on each "Hub User Needs" and "Programming Needs"
4. Desk research (web-based) on Innovation Hub and Coworking industries along with in-person Hub site-visits. A total of 18 web based articles and 12 websites were reviewed. 6 tech/innovation and coworking spaces were visited in-person (see reference section)

2.4.1. In-Person Interviews:

We conducted 17 interviews with stakeholders for multiple purposes, ranging from ensuring strategic partner buy-in, to solicit support of experts in the field and to learn about space and resource needs, along with an exploration of stakeholders' overall vision of their short and long term vision for the development of the Creative Economy in this region (See reference section for Interviewees).

2.4.2. Multi-Stakeholder Focus Groups:

We hosted a total of 4 multi-stakeholder focus groups in the period August 10th to October 15th, 2018 with a total of 32 attendees. The focus groups provided a forum for more in-depth explorations of particular needs, interests and ideas within targeted stakeholder groups, including digital media, tourism and festival and tech-based stakeholders.

2.4.3. Public Surveys:

We conducted a total of 84 surveys on each “Hub User Needs” (38) and “Programming Needs”⁹ (46). The surveys provided detailed insight into the breaths of the current developments within the Creative Economy and what will be needed locally to meet those developments in regards to adequate and suitable space and programming. Some of the survey questions were directed towards input on tech-hubs and coworking spaces and addressed space-needs and space-use-habits, while other questions addressed the needs, desires and ideas of entrepreneurial support-programs (i.e. workshops, talks, courses, events etc.) for our stakeholders.

2.4.4. Desk Research:

The desk research primarily focused on the Hub industry (innovation/tech/co-working spaces) and served to uncover current and emergent trends in the industry. A matrix¹⁰ was created based on researching 26 different coworking/innovation hub spaces located in each Vancouver, Victoria, Revelstoke, Bergen Norway and Nanaimo looking at: *Location; Size; Space capacity; Cost structures; Program offerings; Perks and amenities; Branding and customer/user profile*; as well as their positioning on the continuum ranging from non-profit, social enterprise and impact driven to high tech, high growth start-up focus¹¹.

A total of 5 personal visits were made to a variety of community hubs, coworking/tech-hub spaces in each Gibson, Victoria, Nanaimo and Phoenix, AZ to gain a feel for space, choices of furnishing, interior design, programming space, business and membership models along with operational and tech systems¹².

3. Key Research Findings

The following outlines the key-findings from each of the research activities, being:

1. “Literature Review and Community Based Initiatives”
2. “Public Engagement Strategy”
3. “Cultural Sector Review and Asset Mapping”
4. “Hub Industry and Market Research”

3.1. Literature Review

The literature review (city-led economic development reports, regional social planning documents, citizen-led community development forums) all reflected the same common theme of being rooted in the values, culture and history that make Powell River unique and that recognize the diversity inherent in the social makeup of the region overall. Arts and Culture have repeatedly been identified as core to the economy in Powell River, with many spin-off economic activities and sub industries that intersect, catalyze, and enhance a significant number of associated creative industries. Examples include the economic spin off effects of cultural festivals, which include support and growth in hospitality and food services, craftspeople, artists and artisans, digital media and

⁹ <http://prinnovationhub.com/index.php/take-our-surveys>

¹⁰ U:\Creative Economy\Hub Concepts\co-workspace matrix v.Aug3.htm

¹¹ https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1QjQeoLHze5G_hmx4VcqtzxdYM_gSjiiJulyvdRoLAHc/edit

¹² Fuse, Gibsons; *The Public Market*, Gibsons; *Club KWENCH*, Victoria; *The Dock Co-working*, Victoria; *Fort Tectoria*, Victoria; *Co-Hoots*, Phoenix, AZ

communications, administration and accounting services, and technical services. Furthermore, topics of sustainability and resilience are embedded throughout most of these studies, reports and consultations.

The reports clearly demonstrate that generally speaking, community values and goals are rooted in sustainability, collaboration, a just distribution of economic gains, innovation, inclusion, creativity, and resilience. Throughout various community engagement processes over the years, there is a common theme of wanting to ensure that economic development addresses quality of life for all, especially elders, children, and individuals and families in precarious circumstances. Based on this, a focus on social enterprise would be well suited to any kind of analysis on how a possible innovation/tech hub would best be structured.

Combined, the recommendations from these reports can be synthesized into the overall strategy to first and foremost diversify the economy of our region. However, the challenge is how to translate the recommendations for economic diversification into clear policy and strategies that are concrete and in direct support of the very development directions that these studies recommend. This requires a greater awareness of the intersecting nature of economic sectors within a larger and quickly changing social and economic landscape.

The reports we have reviewed do not point to the growth of one particular industry per se, but to a diverse set of practices and indicators across sectors and current economic activities characteristic of the Creative Economy. There are also issues related to recommendations being based in a particular kind of economic thinking, that doesn't align well with the foundational changes we are witnessing in our wider economic systems - being the move towards knowledge, data and experience driven economies, rather than resource extraction for the production of goods. Subsequently, such economic development strategies often fall short to form a clear road map and thus fail to produce the very changes they seek to create in the still nascent Creative Economy.

Powell River is currently facing these similar challenges and has become aware of its need to approach economic development from a different angle. Instead of focusing on conventional sectoral economic growth indicators, the Initiative looked to identify underlying themes and trends as well as points of convergence between both sectors and industries as places where we can expect to find creative tension and thus ripe innovation potential.

The literature review revealed two major sub-themes and sub-narratives:

1. The awareness and forecasting of the changing economic and social landscape regionally, nationally and globally, which reflected a need and desire to:
 - Go beyond resource extraction and primary goods production
 - The importance of valuing local human, cultural, and ecological histories and assets, in particular the rich cultural history and practices of the Tla'Amin Nation
 - The importance of recognizing the significant role that the Arts and Culture sector has already played in diversifying the economy and improving the quality of life of the community, generating new investment, jobs, and streams of revenue.
 - The importance of connecting with and supporting youth ideas and initiatives in community economic development
 - The need to consider and tap into the rapidly growing and evolving knowledge based industries by 1) *focusing on education, attraction of satellite companies and remote workers, and by 2) builder stronger partnerships with educational institutions, the Tla'amin Nation, the health and social service sectors, small business networks, tourism organizations, and financial institutions*

2. A general move away from searching for “the next big industry” and a turn towards a desire to stay true to the cultural roots and creative activity of the community, as well as embrace changes that will go beyond conventional modes of development. The literature review further revealed an existing focus to examine and support intersecting areas of economic and cultural activity, that are both nascent and flourishing and pointing to areas with the most potential for growth, with particular attention being paid to the intersections between innovation, small business, social enterprise, arts and culture, and knowledge based industries.

The following were identified as the areas that had the most potential for intersectional growth:

- *Digital Media*: which covers marketing, communications, content development and creation, publicity, information sharing and forging community connections and partnerships.
- *Festivals and Tourism*: which covers the range of established and newer cultural festivals that have demonstrated tangible successes in tickets sales, community buy in, economic spin off effects, and tourism related activity. Special attention was paid to new emerging forms of arts and cultural tourism
- *Tech and innovation*: while still a nascent area of activity, the literature review highlighted the importance of attracting more skilled creatives in this area as well as leveraging education and associated learning and entrepreneurial capacity within the population. It was identified that small and large enterprises, individuals, and collectives would benefit from more investment and support to enhance and develop strategies for tech and innovation activities. There was also an awareness that by supporting and investing in this area, new possibilities of partnerships could emerge to address a range of unmet needs in the community.

3.1.1. Community Based Initiatives and Research Review Findings:

In addition to the review of municipal reports the Initiative also looked at community led initiatives that have been organized across sectors to determine the values, needs and priorities by a diversity of community members as a way forward, while ensuring alignment with the unique social and ecological nature of this region. The reports that resulted from these initiatives highlighted a focus on supporting smaller scale businesses that enhance the overall well-being of the community, as well have multiple spin off effects across sectors (smart growth). These included:

- *Ways of enhancing the arts and culture sectors, such as festivals, arts events, etc.*
Within this area, tourism, digital media and tech development were identified as sub sectors that have already been used to enhance and build upon the successes in this sector overall, and had the most potential to grow.
- *Projects/initiatives that combine tourism, experience economy, arts based projects and ecology.* These would involve new and established arts practitioners, arts spaces, new educational initiatives, and build on existing partnerships and create new ones.
- *Ways to support social enterprise initiatives that focus on issues such as child poverty, housing challenges, food security and the needs of seniors.* Digital media, Innovation and tech based industries have been identified as potential leverage points to address these issues.
- *Educational initiatives that work with the unique nature of the region:* rural studies, local economic development programming, arts and culture administration, media studies, social enterprise studies (living laboratories that provide new models for interactive, experiential learning) as well as tech development (coding, algorithm development, tech stacking and augmented and virtual reality projects).

In summary, these reports demonstrate that, generally speaking, community values and goals are rooted in sustainability, collaboration, a just distribution of economic gains, innovation, inclusion, creativity, and resilience. Throughout various community engagement processes over the years, there is a common theme of wanting to ensure that economic development addresses quality of life for all, especially elders, children, and individuals and families in precarious circumstances. Based on this, a focus on social enterprise would be well suited to any kind of analysis on how a possible innovation/tech hub would best be structured.

3.2. Public Engagement Outcomes

Social Media: Between June 28th, 2018 and February 6th, 2019, fifty-nine original social media events were posted by the Initiative and reached an online audience of 22,186 people, with 3,444 engagements (aka “Clicks”) on its Facebook Page alone (being an engagement rate of about 15%! - very high for social media). Aside from demonstrating a wide dissemination of the Initiative’s content in general, the high engagement rate also indicated a high level of interest in the topic of the Creative Economy in Powell River and beyond. To date, a total of 120 people signed up for our email list within a 3 month period and receive regular newsletters.

Open Houses: Were attended by a total of 80 community members and generated a high level of interest and valuable input into the development of the local innovation hub as all participants had an opportunity to view the proposed site for the innovation hub. The open houses provided valuable insights into the behaviours, interest and needs of Powell River’s growing segment of entrepreneurially minded Cultural Creatives. We learned that about 75% of the participants at the open houses were newcomers to Powell River within the last two years. Most were from the Lower Mainland, some were independent workers and were looking for coworking and for networking opportunities for both business engagement and for connecting with other creative and entrepreneurial minded people with an interest in innovation and impact engagement.

One hundred percent of participants expressed interest and excitement around the prospects of entrepreneurial programming, such as workshops, short courses, community forums, mentoring opportunities, and “TEDx” type talks and events. About 50% of the participants expressed a general interest and need for coworking, but only 10% of the participants expressed a readiness to financially commit to actual coworking at the time of the open Houses. The remaining 50% of the participants were interested in the prospects of an innovation hub from the point of seeing a need for a generative place in Powell River that can host and convene a cross section of people and conversations with a particular focus on innovation and addressing current issues and solutions. Jason Revke, local entrepreneur (originally from Calgary) and owner of a helicopter-accessory company, “Aero Design” noted, “what is lacking is a creative centre-point to be accessed or explored by both local residents and visitors, that doesn’t just provide space for networking like coffee shops, or programs like universities or the community of outdoor groups, but a unique setting that can encompass all of the above.” Revke suggests that the upcoming innovation hub take on the challenge of fulfilling this need¹³.

The sessions overall generated a much needed momentum and attention towards the work of the Initiative and served as a key-driver in generating the 40 responses to our digital Hub User surveys (see section 3.4.1. for details on the Hub User Surveys).

¹³ <http://prinnovationhub.com/index.php/portfolio/community-snapshot-jason-rekve/>

The **Stakeholder Focus Groups** meetings were convened with representatives from each of the Digital Media (marketing, digital content development, film and video production), Tech and Tourism (festival and experience sectors). The meetings identified a need among the stakeholders to connect and collaborate, to share ideas and best practices across disciplines and sectors, for new content and business development, and new sources of financing. There was a clear message that a hub/centre would do much to consolidate such work and help build a more collaborative, rather than competitive approach to development. This would enable people to address specific needs as well as offer skills and capacity building training.

Another area for potential growth was identified among individuals involved in developing software, large data and gaming. A key result from this focus group was the need to establish a hub/centre for networking, prototyping and incubation, as well as to tap into a youth demographic who may have an interest in sharing and learning together to develop their own ideas and tech-enabled business concepts. David Repa, owner of Hightide Games said, "Powell River is a fantastic playground for entrepreneurs, but the real key is connecting and a future innovation hub would address that¹⁴." Currently, those working in these areas are quite dispersed and have few opportunities to connect or collaborate.

3.3. Cultural Sector Review, Asset Directory and Mapping Findings

The Initiative undertook a comprehensive review of existing assets and new growth indicators within Powell River Cultural Sector with a particular focus on creative industry activities in arts and culture enterprises, including "digital media and tech," "tourism/experience economy and festivals," and "marketing and content development." The choice of these industries were based on the combined findings from the overall *Literature Review* (identifying common denominators and underlying themes ripe for growth and innovation), from past reports¹⁵ on the *Arts and Culture industry* and output from the *multi-stakeholder focus groups*.

The Initiative produced a separate *Cultural Sector Review and Asset Mapping Report*, which, for the purpose of brevity, has been synthesized into the following three points in this report:

1. *New public and private cultural sector initiatives* that have happened over the last five years and how they contribute to the development of a Creative Economy.
2. *Needs and opportunities* that have risen from the development of these industries, and *gaps* that exist.
3. *Shifting demographics and the impact of newcomers* with regards to skills, interests, entrepreneurial endeavours, and creative contributions.

