



# FINAL REPORT

Defining Diversity: Creating Community



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### Defining Diversity: Creating Community

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# Defining Diversity: Creating Community

## Final Report

### PROJECT OVERVIEW – WHAT HAPPENED?

**Defining Diversity: Creating Community (DDCC)** was a two-year participatory action research project developed through a partnership among Vancouver Island University (VIU), Tla'amin Community Health, and the Powell River Model Community Project. It was designed in response to concerns that a lack of understanding between groups and individuals would stall progress in dealing with Powell River's looming social issues, caused by a slowing economy and government cut backs.

The original DDCC project was proposed in 2012, building on earlier pilot projects, one led by John McKnight for Inclusion Powell River and the other led by the Powell River Diversity Initiative. The resulting DDCC project identified three overarching goals: (1) to build community capacity, resilience, and sustainability; (2) to spark increased citizen contribution and involvement; and, (3) to demonstrate the efficacy of this unique approach to social and economic change.

The DDCC project relied on several key concepts; **diversity, sustainability, shared leadership**, and attention to personal **mindsets**. It consisted of four two-day community education course offerings, followed by participant surveys and focus groups, and concluded with a learning circle open to all participants. Data was analyzed to respond to the research question:

How does participation in educational experiences that include a deep exploration of the meaning and value of diversity in our community, combined with the introduction of asset based thinking, impact citizens? More specifically, how does the educational experience *Defining Diversity, Creating Community* impact each citizen's view of self, their relationships with others, and their capacity to contribute to the social and economic well-being of their community over time?

### PROJECT VS. PROCESS

A project like Defining Diversity: Creating Community is written and proposed in a static linear way, yet by its very nature is dynamic. It involved hundreds of people over a two-year period and was positioned within the context of a community undergoing rapid change. If we think of communities as vibrant evolving systems, then it makes sense that we cannot design projects with definitive outcomes. Or perhaps more accurately, we can design them but their essence and meaning will change. Fortunately, because this project was designed as much as a community development activity as a research project, the latitude for **emergent design** existed. We designed a process rather than a project. We could take advantage of

opportunities and of individual and group contributions in a very fluid and evolving manner rather than adhering to a rigid implementation. Janet Newbury noted<sup>1</sup> that emergent design generates energy and support for significant community transformation when we ensure organizational responsiveness, ongoing open communication, self-reflection, and promote a willingness to relinquish control and share leadership; in short, when we trust the process.



Examples of emergent design during this project include: changes in participant recruitment strategies, redevelopment of course curriculum, and changes to the focus group questions. A larger example is the emergence of the ***Groundswell conference***, the ensuing ***documentary film***, and the ongoing projects funded by the Taos Institute including the ***Let the Sparks Fly*** - articles with business leaders and entrepreneurs - and the ***Audio Walks***. These projects have engaged citizens and positively impacted the social and economic well-