3.3.1. Contributions of New Private and Public Cultural Sector Initiatives:

The review identified a total of 20 new and significant Cultural Sector Initiatives over the past five years¹⁶. Most noteworthy were the recent creations of new multi-use public spaces, such as the Powell River Public Library, Art Centre, and Fibre Arts Studio, ARC Community Resource Centre, Outdoor Educational Centre and the public acquisition of the Patricia Theatre. Each of these are used to offer educational services and programming, promote local artists/creatives, support social enterprise projects embedded within their operations (public library, Patricia Theatre).

¹⁴ <http://prinnovationhub.com/index.php/portfolio/local-profile-the-new-wave/>

¹⁵ "Powell River Sustainability Charter", "Groundswell Report", "Community Social Plan", "Illuminating the New Economy", "Vital Signs Reports", "Powell River 2015 Economic Development Strategy"

¹⁶ See Appendix 1 for list of new private and public sector initiatives

New private spaces, such as a pub, brewery, cafes, market spaces, and restaurants also play their part in stimulating economic activity within the creative sector. Along with direct economic impacts, all of these new initiatives have generated a number of “spin off effects” as creatives and small businesses are hired to provide services related to the activity contained within these spaces, such as media and communications/promotions, specialized arts and music skills, arts education and instruction, artwork commissions, instructors, grant writing, administration, etc.

Furthermore, new cultural festivals such as the Townsite Jazz Festival, Craft Beer Week and PR Logger Sports, and the promotion of the Sunshine Coast Trail and other backcountry experiences have also tapped into new tourism and “experience” markets and associated businesses, as well as expanded opportunities for local creatives to find new sources of income within the realm of event production, media/communications, and food and services industries. These new and expanding additions to the creative economy also have been growing and have significant potential for youth and new arrivals to innovate and create business start-ups related to the unique aspects of the region.

As highlighted by the Conference Board of Canada, it is estimated that every \$1 a municipality spends in the creative sector generates \$7-\$14 dollars in economic activity, a 700% to 1300% investment¹⁷. In addition to local investment in the cultural sector, grants from provincial and federal sources have been documented as generating close to *two additional dollars in the provincial economy for every public dollar invested*¹⁸. Over and above generating immediate and spin off economic benefits, these new spaces, activities and events have also facilitated stronger partnerships and relationships between various public and private organizations within the region, including the city, regional district, school district, VIU, Inclusion PR Society, PREP Society, and local businesses and individual creatives.

The review also revealed that Powell River is enjoying a growing number of creative services in *digital media, publicity and marketing channels* (such as Powell River Connect¹⁹, The Powtown Post²⁰ and Seekers Media²¹), as well as a demonstrated interest in *culinary arts, locally produced food and DIY gardening* that catalyze small business and education initiatives (such as Vancouver Island University’s Culinary Arts program purchasing food products of local food growers, while exposing students to the art and business of wildcrafting) and finally a *nascent agri-tech industry-trend* with specialized indoor food growing systems and small scale farming and animal husbandry for butchering.

3.3.2. Demographic changes:

Provincial data highlighted certain demographic changes with relevance to Powell River, in which younger families and retirees are shown to move from larger urban centres to smaller communities like Powell River. According to a study by Insights West²², 34% of Metro Vancouver homeowners are planning to sell homes to move to more affordable markets in the next 5 years. 40 % of gen-X homeowners in Metro Vancouver said they are considering cashing in and getting out. 4% of these have identified the Sunshine Coast as area to move to. In Powell River, "non-residents have made up about 50 per cent of the buyers in Powell River over the past couple years" (Neil Frost, RoyalLePage²³).

¹⁷Conference Board of Canada (2008) Valuing Culture: Measuring and Understanding Canada’s Creative Economy

¹⁸Sandhu, G. & Associates. (2006). Socio – Economic Impacts of Arts and Cultural Organizations in BC: Grant Applicants to the BC Arts Council. Victoria, British Columbia: Ministry of Tourism, Sports and Arts

¹⁹<https://powellriverconnect.com/>

²⁰<http://powtownpost.com/>

²¹ A local market leader in content production and marketing for the experience economy in western Canada <https://www.seekers-media.com/>

²² Insight West <https://insightwest.com/news/metro-vancouver-management-class-could-be-leaving-in-droves/>

²³ David Repa, CTV News <https://www.ctvnews.ca/business/home-buyers-and-tenants-leaving-b-c-s-lower-mainland-for-smaller-towns-1.3341860>

This influx of newcomers has led to increased activity in the cultural, artisanal, tech and service industry as a significant number of recently arrived people have either created businesses locally, such as “High Tide Games”²⁴ or have launched online businesses, such as Ken Diamond’s online footwear business²⁵ (www.kendiamond.com) from his home base in Lund. Our web-based profile series presents a number of these people and their businesses (www.prinnovationhub.com), including their motivations for moving to Powell River. Collectively, this reveals common characteristics among the newcomers as being entrepreneurial minded and resourceful, often well-educated and financially viable when moving to the region. They tend to “set up shop” independently, rather than depending on conventional employment. Jen McGuinness, newcomer-entrepreneur and owner of a small agri-tech (indoor tech-based small scale food growing), when asked if newcomers will change Powell River said that “...’newcomer-entrepreneurs” are adventurous people with a can-make-it-work attitude, that know what it is like to be a part of a close-knit community (aka entrepreneurial community in Vancouver) and who are moving to Powell River because they want that again.”²⁶

As for retirees, they bring skills sets and experiences that have enhanced an already robust volunteer sector, which is contributing to the ongoing success and growth of many cultural initiatives in Powell River. Nowhere is this more evident than in the case of PRISMA (the Pacific Region International Summer Music School), an international music summer school for young world-class musicians from across the world, which has turned into a flag-ship cultural event due to a growing number of highly qualified volunteer board-members and retiree contributors.

3.3.3. Needs and Opportunities Arising from the New Developments

In 2015 the City of Powell River commissioned a comprehensive Powell River Economic Development Strategy report. The report highlighted a number of regional assets and differentiators²⁷ that make this region unique. Among these, Powell River’s cultural assets as a whole, were identified as one of Powell River’s most notable differentiators. However, without a broad and focussed network of connected supports, infrastructure, initiatives and investments, differentiators like “culture” can be left untapped in terms of their economic potential. Conducting a review and mapping of Powell River’s cultural assets thus became key to investigate and tap into the growth potential of Powell River’s cultural sector for the Creative Economy.

The 2015 report also noted that *“although service jobs contribute three out of four jobs in Powell River, some, such as information, culture, management, professional, technical, education and financial services are under-represented when compared to the province. If goods producing jobs continue their decline as a proportion of the total job base, then the better paying jobs of the future will have to come from these key industries”* (City of Powell River, 2015, p.2). The identified gaps within these types of service job, leaves the more reason to focus on stimulating activity within the Creative Economy.

²⁴ <http://prinnovationhub.com/index.php/portfolio/local-profile-the-new-wave/>

²⁵ <http://prinnovationhub.com/index.php/portfolio/powell-river-and-beyond>

²⁶ <http://prinnovationhub.com/index.php/portfolio/local-profile-the-new-wave/>

²⁷ In economic development, assets are any attribute or feature that contributes to community wealth. Assets become differentiators when they create advantageous conditions for economic wealth, through the explicit effort of people. In Powell River the bestselling features of the community are its natural environment, its distinct marine location in proximity to Vancouver, affordability as a place to live and do business, its strong sense of place, and its cultural diversity.

As the cultural sector overall grows and diversifies within the region, we are seeing more opportunities and need for these kinds of services to expand and integrate into the broader economic landscape. However, the kinds of skills associated with these services require specific training, formal and informal educational spaces and programming, as well as more opportunities for collaboration and information sharing. Specifically, entrepreneurial skill sets, especially those related to the new realities of start-ups, diverse types of enterprises, expansion and marketing have been identified as critical for a new knowledge and creative based economy to thrive.

As an example, Paul Kamon (Executive Director of Sunshine Coast Tourism), indicated that Powell River has the potential to be “the next adventure town” as an alternative to the over crowdedness of Whistler and Squamish. However, “timing is critical in making the city’s organic rebranding successful.” Kamon stresses that “when it comes to a change in the market, a space to foster skilled human resources is vital.” Kamon considers a potential innovation hub as a possible answer to providing this solution, adding that “local visitors who are entrepreneurs, self-employed or freelancers would happily take advantage of a place to cowork and connect with others in the creative economy.”²⁸

Additionally, as the cultural sector evolves and diversifies, there are increasingly more opportunities in the realms of viable intersections, such as interfaces with agribusiness, tourism, new media, artists and architects to re-tool and re-imagine uses for land use, waste, and older, underutilized infrastructure. By supporting initiatives that promote cross sectoral collaboration there is much more opportunity for catalyzing home grown innovative approaches to larger needs and gaps, such as affordable housing, healthcare, and food security.

Based on these identified gaps and opportunities, it is essential that a creative economy centre, such as an innovation/coworking hub works to not only provide space for established businesses, (anchors) but also fosters an innovation and entrepreneurial culture that can work to fill in the gaps and generate more robust local economic activity in the creative/knowledge based sector.

In summary:

Powell River is only seeing the tip of the iceberg in regards to the growing creative economy potential that this wave of entrepreneurial-minded newcomers are contributing to. Feedback from those interviewed and from focus groups all point to the need for Powell River to establish responsive developmental infrastructures that can capture, engage and leverage the energy and resourcefulness of the growing segment of these resourceful and entrepreneurial minded newcomers, with particular attention being paid to the \$ multiplication effect of creative industries, tourism and the experience economy, the role of digital media in the growth and proliferation of those industries and the use of new technologies in optimizing and securing local sustainability in areas such as food growing and green tech.

²⁸ Paul Kamon, “Community Snapshots” <http://prinnohub.com/index.php/portfolio/community-snapshot-paul-kamon/>

3.4. Innovation/Tech Hub and Coworking Industry and Market Research

The market research on the Hub industry included research finding from: 1) Interviews and meetings with 20 individual stakeholders; 2) conversations with 32 individuals over 4 multi-stakeholder meetings; 3) 84 individual survey responses from 2 surveys on each “Hub User Needs” and “Programming Needs” with our target group; 4) data collection from 18 web-articles and 12 websites on Innovation Hubs and Coworking industries along with 6 in-person hub-visits. The market research was divided into two main sections:

1. **Survey Responses from Hub User and Programming Market Research**
2. **Web-based and interview finding on Hub Industry Market Research**

3.4.1 Survey Responses:

Respondents (84 in total) included a range of people working from home, remotely, or in office, tech and internet based businesses artists, digital media, consulting, resource management, food services, small business (online and in physical space), facilitation, sustainable fashion, life coaching, event producers, inventors, software developers. Social services, social enterprise founders, legal services, and publishing. Questions were partitioned into two surveys pertaining to each *Hub Space Use (38)* and *Programming Needs (46)*.

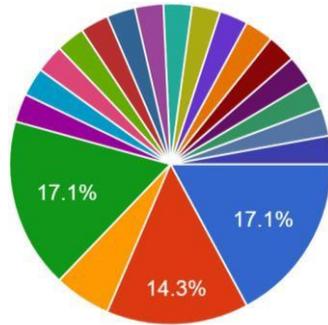
Hub User Surveys:

About 43% of the respondents have prior experience with coworking spaces, 23% had worked in makerspaces, 14.3% in innovation and research space and only 3% had incubator-experience, with 0% of the respondents having ever worked in accelerators and/or launchpads/rocketspaces and 48% had no experience with any of the above²⁹. This may be a fair indicator that the people showing interest in the work of the Initiative at the time of the Open Houses and Stakeholder Engagement meetings (which is where we fielded the majority of our respondents from) were not ready for “incubation and acceleration-type” entrepreneurship services, but more likely clients ready to engage “ideation” and “pre-incubation” type development services, with a potential to grow their business skills and entrepreneurial aspirations over time in a coworking environment.

As for future space use needs of the respondents, we learned that a total of 54% of the respondents (20 people) we interested in becoming coworking clients/members, being that 17.1% of the respondents would rent space on a monthly basis, 17.1% would use a Hub on a drop-in basis a few times a month, 14.3% would access the Hub for hot-desking (flexible workspace) a few times a week and 5.7% would access a dedicated desk paid for monthly. See figure 1.

²⁹ https://docs.google.com/document/d/1_4KzTw9afIYp5QhDkQuAhkJEdSq0l3k6gVVLhjxkoM/edit

As a potential hub user, which of the following categories would best suit your needs:



17.1%: Office Space: I would rent the space on a monthly basis
 17.1%: Drop-in: I would use the space a few times a month/every so often
 14.4%: Hot Desk (Flexible Workspace): I would pay to use the space a few days a week
 5.7%: Dedicated Desk: I would pay to use the space consistently on a monthly basis

Fig.1

Which of the following types of rental spaces would you be interested in accessing:

35 responses

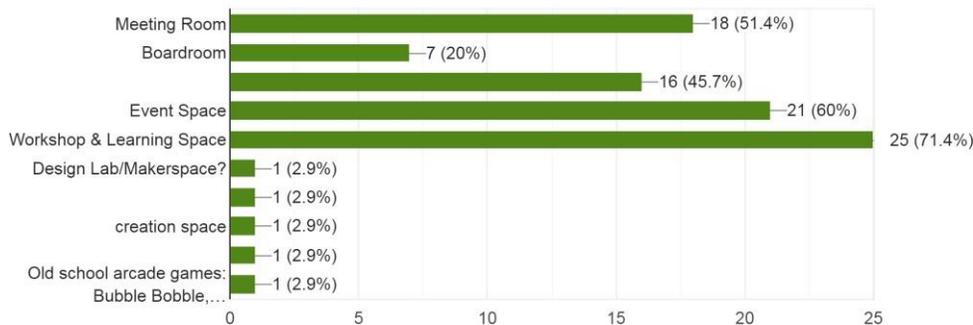


Figure 2.

“I want something that is ahead of where my business and myself are situated. Something that grows my capacity in leading ways, exposes me to new ways of working, ideas, tools; a setup that offers me community within this community, opportunities to engage in new projects and in new ways, a place where I feel at home, a kitchen, so I could stay there for long hours, 24/7 access as my business does not necessarily operate only at “business hours.” (Hub Use Respondent)

When asked about which types of rental space the respondents would be interested in accessing up and beyond work space and tea-kitchen (figure 2.), *Event and Workshop/Learning Space* had the greatest attraction.

Programming Use Surveys³⁰:

The programming use surveys investigated the level of interest in the areas of 1. *Mentorship*, 2. *Business Planning and Development*, 3. *Entrepreneurial Training*, and 4. *Specific Skills Set Building*.

85% of people responded that they would be interested in programming that provides *Mentorship* for business start-up. 76.1% were interested in training pertaining to *Business Planning and Development* Entrepreneurship, 40% were interested in *Entrepreneurial Training* focusing on ideation, new market development and “Possibility thinking.” 93.5% were interested in accessing programming focusing on *Skill-set Building for Innovation and Design*.

Programming focused on specific *Skill-set Building* was further broken down into 10 sub-topics revealing the following top-four interests areas:

1. *Communications & Design: Social Media, Newsletters, Online Campaigns & Brands, Experiential Marketing* at **72.2%**
2. *Digital Media: Video Production, Photography for Marketing & Branding, Website Building* at **61.4%**
3. *Collaboration & Leadership: Process Facilitation, Emotional Intelligence, Interpersonal Communication, Social Impact Strategy Development, Community Engagement Tools* at **52.3%**
4. *Traditional Crafts: Woodworking, Textiles, Pottery, Painting, Metalworking, Food Processing* at **36.4%**

When asked about desired types of delivery/programming format, 69.5% of the survey participants were interested in participating in *Bootcamps*³¹, another 69.5% were interested in *Hackathons/Brainstorm Sessions*³², 61% were interested in *Pitch Nights*³³, with 41.5% interested in an *Online Learning* format.

3.4.2. Hub Industry Market Research:

The Initiative scanned the Hub Industry nationally and internationally to identify examples of Hub models that seemed to most align with the values and priorities identified through the Initiative's Cultural Sector Review and Asset Mapping, Public Engagement process and Hub User and Programming responses.

A matrix³⁴ correlating topics of *geography and socio-demographics, values and target market, connections to the cultural sector, values of diversity and inclusivity and local Space and Programming needs* identified 5 top examples of hub models/coworking spaces as potential interest to a Hub in Powell River. They were: 1. *Impact Hub Oakland, CA*; 2. *Impact Hub Bergen, Bergen - Norway*; 3. *The Cranium, Vancouver*; 4. *The Hive Vancouver*; 5. *312 Main St., Vancouver*.

Common for all 5 is a focus on collaboration with partners to offer a mix of programs that deliver solid business skills to early stage businesses, and pitching and investor relations skills at the pre-seed stage. Often programs are coupled with membership in an entrepreneurial community to provide connections to an ecosystem of peers, mentors, investors, community leaders and government – all within an inspiring space that fosters collaboration and creativity. This brought our attention to the need for establishing an entrepreneurial ecosystem in Powell River.

³¹ Intensive learning environments that foster new skills in a shorter period of time than traditional academic environments

³² Timed events that encourage attendees to use known skill sets to solve new problems, developing new thinking, ideas and skills

³³ An event in a social environment that develops pitching and communication skills - presenting, listening and questioning in public

³⁴ file:///U:/Creative%20Economy/Hub%20Concepts/co-workspace%20matrix%20v.Aug3.htm



One Hub stood out in particular, being the Impact Hub in Bergen³⁵, Norway as Bergen, like Powell River, is a semi-remote coastal resource-based City (though with a larger population) that is in the process of diversifying its economy with a focus on the Creative/Knowledge Economy.

The Bergen Impact Hub is a 720 m2 coworking space and is part innovation lab, part business incubator, and part membership community. The space provides a collaborative work, meeting, and learning space for people seeking

to create positive impact and is motivated by the belief in the power of innovation through collaboration. Furthermore, the Bergen Impact Hub features flexible office spaces, various programs suitable to entrepreneurs, an exhibition and events space, a member café and a variety of events linked to lectures, music, debate and film - all features and themes that have emerged in our various community engagement conversations and Hub User surveys locally.

3.4.3. Global and Local Coworking Trends

There is a substantial and growing number of new independent knowledge workers moving to the Upper Sunshine Coast. Though we don't know the actual number, we know that they are here as they have shown to be the dominant segment at the Initiative's community engagement activities over the past 8 months. This growing trend reflects a larger global trend, both in regards to the rapidly growing segment of independent knowledge workers world-wide, but also in regards to how the knowledge economy is shifting the geographical dependency away from having to reside within commuting distance to one's employer to living in a location-of-choice, as long as there is connectivity and an ability to be productive in one's location of choice.

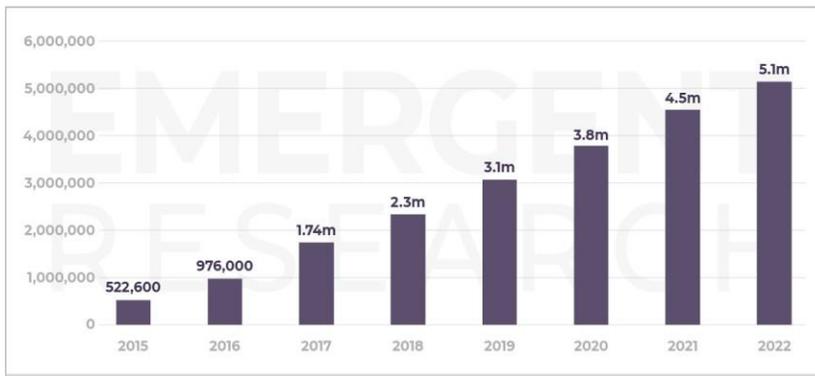
As stated by GCUC³⁶ (Global Coworking unconference conference): "While there are no solid estimates of the total number of global self-employed knowledge workers, it's clear their numbers are large and growing. This growth, coupled with a growing realization of the value of coworking by independent workers, will continue to drive demand for coworking spaces. Startups will continue to flock to coworking spaces: Startups understand the cost, flexibility and talent attraction advantages provided by coworking spaces, because of these advantages, coworking spaces will continue to be the location of choice for most startups."³⁷

³⁵ <https://bergen.impacthub.net/bookings/>

³⁶ <https://gcuc.co/>

³⁷ <https://gcuc.co/2018-global-coworking-forecast-30432-spaces-5-1-million-members-2022/>

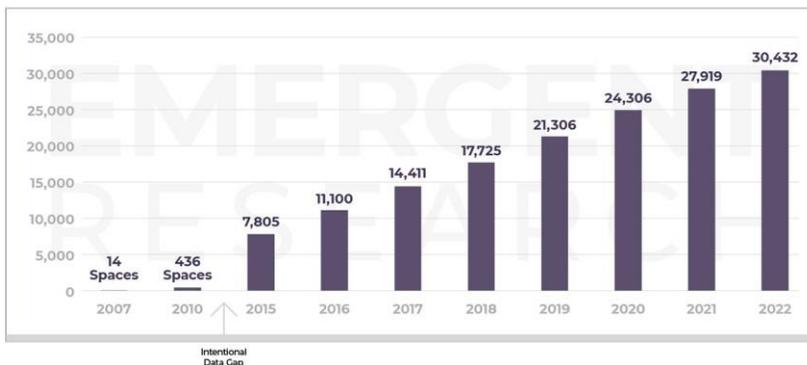
Number of Global Coworking Members 2017 FORECAST



Global Number coworking Spaces (GCUC, 2019)

The GCUC is forecasting that the global number of coworking members will increase from 1.74 million in 2017 to 5.1 million in 2022³⁸ and outgrow the number of spaces available.

Global Number of Coworking Spaces 2017 FORECAST



Global Number of coworkers (GCUC, 2019)

Given the convergence of these two trends (growing number of coworkers and increased movability in relation to location of employer), it is reasonable to expect that Powell River will keep seeing this market segment growing along with a market needs for flexible working spaces, access to business networks, community connection and investors. This points to a growing coworking market potential for Powell River, and represents in and off itself a potential business opportunity within the Creative Economy. The Powell River Creative Economy and Innovation Initiative will have an opportunity to test this market with its proposed entrepreneurial training delivery, programming and coworking space, which will be described in more detail in section 4. *Creative Economy Road Map*.

³⁸ <https://gcuc.co/2018-global-coworking-forecast-30432-spaces-5-1-million-members-2022/>

3.5. Summarized Key-Recommendations

1. **Sector Development:**

- Bring attention to growing the economic multiplication effect of the cultural sector.
- Focus economic development efforts on building increased capacity for engagement and development of the cultural sector and creative industries.
- Stimulate business opportunities in the knowledge economy as jobs in this area (*ex. information, culture, management, professional, technical, education and financial services*) are underrepresented in Powell River in comparison to the rest of the Province.
- Help establish an innovation/tech/creative economy sector beyond basic marketing and content production to better reflect growing shift in both demographics and economic paradigm.
- Consciously engage and explore viable intersections between industries for innovation opportunities.

2. **Hub Space Developments:**

- Do not simply think “built it and they will come.”
- Start small, build incrementally, bottom up with direct input from users.
- Strength in numbers - build strong and meaningful relationships and partnership with other organizations and businesses for leveraging mutually beneficial resources, including referring potential clients and users.
- It will be the culture of the user that will define the space and not the other way around - culture and values to inform function, form and design.
- Understand and honor the relationship between space, architecture and human emotional, mental and physical well-being.
- The space must be generative and multi-purpose - infuse with human-centred innovation-design.

3. **Programming Development:**

- Focus on establishing an entire ecosystem for innovation and entrepreneurship, not just stand-alone one-off deliveries. Activities must be generative in nature and incorporate capacity building mechanisms for ongoing sustainable delivery and growth.
- Provide training that builds capacity and actual skill-set to engage innovation and design, such as a learning about the process of creativity, systems thinking, collaborative processes etc.
- Do not just focus on servicing entrepreneurs/solopreneurs ready to launch or scale their business, but capture the attention and potential of the independent cultural creative worker and stimulate and encourage the “entrepreneurial inclination.”
- Involve multiple “delivery-agents” in the development of various streams of delivery - ranging from local independent business owners as mentors, to post-secondary partners, to larger established industry partners.

4. **Intersection between Space-Use and Programming:**

- Do not assume that coworkers will become programming clients or vice versa. They are most often different segments with some minor overlap.
- Encourage ongoing cross-pollination of ideas and resources between coworkers and programming clients by providing stand-alone events and program content that appeals to both audiences.

3.5.1. Recommendations on Sector Growth: Cultural sector and creative industries representation:

Though the scope of the Creative Economy in Powell River goes beyond activities in the cultural sector and related creative industries, the creative sector presents a tremendous potential for growth for Powell River and will need to be considered in all planning activities going forward pertaining to the Creative Economy. This is particularly important when in regards to how best to nurture, attract and engage creative and entrepreneurial talent.

The literature reviews, focus groups, surveys, and community research reviews reflected one of the key findings of the 2015 Economic development report, namely that: “Although service sectors contribute three out of four jobs in Powell River, some, such as information, culture, management, professional, technical, education and financial services, are under-represented when compared to the province. If goods producing jobs continue their decline as a proportion of the total job base, then the better paying jobs of the future will have to come from these key industries.” (*Powell River Economic Development Strategy Report, 2015*).

Given that economic forecasting highlights the need to develop creative industry sectors that are not specific to goods creation, it is important to note that the current landscape in Powell River is not fully reflective of this shift. Although there are numerous new arrivals working remotely in these sectors, or interested in setting up businesses, there is yet to be a recognizably established innovation/tech/creative economy sector beyond basic marketing and content production, web building services, and entrepreneurial support services.

Also, currently, local education and activity in the new tech industries, coding, and higher level design and development is basic and/or minimal. Additionally, as the cultural sector evolves and diversifies, there are increasingly more opportunities in the realms of viable intersections, such as interfaces with agribusiness, tourism, new media, artists and architects to retool and reimagine uses for land use, waste, and older underutilized infrastructure.

3.5.2. Recommendations on Hub Space and Programming

Hub Space:

We have learned that for an innovation hub/coworking space to become a thriving and dynamic space of collective activity, it needs to truly reflect the cultural norms of the segment it wishes to serve. Because of its collective and community minded nature, applying a “built-it-and-they-will-come” philosophy does not serve collective spaces like coworking and incubation spaces well. Rather, focusing on incremental growth and building from the bottom up with direct engagement and input from the users, especially in a place like Powell River will be important to this. This means that the Initiative needs to put just as much attention and energy into building a surrounding community of people who identify with the norms and culture of the Creative Economy as it will need to be put into building the physical space itself.

As for the “feel” of the place we have learned that it will not be the space that defines the users, but the culture of the users that will define the feel of the space. A common denominator among the people we spoke with was a desire and expectation of the space being generative in nature, meaning that it needs to facilitate a formal and informal coming-together of people that allows for networking, new idea generation, learning and exposure to inspiring new thoughts and practices, while also providing an undisturbed working environment.

It is also important to be aware that the Creative Economy segment of workers and entrepreneurs often associate with a larger global community of innovative thought, practice and business impact philosophy that moves laterally across social strata, geography, income level, ethnicity, gender and religious affiliation often referred to as the “cultural creatives.”³⁹ Values such as inclusivity, diversity, sustainability and connectivity must be taking into consideration in the developments of a physical hub space.

Programming:

It is clear that Powell River needs to create an actual ecosystem that fosters innovation and entrepreneurial growth. One-off activities and stand-alone deliveries will not be enough to generate the kind of cultural and economic shift that is desired in the region. The cultural creatives, the segment of the population deemed to have the most potential for innovation and entrepreneurial activity, are a part of a cultural shift towards collaboration and joint creativity-generation and problem solving, rather than cut-throat competition. This speaks to a need for programming that is highly creative and that has the ability to engage industries in a lateral and synergetic way for cross-pollination of ideas, networks and resources across sectors.

The responses from the Programming Surveys furthermore showed a high level of interest in training that focuses on actual skill-building to engage innovation and design (93.5%) with a particular attention being paid to topics like digital communication, branding and social media skills. We can't extrapolate too much from this level of interest about the entrepreneurial readiness of the respondents - other than perhaps a recognition, that even as an independent workers (the majority of the Programming Survey respondents were independent workers) one has to treat oneself and one's services as a business onto itself, and subsequently needs to know how to effectively market one self.

We also learned that there is a desire to engage a number of delivery-modes, ranging from bootcamps (intensive multiple-day learning environments) to weekend and evening workshops, including pitch-nights and talks on topics of relevance to the Creative Economy that would be information and inspirational in nature.

Intersection between Space-Use and Programming:

From interviews with leaders in the industry, we have learned that coworkers and program clients don't make up the same group of people. Programming offered through a community hub will often draw an interest from the wider community and help bring attention to the innovation hub/coworking space in general, however not necessarily draw interests from people who are actually coworking in the space, either because they are already in the process of building their business or because they already have access to the resources they need through the surrounding ecosystem. However, it is not uncommon for a hub space to be attracting potential coworking members from among programming clients, but less so the other way around. This tendency corresponds well with our survey-findings which show that only about 15% of the people responding to both the Programming and the Hub User survey were the same people. Certain overlaps can be made between program clients and space users, in particular around stand-alone events with high-profile keynote speakers or specialized learning opportunities that cannot otherwise be accessed in the community. This is something to be aware of when targeting the difference audiences for each coworking services and program offerings, keeping in mind that creating some level of intentional overlap between the two groups will be important to encourage cross-pollination of ideas and resources.

³⁹ The cultural creatives describe a large segment in Western society who since about 1985 have developed beyond the standard paradigm of modernists or progressives versus traditionalists or conservatives. Ray and Anderson claim to have found 50 million adult Americans (slightly over one quarter of the adult population) can now be identified as belonging to this group. They estimated an additional 80–90 million "Cultural Creatives" exist in Europe as of 2000. (*The Cultural Creatives: How 50 Million People Are Changing the World*, Paul H. Ray, 2000)

4. The Creative Economy Road Map - Strategic Context

The **main objective** is to create a dynamic entrepreneurial culture in Powell River as a means to stimulate the growth of the Creative Economy on the Upper Sunshine Coast. The premise being, that the Creative Economy is the sector that encompasses the industry's most ripe for innovation and growth, while enhancing the overall community well-being, building resilience through economic diversification and creating satisfying well-paying work in the knowledge-, technology-, communication-, cultural and other related creatives industries, while also attracting new talent and resources to the Upper Sunshine Coast. The recognition of this development direction is based on both the findings from the recent Creative Economy sector development research work and on the strategic planning directions as reflected in the Powell River's 2015 Economic Development Strategy.

Powell River's 2015 Economic Development Strategy:

The targeted sector development strategy for the Creative Economy is grounded in Powell River's 2015 Economic Development Strategy, which states the following vision statement:

"Powell River is a healthy, culturally rich and prosperous community whose economy has successfully transitioned from forest dependency to a diversified mix of valued-added activities and employment. It is a smart city with quality technology infrastructure and a flourishing regional airport. Traditional industries have transformed in response to competitive pressures and remain an important part of the economic base. Entrepreneurship and innovation have driven emerging sectors forward, including an international education cluster and an expanded agriculture industry. A revitalized downtown, and waterfront developments, have stimulated investment in tourism products and new forms of housing to accommodate a growing and demographically diverse resident population. The Tla'amin Nation has made significant progress since treaty settlement and are now a major economic and cultural force across the community."⁴⁰

Further to this, the 2015 Economic Development Strategy outlines four main goals⁴¹ to guide strategic action to fulfill this vision by 2030, being:

1. **Competitive Businesses Powell River:** Will encourage innovation and improved competitiveness among local businesses so they are able to invest in the productive capacity needed to employ workers now and in the future.
2. **Community Self-sufficiency:** Increasing self-sufficiency represents a reasonable goal given Powell River's location and historical reliance on local initiative. Continued development of social and cultural networks and greater control over the management of local natural resources would provide the community with the tools to pursue economic diversification while protecting the environment and ecological services.
3. **Smart City:** Powell River has in-place telecommunication infrastructure that could be a game-changer for economic development. A wired, connected community appeals to new, knowledge-led business activities while providing opportunities for increased productivity and innovation among traditional industries.
4. **Sustainable Growth:** The current trajectory of population aging in Powell River suggests there will be serious worker shortages and potentially compromised service levels in the not-too-distant future, unless steps are taken to retain and bring young families and people into the community.

These four strategic goals and overarching vision provide a good springboard for the development direction of the Creative Economy Sector Development Strategy and are woven into the strategic objectives, goals and actionable projects laid out in Section 5. The Creative Economy Road Map.

⁴⁰ Powell River Economic Development Strategy, 2015, p. 6, 7 <https://powellriver.civicweb.net/document/33198>

⁴¹ Powell River Economic Development Strategy, 2015 p. 7.

5. The Creative Economy Road Map - Actionable Projects and Action

The **main objective** of the Creative Economy Road Map is to chart the best possible direction to create a dynamic entrepreneurial culture in Powell River as a means to stimulate the growth of the Creative Economy on the Upper Sunshine Coast. The premise being, that the Creative Economy is the sector that encompasses the industry's most ripe for innovation and growth, while enhancing the overall community well-being, building resilience through economic diversification and creating satisfying well-paying work in the knowledge-, technology-, communication-, cultural and other related creatives industries, while also attracting new talent and resources to the Upper Sunshine Coast.

Three Main Strategic Goals:

1. **To establish and deliver an Entrepreneurial Ecosystem Development Program (EESD) that fosters a solid culture for innovation and entrepreneurship on the Upper Sunshine Coast.**
2. **To develop a physical hub space that encourages increased connectivity and activity among stakeholders in the Creative Economy in Powell River, while serving as a home for the EESD activities.**
3. **To effectively engage and educate the general public about the relevance and possibilities of the Creative Economy to Powell River and to demonstrate the interfaces of the creative economy between groups in the region.**

Each of these goals have a number of strategic projects and actions attached to them, which will be outlined in the following three sections, 5.1., 5.2., and 5.3.

5.1. Goal #1: Formation of an Entrepreneurial Ecosystem Development (EESD) Program:

Successful entrepreneurs are made, not born. In the words of Innovation Island, "Success is created from the appropriate raw material, focused efforts and positive habit-forming behaviours." The entrepreneurial ecosystem development program fields, assesses and provides the right kind of environment for the entrepreneurial "raw material" to turn into the jewels, rockstars and innovators that we are in such need of to effectively address and turn our current societal challenges into opportunities of tomorrow.

The EESD program will address the core elements requires to foster successful innovation ecosystems, including: entrepreneur programs; foster technology; mentor network development; access to capital; maker spaces; coworking spaces; workshops and events.

5.1.1. EESD programming goals:

1. Develop and/or resource a successful incubation, entrepreneurial and innovation training program with a focus on segments that engage in the Creative Economy including access to business mentors.
2. Increase the digital media skill-set of Creative Economy entrepreneurs and independent worker in order to grow their capacity to engage entrepreneurial opportunities and innovation (predominately a need for skills in digital marketing and branding, digital content development and social media).
3. Develop a social enterprise and social innovation skills-base with a focus on social impact measurements pertaining to issues/opportunities that matter to Powell River.
4. Support the development of disruptive technologies and innovation, including skills for youth to grow Powell River's next generation of home-spun tech entrepreneurs grounded in the Creative Economy.

On the basis of needing to meet the four identified EESD programming goals, the Initiative consulted with existing entrepreneurial and innovation experts and “delivery agents” in the province to help us envision the kinds of entrepreneurial ecosystem development activities that will best reflect the strategic objectives of the Initiative and the unique cultural assets and needs of Powell River.

As a result the Initiative came up with a comprehensive package of content to be delivered through the following program streams:

EESD Program Streams (June 2019 – December 2020):

- 1. Incubation and Entrepreneurial training program:** 18 months series of quarterly 2-day training sessions and weekly touch-base-sessions (90 hours). Target market: tech enabled entrepreneurs ready to develop and test a business concept/product/service.
- 2. Social enterprise, impact and social innovation program - “Creating revenue for good - impact business going mainstream”:** 12 months series delivering content on alternative business structures, coops, social enterprise and social impact measure over 4 quarterly sessions (24 hours). Target Market: Community leaders, social innovators, non-for-profit employees, cultural sector organizations, impact entrepreneurs.
- 3. Digital biz-skills workshop series:** 12 months delivered over 4 quarterly sessions (24 hours). Skill building for digital business development: branding, marketing, content development, social media, lean-biz and integrated management aps.
- 4. Inspire 2025 Speakers’ Series:** 6 events over 12 months. Mixed series of TEDx-types talks, panels, community conversations and short workshops on varies Creative Economy topics to prime innovating thinking, networking and industry contact. Expressed topics of interest: *Fiber waste/fiber making; Green tech and up-cycling; Mycelium cultures and environmental remediation; VR/AR, digital media and film production; Food innovation; Place making, tourism and experience economy and others.*
- 5. Youth Coding Camp:** 1 week Coding & App Development boot camps at VIU-Powell River’s campus with Apple Canada, School District 47 and neighbouring school districts and the Symbiosis network, a BC-based STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Art & Design, Math) network of people, resources and technology.⁴²
- 6. Mentorship Network and Pairing program:** Capacity development of new mentors - identify and work with potential candidates to support early stage entrepreneurs. Pairing existing mentors with entrepreneurs. Provide formal and informal mentorship. Provide a platform for peer-driven learning.
- 7. Development of capacity building tool for ongoing growth and development:** Identification of key actors in Powell River’s ecosystem and recommended key-strategies for those on how to continue incubator execution going forward thereby expanding ecosystem capacity.

EESD Program Development Timelines:

The launch of an EESD program is scheduled to launch in early fall 2019 to coincide with the completion of the leasehold improvements on the space sponsored by the City (funds application for leasehold improvements to be submitted in March 2019) - see section 5.2. for details. Planning and development of the EESD program is underway with exploratory conversations taking place with potential program delivery partners as well as a submission of a application for funding of the EESD programming to ICET’s Innovation Support program.

Preliminary planning of the EESD program is as follows:

⁴² “Weaving together both formal and informal education, this innovative learning ecosystem – the first of its kind outside the US – will become a vibrant model for scaling the kinds of learning and careers needed in a knowledge-based economy.” <http://www.symbiosis.ca/about-us.html>

<u>Phase 1: April – Dec. 2019:</u>	<u>Planning and Development</u>
April – May:	Draft MOU between PRESS, VIU and the Initiative on programming
May – June:	Draft and post RFPs for EESD program delivery
June – August:	Select and contract strategic program delivery agent(s), local and external Develop coworking membership model – soft launch for key-members
<u>Phase 2: Sept. – Dec. 2019:</u>	<u>EESD Launch and Delivery</u>
September:	Public Launch Party Launch coworking membership program
October:	Start formation of mentor-network
<u>Phase 3: Jan. – May 2020:</u>	<u>EESD Delivery and Assessment</u>
January – February:	Assessment and adjustment of EESD program delivery
February – May:	Deliver <i>EESD Training Program (Incubation)</i> Offer mentoring
June – July:	Program Evaluation and Next Steps
July – August:	<u>Summer Programming:</u> Deliver <i>Youth Coding Camp</i> in collaboration with SD47 Deliver <i>EESD Training Program (Incubation and Financing)</i>
<u>Phase 4: Aug. – Dec. 2020:</u>	<u>EESD Assessment and Evaluation</u>
September:	Launch SD47/VIU Dual Credit Program (ITAS 185) Deliver <i>EESD Training Program (Launch)</i> Offer mentoring Wrap-out, assessment and evaluation

For the development of capacity building tools (point 7) for ongoing growth and development, the Initiative will be looking at the following:

- With other community partners, create and engage collaborative approaches for start-up incentives and growth planning support, including market assessment with facilitation into programs.
- As the Hub matures with its users and the entrepreneurial ecosystem matures, connect start-ups with later stage funding and development with access to market.
- Explore and engage public procurement and pre-procurement strategies based on supporting local business, social enterprises and innovation that showcases local entrepreneurs.
- Foster peer driven networking facilitated by users of the centre.

5.2 Goal #2: Developments of a physical hub space to encourage increased connectivity and activity among stakeholders in the Creative Economy

The Hub User surveys demonstrated a wide set of needs and ideas regarding physical space, ranging from simple programming space to shared office space, to maker-spaces and tinker-kitchens, to production space, and to complex multi-purpose spaces, including a range of activities from events, programming, production and coworking.

When we paired those desired space capacities with the specific space needs and characteristics of the chosen sub-industries in Powell River’s Creative Economy and their particular programming needs and added the growth trends for the coworking industry overall, we came up with the following set of projects and actions laid out in two stages to meet the second strategic goal (Goal #2: *Developments of a physical hub space to encourage increased connectivity and activity among stakeholders in the Creative Economy*)

Stage 1: Short Term Hub Development:

1. Offering physical space in support of entrepreneurial activities and business support (access to professional business services and work stations; training programs, mentoring, events and networking opportunities; innovation and design).
2. Providing space for entrepreneurial training and incubation programming
3. Providing working space through access to “hot-desks,” “designated desk-space,” meeting room(s) and anchor tenancy.

Stage 2: Long Term Hub Development:

4. Offer access to a flexible multi-purpose event and performance space for public events, community forums and workshops, attractive to the cultural creative segment.
5. Provide collective production space for the digital-media community to help consolidate resources towards accessing and pitching on larger production-opportunities for Powell River.

5.2.1. Stage 1: Short Term Innovation Hub Planning and Development Activities:

While the long term goal is to develop a space for a larger Innovation Hub, currently earmarked in the newly opened Townsite Market, the first step is to establish a smaller space that will be developed collaboratively with interested creatives/coworkers/entrepreneurs. The City of Powell River has offered up the use of an 850 sq. ft. office lease to serve as a launch-pad for the developments of a larger innovation hub. The space is situated above the new Powell River Regional library and adjacent to a recently established public art centre (The Art Centre/TAC). There are a number of recently arrived as well as established creative workers who have expressed interest in both helping to develop and rent space geared towards coworking, meeting/event/networking space, and programming.

Powell River Educational Services (PRESS), the Initiative’s administrative body, will be taking over the lease from the City for program delivery and coworking on April 1st, 2019. Rent will be covered by the City for the first 12 months. Insurance will be covered by PRESS and utilities are to be covered by the Initiative through revenue from coworking and programming activities. The Initiative has been meeting with Powell River Community Forest (PRCF) Ltd. regarding funding for leasehold improvements to the Hub-space and an application will be submitted to PRCF for \$70,000 towards leasehold improvements in March 2019. The PRCF is an independent for-profit corporation set up by City of Powell River to manage the CFA⁴³ (Community Forest Area) of Powell River where 100 per cent of profits are returned to the community.

⁴³ “A CFA (Community Forest Agreement) is an area-based forest tenure issued by BC Ministry of Forests that allows harvest of timber on provincial forest land. CFAs are intended to provide communities with opportunities to have more control over how their local forests are managed and directly receive benefits from forest development occurring in their area.” <https://prcommunityforest.ca/>

The initiative has formed a working group, whose efforts will be coordinated by on part-time staff person,⁴⁴ who will care-take the development process between March and September 2019. This will include working with the working group on the following:

1. Leasehold improvements activities (June - September 2019)

- Working with an interior designer on design of programming and coworking space to reflect user needs as identified in the Creative Economy Road Map. Draft up construction drawings.
- Draft up RFPs for hire of a general contractor for renovations - oversee renovations.
- Renovations and digital wiring (fiber optics) for permanent work stations, installation of video-conferencing and zoom equipment.
- Reach out to possible corporate sponsors (Telus) with specific asks.

2. Develop and operationalize the Hub membership model (May - September 2019):

- Design membership model. Develop a communications strategy, membership and usage plan.
- Decide on administrative system(s). Multiple lean and integrated administrative systems for coworking and innovation hubs already exist allowing for multiple levels of integration of services, such as online booking of hot desks, automatic billing connected with space etc.
- Branding of the EESD program and Innovation Hub services, including coworking.
- Formalize ways to connect and learn from other geographical areas.
- Tapping into underrepresented groups, bringing people together: women, First Nations, recent immigrants.
- Develop tracking systems of new remote workers.

Timelines for Hub Space Planning and Development:

Phase 1: April – Dec. 2019:

Construction Planning and Membership Recruitment

May:	Confirmation on funding from Powell River Community Forest
May – June:	Draft and post RFPs for General Contractor for leasehold improvements Work with Interior designer on renovation project Draft construction drawings Source commitments from anchor tenants
June – July:	Hire GC for renovation project Construction/leasehold improvements Develop coworking membership model – soft launch for key-members
June - August:	Prepare membership package and recruit potential Hub Users
August - September:	Planning and funds development for further Town Site Innovation Hub (ICET Quick Start-Implementation program for business planning required to access funding for the developments of the Town Site Market Innovation Hub).

⁴⁴ The City has committed \$5000 in staff wages towards the development efforts, with the expectation of that \$5000 to be matched through a funds proposal to Powell River Community Forest for leasehold improvements that will be submitted in March 2019.

<u>Phase 2: Sept. – Dec. 2019:</u>	<u>Hub-space and membership launch - operationalization</u>
September:	Public launch of space and membership program Launch coworking membership program
November - December:	Project Planning for development of the Town Site Innovation Hub
<u>Phase 3: Jan. – May 2020:</u>	<u>Programming and co-working operationalization</u>
January – February:	Assessment and adjustment of programming space Assessment and adjustment of co-working and tenancy space
January - April:	Funds Development for Town Site Innovation Hub

5.2.2 Long Term Innovation Hub Planning and Development Activities:

The Townsite Market Innovation Hub

We are incrementally working our way towards the development of a 7500 sq. ft. innovation hub located in the newly renovated Townsite Market. The Townsite Market is located in the heart of Townsite, the original town centre built around the establishment of the pulp and paper mill. The original building on this site was known as the company store, and built in a simple Frontier style structure. In 1941 it was razed and rebuilt as an ultra-modern Bauhaus style building and continued to function as a company store into the 1980's. With the downturn of the mill, the building and other heritage sites in the Townsite were closed and sat empty for a time.

Developer Steve Brooks (tech-consultant by trade) has in recent years purchased a number of architecturally significant buildings with the vision of creating a new and vibrant cultural centre for the community, and one by one buildings are being renovated, transformed and repurposed into an award winning brewery (Economusee)⁴⁵, a yoga studio and event space and the now Chelsea Market-inspired market space (the company stores building). The newly renovated market houses local businesses and artisans as well as a social enterprise and a community driven climbing-gym co-op. The proposed innovation hub space is in a prime corner area of the building and features 18ft ceilings with exposed original fir beams with large windows facing the ocean. The significant potential of the space to attract a range of entrepreneurial activities related to innovation, tech and the creative economy has been commented on by everyone who has visited in the space during our Open Houses and multi-stakeholder engagement meetings.

The renewal of these buildings with uses related to the changing demographics and economic activities in the community is reflected in other revitalization projects in the Townsite, such as McKinney's pub in the historic Rodmay hotel is attracting performers from across BC, the Patricia Theatre, Canada's oldest running movie theatre, is in process to be purchased by the local Film Society to be run as a multi-use performance space. The old provincial building (The Old Courthouse Inn) has become a successful and popular accommodation and restaurant and is regularly booked by attendees of the Powell River Film Festival, and the recently established Townsite Jazz Festival, which are both held in Townsite. For two years, Powell River Tourism supported the Aurora Festival, which created a multimedia celebration of the area, utilizing the unique architecture to create performances and multimedia installations to highlight known and hidden stories of the area, most notably the expropriated Tla'amin village site of TeeskWat on what became the site of the paper mill.

⁴⁵ "An ÉCONOMUSÉE," is an innovative concept that allows private enterprises to reach out to the general public, explain local culture and contribute significantly to the preservation of an intangible cultural heritage. <http://www.economusees.com/en/learn-about-economusee/what-is-an-economusee>
VIU led the Community Based Research (CBR) project on the Townsite Brewery qualifying to become an Economusee.

Most of the new economic activities in Townsite and in the Townsite Market are sprouting from Powell River's existing cultural sector and creative industries, while being infused with enthusiasm and the discretionary income of newcomers, as well as visitors to the growing number of festivals and noteworthy cultural events taking place in Powell River. The development of an innovation hub in the Townsite Market focusing on the intersection between the cultural creatives, tech-enterprises, impact entrepreneurs and innovation in general, is only a natural extension of the activities already forming in Townsite.

The Initiative (with PRESS) is currently in conversations with Townsite Market owner, Steve Brooks about the possibilities of PRESS purchasing the potential space for the innovation hub as a strata, rather than to be a leaseholder of the space in order to move the ownership of the space out of private hands.

Short Term Project Activities:

1. Prepare for proper construction quotes, including raising funds to work with a designer and/or VIU's Interior Design BA program on conceptual and construction drawings.
2. Develop a business plan for financing demonstrating a solid business model, revenue streams, market assessment and sustainability plan, including:
 - Develop a tenancy attraction package.
 - Secure local and out-of-town tenancy, partnerships and memberships.
3. Apply for \$ support towards leasehold improvements, not including purchase of strata.

Financing strategy:

1. Turn private ownership into non-for-profit ownership by turning lease into strata. To be purchased by Powell River Educational Services Society (PRESS).
2. Apply for Quick-Start Implementation support (ICET - \$15,000) with matched contributions (\$15,000) from local partners to help cover cost of the next step of project planning, being:
 - Work with designer to draft conceptual and construction drawings (\$10,000), which will be needed to obtain construction quotes.⁴⁶
 - Obtain detailed construction quotes (\$5,000).
3. Develop business plan and tenancy attraction package (\$15,000) in preparation for infrastructure fund applications - multi-purpose space for programming, production space, event space, coworking, incubation, launch, acceleration and anchor tenancy.
4. Solicit and secure local and out-of-town anchor tenants and core coworking membership base (60% occupancy). We will be growing the market from the current innovation hub activities.
5. Apply for infrastructure grants (PR Community Forest, BC, ICET others) based on construction quotes, business plan and occupancy commitments (\$.5 Million to \$1 Million).

⁴⁶ We are currently exploring the involvement of VIU's Graphic and Interior Design BA program on the design-side to provide a learning opportunity for students and to keep design costs down.

Project Plan, Financing and Timelines:

Phase 1: May - Dec. 2019:

Strata Formation, Design and Construction Quote Planning

May:	Develop strata agreement btw. PRESS and Market Site Owner.
May – June:	Engage and draft MOU with VIU’s BA Interior Design program for student participation in design-phase of Innovation Hub design, Fall 2019. Secure matched \$ contributions from community partners (\$15,000).
June- July :	Submit Quick Start Implementation proposal to ICET (\$15,000).
September - October:	Work with VIU’s Interior Design students and faculty on Hub design Produce 3D conceptual drawings and construction drawings. (Engage Interior Designer if VIU is not able to participate). Start business planning work.
October - December:	Approach potential funders in prep for infrastructure proposal(s). Work with contractor(s) to provide detailed construction quote. Create tenancy/membership attraction package.

Phase 2: Jan. - Dec. 2020:

Infrastructure and Business planning

January - February :	Solicit and secure future innovation hub members and tenants using attraction package. Create infrastructure proposals and submit.
March - April:	Finish business plan. Draft RFPs for hire of a Interior designer, GC and construction company if separate from GC.

Phase 3: April - December:

Procurement and Construction

April - May:	If successful infrastructure proposals, put out RFPs and hire GC and Interior Designer for procurement of design materials and furnishing. Construction planning, including working with designer on procurement.
June - October:	Construction/renovations.
November:	Interior finish and furnishing.
December:	Innovation Hub Launch.

5.3. Goal #3: Creating public awareness and engagement on the possibilities of the Creative Economy

A public engagement and generative storytelling strategy is being planned to raise awareness about the diversity of people and initiatives in the community with regards to community economic development, cultural and social entrepreneurship, and creative placemaking that form a part of the emerging creative economy. The strategy aims to build on the effective and engaging communication work of Creative Economy collaborator Romila Barryman, who wrote a number of widely shared community profiles for the Initiative website. By profiling some of the stories of people and projects that are making positive change in the community we aim to show how they form part of a growing constellation of initiatives that are a part of a creative economy movement unfolding in Powell River by telling new empowering stories of change, impact and collaboration. By doing this we celebrate our change makers, educate the broader public about what is happening around them, and hopefully inspire others to pursue their own ideas with regards to innovative creative entrepreneurship rooted in a love of this region.

The strategy furthermore aims to help develop and strengthen partnerships and connections amongst groups and create a clearer picture of the interfaces of the creative economy in this region. The First Credit Union has put forward \$2,500 towards this and the Initiative is actively pursuing matched funding from local contributors (Powell River Community Forest) to be able to do a series of 6 short videos in total.

In addition to the video-shorts on local change makers and entrepreneurs, the *Inspire 2015 Speakers' Series*, which is a part of the EESD program delivery, will target the wider public and will play an important role in raising awareness around the role, dynamics and potentials of the Creative Economy in Powell River in general. We plan to record the talks and post them for public access across our social media platform.

Timelines for the Generative Storytelling Strategy:

<u>March - November 2019:</u>	<u>Video production</u>
March - April:	Determine which stories to tell
April - May:	Produce first three video-short profiles
	Pitch and obtain funding for another three productions
June - August:	Produce another three video-shorts
September:	Screen and launch Hub and EESD programming launch
October:	Profiles disseminated online and at various community events

6. Summary

The targeted sector development plan (the Road Map) for the Creative Economy in Powell River will serve as a guide and planning tool for the City and other key-economic stakeholders on how to best engage and stimulate the Creative Economy on the Upper Sunshine Coast in the coming 3-5 years. The Road Map has been developed to align with other current City planning initiatives and other strategic development efforts by creative economy stakeholder in Powell River. The research, engagement and consultation, and plan creation took place in four stages between June 2018 and December 2018.

Stage 1. included literature review, cultural sector asset review and mapping, research and analysis and culminated in a baseline cultural asset assessment report that provided a qualitative and quantitative data-based situational analysis. Stage 2. included a comprehensive community engagement process and stakeholder consultation, both via digital survey engagement and outreach and storytelling through social media platforms, as well as in-person meetings, open houses and interviews involving entrepreneurs, independent contract workers, social innovators, SMEs, high school students and key stakeholders in the Creative Economy and Initiative partners. Stage 3. involved four multi-stakeholder focus groups that contextualized the work of the Initiative even further, while providing vision and content for the creation of the Road Map. Stage 4. included additional research to further detail the areas of focus and to formulate associated strategic objectives, goals and timelines for actionable projects and key initiatives. The targeted sector development work balances the geographic, demographic and economic characteristics and potential of Powell River in the context of provincial economic development efforts and global opportunities.

7. Work Cited:

1. REFERENCES:

1.1 ACRONYMS

ABCD: Asset Based Community Development

CFA: Community Forest Area

DIY: Do it Yourself

EESD: Ecosystem Development Plan

GC: General Contractor

GCUC: Global Coworking Unconference Conference

ICET: Island Coastal Economic Trust

MOU: Memorandum of Understanding

PRCF: Powell River Community Forest

PREP: Powell River Employment Programs

PRESS: Powell River Educational Services Society

PRISMA: Pacific Region International Summer Music Academy

RFP: Request for Proposal

SME: Small and Medium Sized Businesses

STEAM: Science, Technology, Engineering, Art & Design, Math

TAC: The Art Centre

VIU: Vancouver Island University

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<https://powellriver.civicweb.net/document/33198>

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<https://www.shareable.net/sites/default/files/Sharing%20Cities.pdf>

1.3 CITY REPORTS

Powell River Community Social Plan 2016

Powell River Arts and Culture Initiative – June 2012

Powell River Arts and Culture Phase 2 Report 2013

Groundswell 2014 Post Conference Summary Report

Powell River Economic Development Strategy, 2015

Powell River’s Youth Assessment Project, 2014

City of Powell River 2012 - 2017 Annual Reports

Mayor’s Task Force on Economic Revitalization

City of Powell River’s Strategic Priorities 2013-2014

Powell River Sustainability Charter

Realizing New Economic Futures, One Community at a Time

http://www.communityeconomies.org/sites/default/files/paper_attachment/Realizing-New-Economic-Futures.pdf

Social Innovation in British Columbia

http://www.hubcapbc.ca/Documents/Social-Innovation-in-%20BC/SIBC_Economic.aspx

1.4 OTHER RESOURCES

Comprehensive list of recent Social innovation initiatives in BC

<http://www.centreforsocialenterprise.com/>

Fastest Growing Industries: Digital Entertainment/Interactive Media

https://pwp.vpl.ca/siic/files/2016/05/Fastest_Growing_Industries_Digital_Entertainment_Interactive_Media.pdf

Innovate BC site: Funding, expertise and connections that power innovation and growth

<https://innovatebc.ca/>

Online information regarding innovation and tech hub centres in BC and beyond:

Profile of BC Technology Sector 2017

<https://www.straight.com/life/1069916/how-big-bcs-tech-industry>

What's Fuelling BC's Economy:

<http://credbc.ca/wp-content/uploads/2014/07/Fuelling-BCs-economy-WEB.pdf>

http://www.hubcapbc.ca/Documents/Social-Innovation-in-BC/SIBC_Economic.aspx:

1.5 PERSONAL COMMUNICATIONS (JULY-AUGUST 2015)

Interviewees:

Bennet, Rob, COO, Program Director, VIATEC, Victoria, BC

Cran, Greg, Campus Administrator, Vancouver Island University - Powell River Campus, Powell River, BC

Francis, Roy, Community Development Officer, Tla'amin Nation, BC

Gray, Thomas, Makerspace co-founder, Powell River, BC

Kamon, Paul, ED, Sunshine Coast Tourism Association, Powell River, BC

Kirk, Rebecca, Program Developer, Nanaimo makerspace, Nanaimo, BC

Lyttle, Donna, Sound artist, entrepreneur, event organizer, Powell River, BC

Merc, Paul, Paul Merc Concerts, Lund, BC <http://paulmercconcerts.com/>

O'Neill, Kathleen, Program Director, PRESS

Pinch, Aaron, Customer Success Architect, Legaler Blockchain, Powell River, BC <https://www.legaler.com/>

Radke, Al, CAO, qathet Regional District, BC

Randolph, Scott, Economic Development Manager, City of Powell River, BC

Revke, Jason, President, Aero Design, qathet Regional District, BC <https://www.aerodesign.ca/>

Rodden, Chris, CEO, Tla'amin Management Services, Tla'amin Nation, BC

Rosenfeld, Theo, Entrepreneur and makerspace co-founder, Powell River, BC

Yule, Jay, Superintendent, School District 47; ED, PRESS, Powell River, BC

Woznow, Ron, Mayor Candidate, Powell River, BC

In-person Hub Visits:

Fuse, Gibsons, BC, <https://www.fuseworkhub.com/>

The Nest, Victoria, BC, 1114 Langley Street

Club KWENCH, Victoria, BC, <https://www.clubkwench.com/>

theDock, Victoria, BC <http://thedockvictoria.com/>

Fort Techtoria, BC <https://forttechtoria.ca/>

Cohoots, Phoenix, AZ <https://cohoots.com/>

Gibsons Public Market, Gibsons, BC <http://gibsonspublicmarket.com/>

Appendix 1: New private and public cultural sector initiatives and businesses

- *The new Powell River Regional Public Library with expanded programming and facilities*
- *The Art Centre - Public Art Centre with educational programming and event space*
- *Tidal Art Centre - small arts-based event, workshop and retreat venue, Lund*
- *Craft Beer Festival, Powell River*
- *Tla'amin Treaty, traditional place name mapping and media projects with Powell River Museum*
- *Hehewesin Reconciliation Canoe Carving Project, Traditional Carving projects and workshops, protocol-teachings and documentary filmmaking*
- *Townsite Market - renovation of historic infrastructure that includes social enterprise, local food and artisana businesses, and a climbing gym coop*
- *Bike Park and community biking initiative - public art bike racks and documentary*
- *Outdoor Learning Centre - camp and retreat venue for wilderness and outdoor learning initiatives*
- *Sunshine Coast Trail and Mountain Biking Trails - added trail building by volunteers and per contracts*
- *ARC community performance and event centre*
- *Revival of MckKinneys Pub with ongoing live music events*
- *Powell River Live and Invest Initiative*
- *Commissioned Public Murals*
- *Upcoming acquisition of the Patricia Theatre by the Powell River Film Society*
- *First Phase construction of a Resource Recovery Centre (zero waste initiative)*
- *Fibre Arts Space*
- *The Nook Cafe - Social Enterprise*
- *K-Lumet fire starter manufacturing - social enterprise*
- *Townsite Jazz Festival*
- *Youth Film Festival and Media Camp*
- *Community Climbing Coop*

Appendix 2: Program Survey Responses

Summary of 46 Responses to Hub Programming Responses:

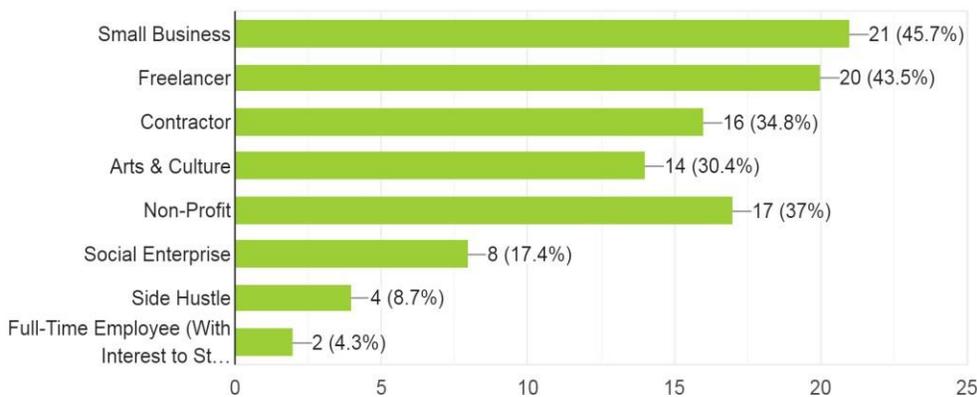
The following is a summary of 46 responses to questions regarding programming in the areas of:

1. Mentorship
2. Business Planning and Development
3. Entrepreneurial Training
4. Skills Set Building
5. List of topics of interest for TEDx-type talks and conferences

Table number 1 (below) shows the number of respondents to types of types/ways of working

Please select the categories that best describe your type of work:

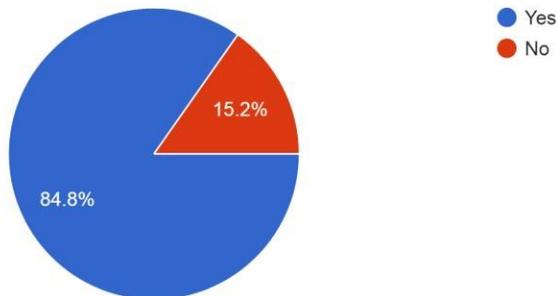
46 responses



Mentorship

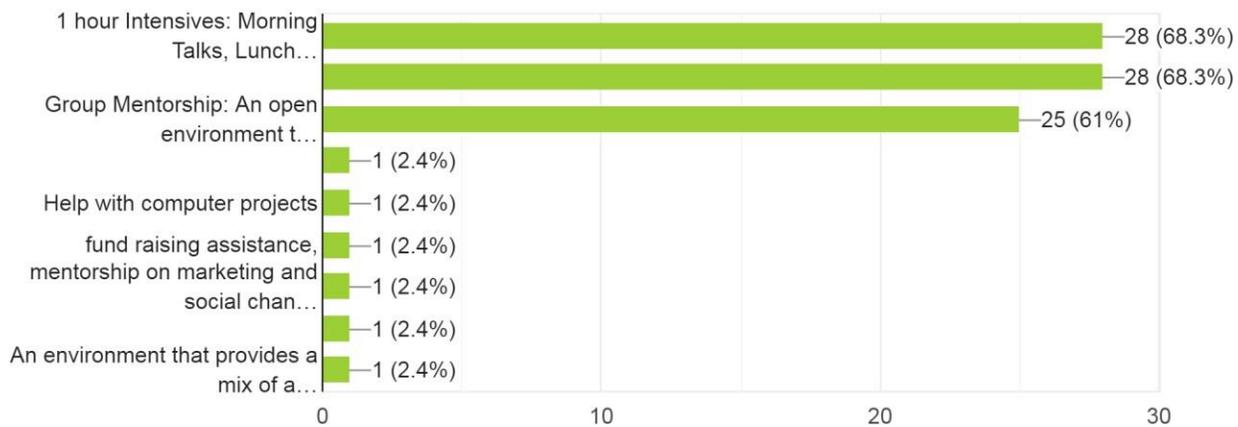
Would you be interested in accessing programming that provides mentorship for your small business, business idea, project or venture?

46 responses



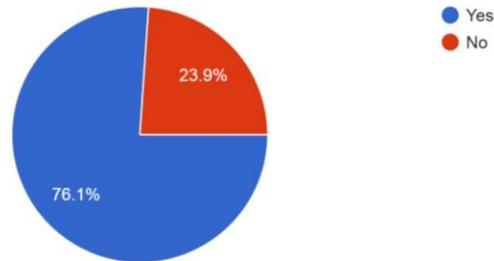
Which types of mentorship would you be interested in engaging in?

41 responses



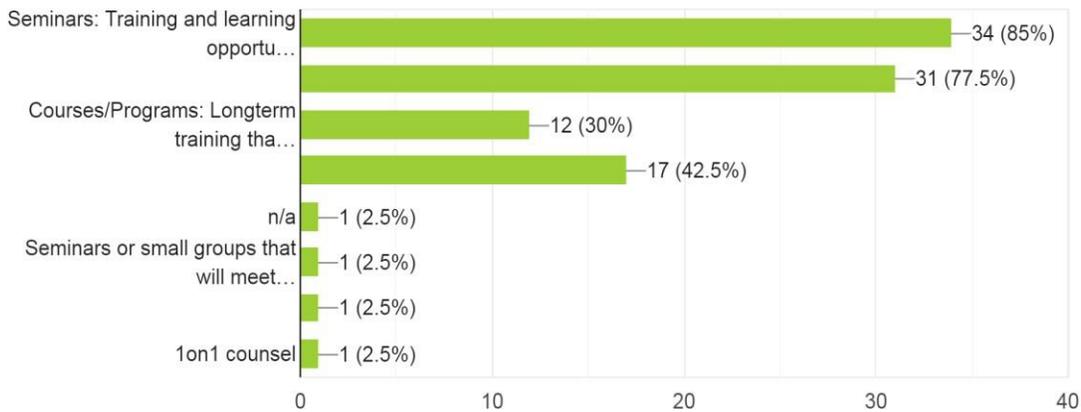
Business Planning & Development

Would you be interested in accessing programming that provides business planning and development such as concept development, market analysis, feasibility studies, business plan writing etc.? 46 responses



Which of the following category would you be interested in engaging in?

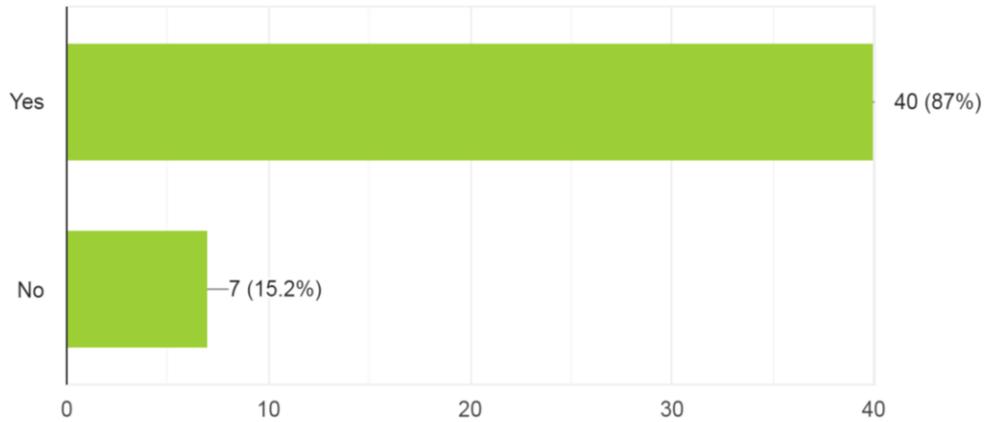
40 responses



Entrepreneurial Training

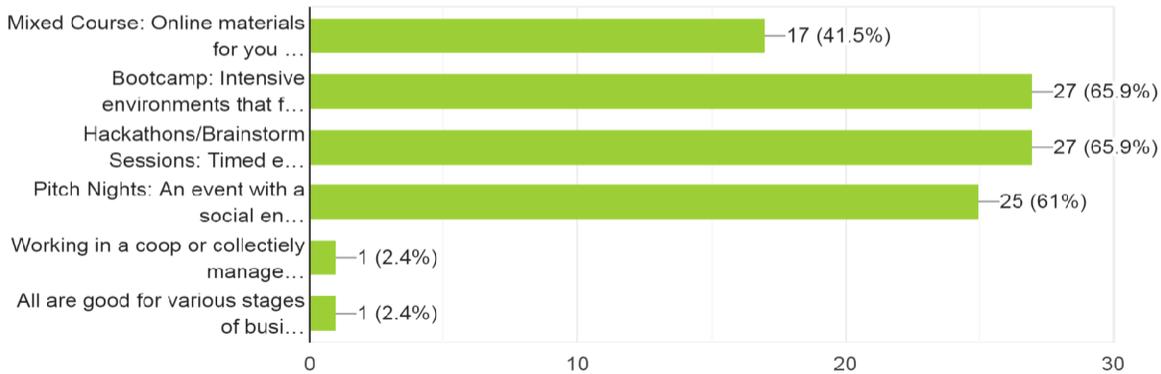
Would you be interested in accessing programming that provides entrepreneurial training such as collaborative idea generation, innovation, creative problem solving, creation of new markets, possibility thinking, etc.?

46 responses



Which types of environment would you be interested in gaining entrepreneurial training?

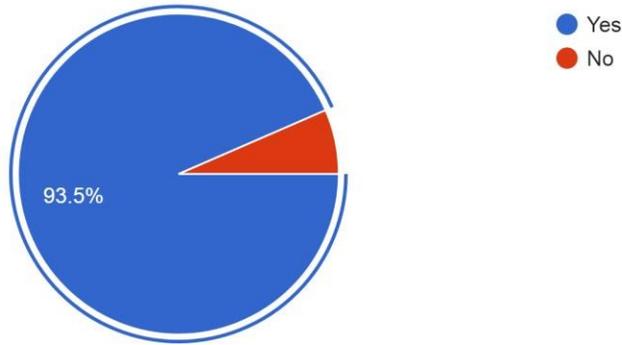
41 responses



Skillset Building

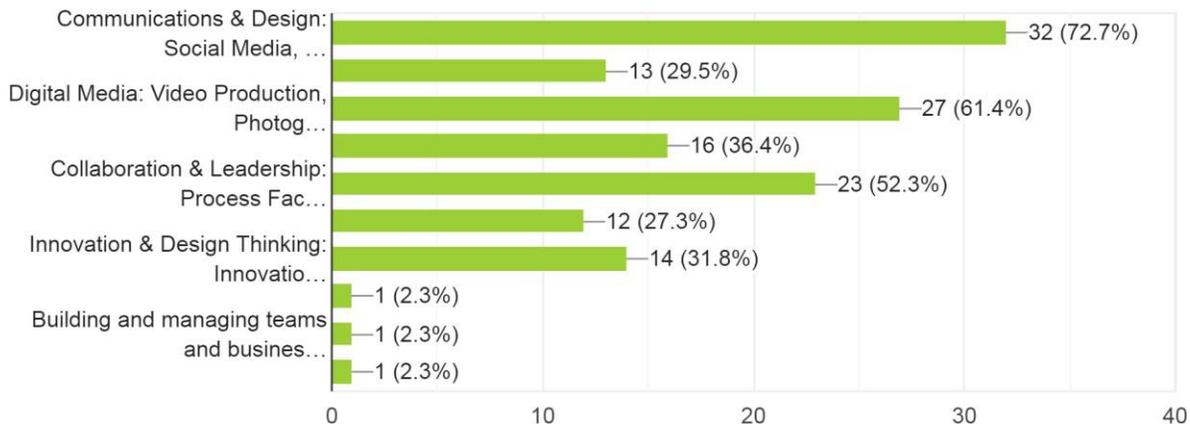
Would you be interested in accessing programming that provide specific skillset learning in innovation and design?

46 responses



Which topics would be interested in gaining specific skillsets?

44 responses



Talks & Conferences

What kind of TED-type Talks or Lunch & Learn topics would you be interested in? Please list below.

Highlights:

- Off-the-wall ideas that wouldn't be expected in PR, but could be done here - and put PR on the map
- Recruiting for non-profit Boards, finances for non-profits, grant writing, copyright for artists
- Disruptive technologies
- Marketing online, lead generation online, the changing landscape of the internet in 2018 and beyond,
- Leadership, Communication, Technology Innovative Success Stories, Change Management, Human Resources, Scaling-up Businesses, Difficult Conversations (i.e. staff, customers), Policy/Practices around Social Media.
- Branding, public speaking, digital presentation/photography, apps as marketing tools, consumer trends, creating printed marketing materials, importing products.
- Anything tourism related!
- What do Small business owners need to be more successful?
- Food product development, but hold the events on Texada.
- Business/ Entrepreneurial skills
- Music, business, philosophy, community development, technology, AI, environmental issues.
- Anything that advocates, promotes and teaches creativity and education as a resource rather than the depletion of natural resources.
- How to create from cradle to cradle. (see William McDonough: Cradle to Cradle Design)
- Business ideas related to climate action - climate changes, solution directions to climate changes
- Mycology as science, artificial intelligence - staying human, How social Media is/and will shape society in future,
- Death cafes
- New frontiers. Parallel type's community round the world. New paradigms. New modes transport/shipping logistics
- Social innovation, design-thinking and human-centred design, community organizing, collaborative leadership, social finance models
- Any field can grow one's knowledge of how to improve themselves, their community, or professional service.
- Local solutions to global issues especially in the area of waste and how to utilize waste materials as resources.

What kind of conferences would you like to see being offered in Powell River?

Please list below. 32 responses

- Experiences of others in towns with similar demographics.
- Maker Faire, Alternative economy, "Living the New Economy" (Nicole Moen in Victoria) inspirational, tech based or disruptive technologies/companies
- Technology, Hackathons, Innovation/Entrepreneur, HR/Management
- Environmental, climate mitigation/adaptation, social media
- Local food system development
- Ones that create dialogue and connection rather than having the expert at the front of the room
- Speakers relevant to the topic of climate action, sharing economy, and more
- Boot camp for Small Business/ Marketing
- Word on the Street, Collaborative Creation,
- Inspirational small entrepreneurs who are making a big difference
- Cannabis, Design, Art, Writing
- New economy, innovation, systems thinking, community engagement
- arts related/social justice
- Big name speakers. E-commerce.
- Conferences that highlight or otherwise leverage our unique conjunction of technological availability and cultural / natural background.
- world experience with our size communities
- Futurology (see <http://ourfutures.co/>), technological impact on current and future businesses, biotechnology.
- Economic development. Social infrastructure and programs, agriculture we development, food security, community building, cultural development
- textile waste awareness and problem solving
- Urban planning, social enterprise, growth industries in green technologies.
- Learn what innovative solutions people are coming up with around the world to solve global issues on a local level.
- Writers workshops, using technology and social media

Appendix 3: Hub User Survey Responses

The following is a summary of 46 responses to questions regarding Hub User Needs:

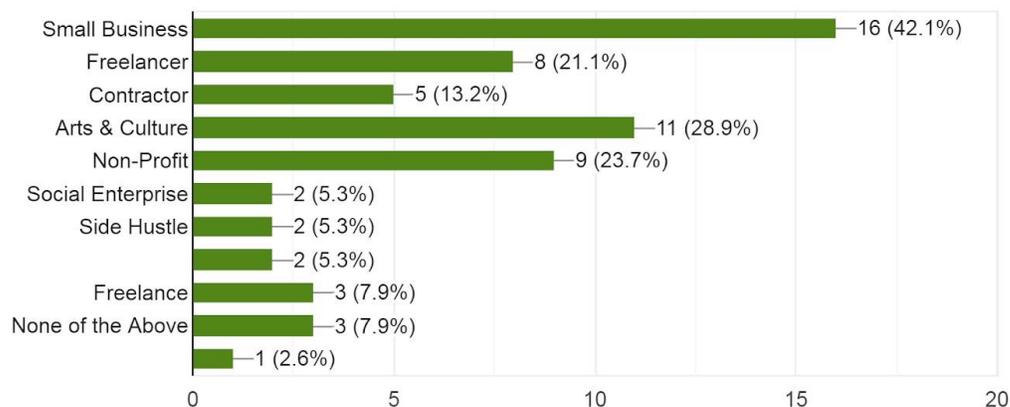
Hub Explorations:

1. Which spaces have you used:
2. If you were to envision a hub in Powell River that meets your business development needs what would that look like?
3. As a potential hub user, which of the following categories would best suit your needs?
4. How many hours per month would you use the hub? (For reference: 4 weeks of full-time work = 160 hours)
5. Assuming that the innovation hub would include internet, kitchen access, front desk service and phone rooms, what additional services would you be interested in accessing?
6. Which of the following types of rental spaces would you be interested in accessing:
7. Which of the following programs would you be interested in accessing:
8. Please describe the kind of culture you'd like to see in a local innovation hub.
9. Free-Write Space: Want to express your enthusiasm for the space? Have invaluable resources or case studies you'd like to share?

Table number 1 (below) shows the number of respondents to types of types/ways of working

Please select the categories that best describe your type of work:

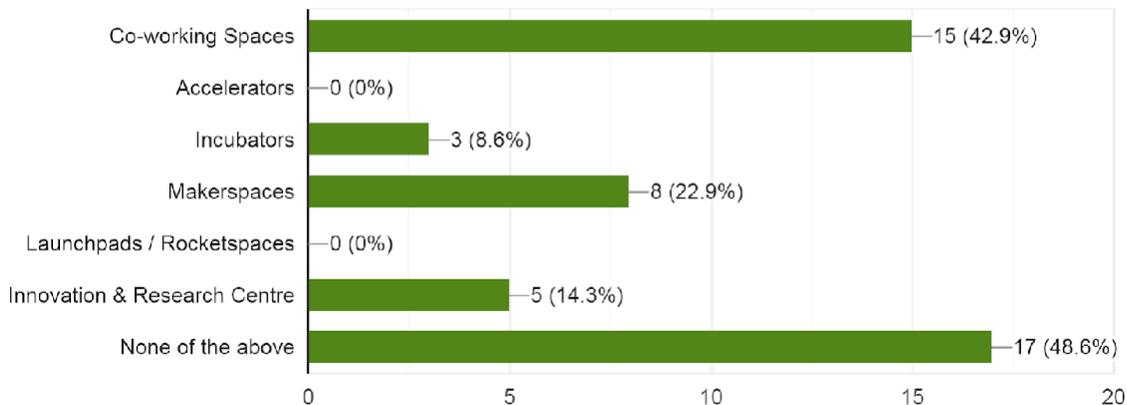
38 responses



Hub Exploration

Which spaces have you used:

35 responses



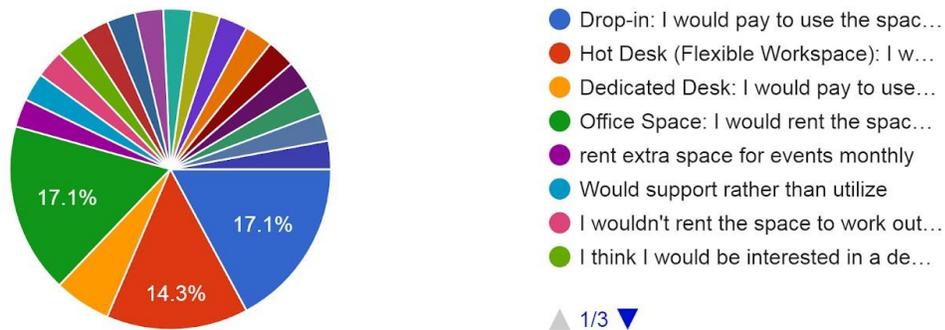
If you were to envision a hub in Powell River that meets your business development needs what would that look like?

- Co working space w designated desk, access to quiet rooms for when needed, kitchen, business services, positive warm, bright and welcoming environments
- Coworking & networking space
- I would love office space, meeting space and conference space with access to a large tv screen, and projector
- Shared Office space at an affordable price. Printing, faxing, board room rental and even event hosting space for business mixer events
- Mainly I would access the space as a way to connect with people. I would also be interested in office resources like printers and perhaps some assistance with labeling and packaging as I have basic computer skills so access to graphic design expertise would be helpful. Would also be great to have spaces that would be venue oriented for meeting space for the community that has catering friendly access. Perhaps a space that could be used for cooking classes.
- Clean, fully stocked with shared office equipment and supplies, meeting rooms, mentoring, creative, whiteboards everywhere, good energy, wood and glass, cutting edge technology for development
- Drop in. Meet-ups monthly for users; speakers.
- I need space to develop both product and business, so a design lab/makerspace would be something I'm looking for. Networking nights would be great. A climate controlled hot desk would be something I would use every week or two. I could really use business and financial mentorship.
- I'm not planning for growth, just to earn enough money to enjoy life in Powell River. A hub might be helpful if it offered events that brought together smart leaders for networking, or offered rental space for me to do events/meetings if needed.
- Reasonable spacious place shared by similar minded business people, with ocean view of course
- A collaborative atmosphere where people are interested in helping each other succeed, rather than competing against each other.
- I want something that is ahead of where my business and myself are situated, something that grows my capacity in leading ways, exposes me to new ways of working, ideas, tools; a setup that offers me community within this community, opportunities to engage in new projects and in new ways, a place where I feel at home, a kitchen, so I could stay there for long hours, 24/7 access as my business does not necessarily operate only at "business hours"

- Just a shared painting studio space where creation is encouraged in many mediums
- Open space with innovative installations and community engagement that would change up frequently to draw local interest and create awareness, provide education and engage the community in local and global research and solutions.
- Central making space for industrial machines, combining shipping from Vancouver area goods, provide a service that helps non techies with marketing....less cost if shared between people or workshops on how to
- It would be beautiful, open, and airy, close to the water and away from the mill. It's ugly and smells. I would want to do workshops with my creativity clients and they would not want to be anywhere near the mill.
- Not distracting. Quiet can just go in and focus on work.
- A place that offers a quiet and supportive place to work and network. A place where workshops and classes can be held. A resource centre for sharing valuable info for developing businesses
- Excellent Internet. Workspace / Meeting rooms. Creative Talent Pool
- Inviting meeting space. Professional and creative environment. Meeting room. Board room. Studio Media space. Social area.

As a potential hub user, which of the following categories would best suit your needs:

35 responses



17.1%: Office Space: I would rent the space on a monthly basis

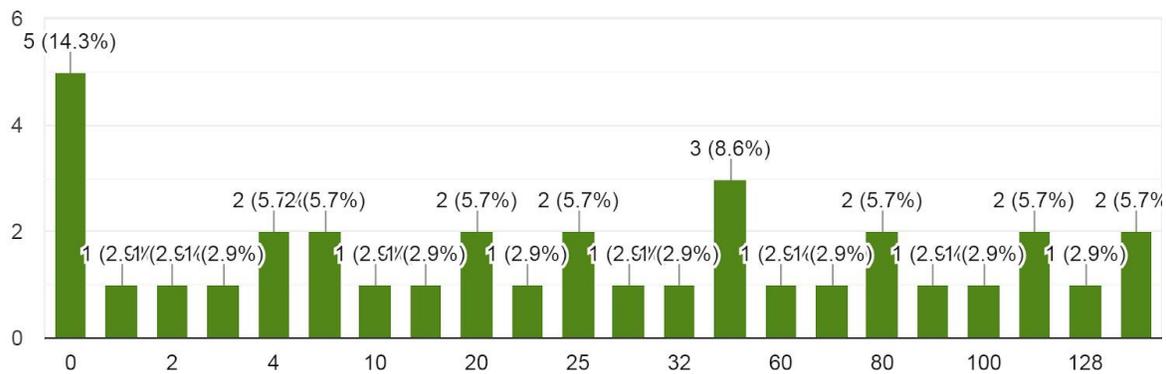
17.1%: Drop-in: I would use the space a few times a month/every so often

14.4%: Hot Desk (Flexible Workspace): I would pay to use the space a few days a week

5.7%: Dedicated Desk: I would pay to use the space consistently on a monthly basis

How many hours per month would you use the hub? (For reference: 4 weeks of full-time work = 160 hours)

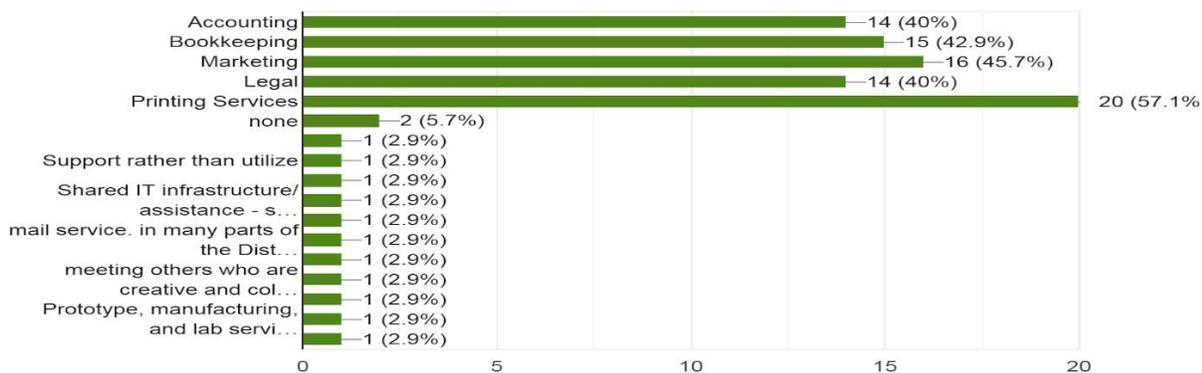
35 responses



Assuming that the innovation hub would include internet, kitchen access, front desk service and phone rooms, what additional services would you be interested in accessing? (35 responses)

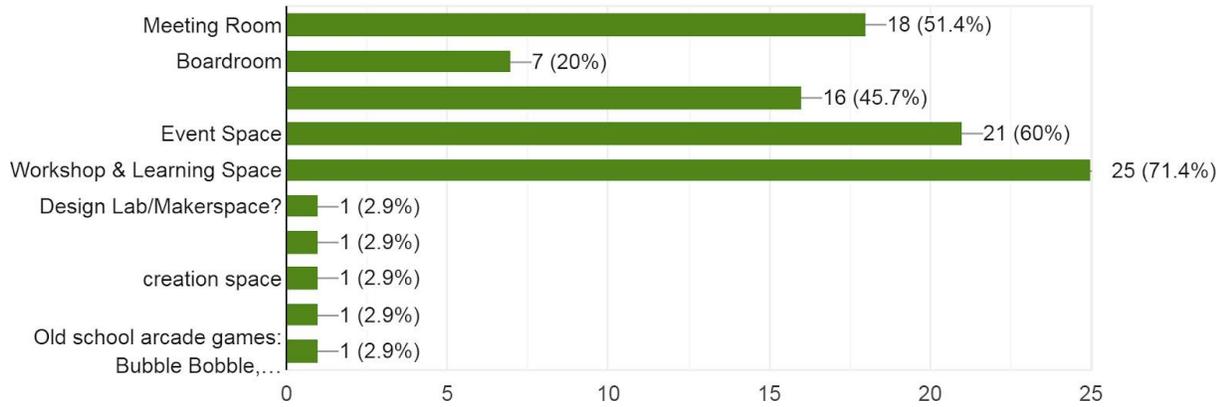
Assuming that the innovation hub would include internet, kitchen access, front desk service and phone rooms, w...would you be interested in accessing?

35 responses



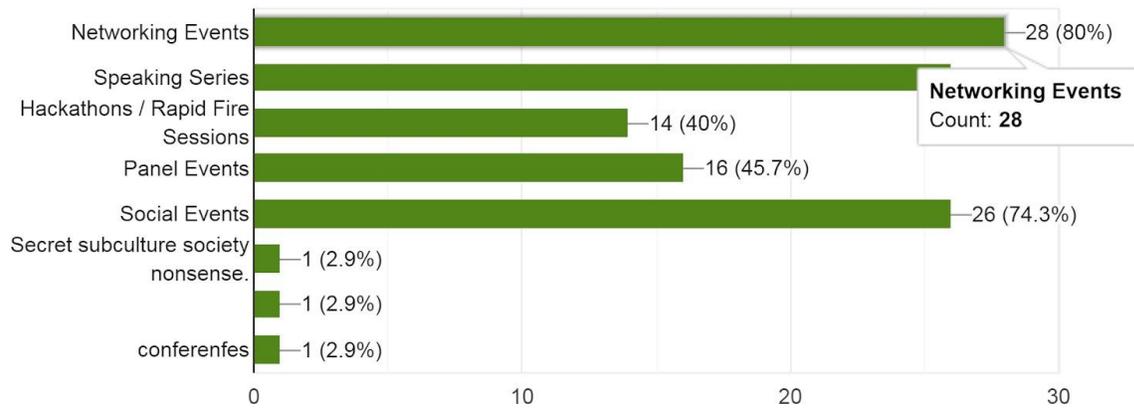
Which of the following types of rental spaces would you be interested in accessing:

35 responses



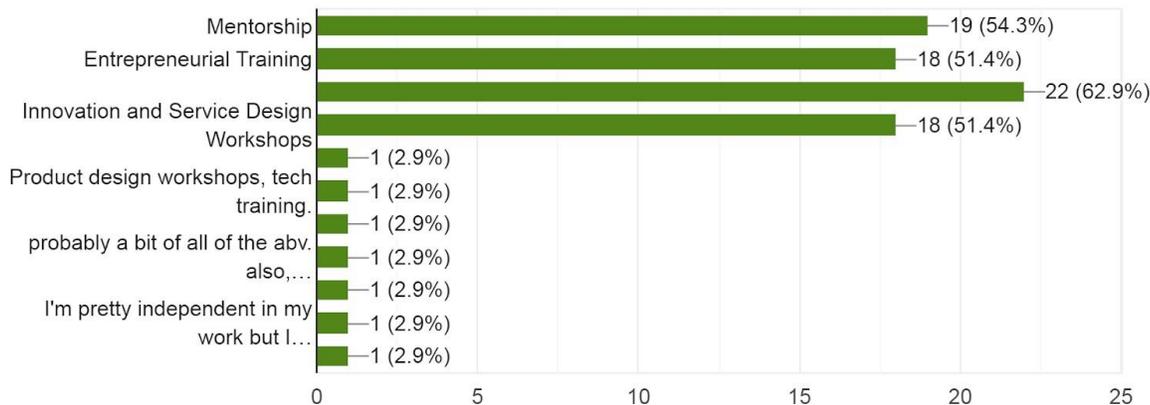
Which of the following events would you be interested in accessing:

35 responses



Which of the following programs would you be interested in accessing:

35 responses



Please describe the kind of culture you'd like to see in a local innovation hub (35 responses):

- Open, welcoming, inclusive, diverse, transparent. collaborative, invested in local impact and presence similar to the open house that I attended just recently and sponsored by you
- Laid Back office casual
- Access and education for and by artists, artisans, workshops, public forums on politics local national and international, food sustainability,
- Positive, driven, efficient
- Non-committal with opportunities to sponsor solopreneurs.
- Anti-oppression. Will indigenous people, newcomers, and people of colour feel comfortable, welcome in the space? Will their presence be at risk?
- Inclusive, diversified, and open minded.
- A collaborative atmosphere where people are interested in helping each other succeed, rather than competing against each other.
- place for professional focussed work; casual, friendly in common areas; working together to help each other succeed in the broad sense.
- Arts and media
- Open, welcoming, engaging of community - NOT just the tech community
- Easy going and flexible....good communication and responsive to those participating
- I'd love a learning and cooperative space and a space where the arts are valued and treated as a vibrant part of the economy.
- Diverse, safe, respectful, low maintenance membership (drama free)
- Supportive, light hearted culture
- Relaxed Business
- Innovative. Collaborative. Tech-forward. Smart. Networked.
- Open, flexible, diverse, experimental
- As all-inclusive as per the social and entrepreneurial as possible
- Exchange of ideas, trading skills, working on each other's projects, sharing a marketing person
- Professional, education oriented, collaborative
- Speakers, Workshops, Hackathons, Networking. Exchange of ideas and collaboration. Would love to have spaces to work independently, and spaces to just connect with others and toss ideas around.
- Supportive - Collaborative
- Collaborative, commitment to seeing the bigger picture, focus on local benefit and developing the local creative economy, altruistic

- Friendly, inclusive, and respectful. Shared use areas can sometimes become land battles or suffer from cliques.
- Welcoming and helpful
- Multicultural
- A culture of sharing, helping and having a common vision for the community.
- Social, idea-sharing, community-based

Want to express your enthusiasm for the space? Have invaluable resources or case studies you'd like to share?

"I've toured a few spaces in Victoria, Seattle and Portland and really think this would be such a boon for Powell River. Can't wait!!"

"Part of my pull to use such a space would be the networking/community-building aspect of it. However, one danger of a "tight community" environment, especially in a small community, is that it can quickly drift in a clique-centred space, which can both limit new and casual-use people from coming in to bring fresh ideas, needs, perspectives; and that kind of tight-knit can eventually lead to quarrels and discomfort (see CJMP for example). I think ways to alleviate this include ensuring that casual use of the space (drop-in, hot desks, members who don't use the space but can attend workshops etc) is encouraged and facilitated"

"This project needs to have long-term funding, with the expectation that there may not be a return or self-sustainment for up to 10 years. With that kind of commitment behind the project, there's a better chance of success. Ultimately, there may be a conflict between the "creative" and the "economy" of a creative economy space. To date, I've seen a lot of focus on the "economy" side of the discussion, with little on the "creative" side"

"I come from a tech background, and now have moved to the Arts... fibre arts and though I still use tech a great deal in my current focus, i see it and have always seen it as a tool... and how it supports a ways and means for anyone to get and do what they need and want to do.. thus, I would like the hub to not just be about tech, but how can it be used support the wider audiences in our community... by creating opportunity to draw, engage, create awareness, educate and research for solving both local and global issues..."

Have a particular experience you'd like to share with us regarding user needs, working out of emerging spaces or your hopes for a future innovation hub? Have suggestion or feedback regarding this survey? Let us know!:

"I have a tech background... so i have a keen awareness of it's place/use in our community and society today... especially today and going into the future... and I love all the possibilities that a tech hub suggests for the future engagement, research and development from within this space. However, I felt your survey was quite limited to your target audience of 'tech oriented' activity and could have easily been more embracing of the wider community who would use, engage, benefit and support this space, while creating awareness, engagement and opportunity (an incubator?) for community input on local and global issues - other interest groups might be arts and culture, food security, fish and wildlife, social enterprise, mobility issues, mental health, etc... and there are more. Even though these may not always be 'revenue generators' other than space rental... they would create a huge draw to the space for the wider audiences, while working with the tech community in a collaborative way that would support the space, the tech users and developers... and the community as a whole. Is this not a collaborative community approach that is also intended to be a part of the definition of the space? Please build in the opportunities that would be inclusive rather than exclusive... it can't all be about generating the revenue"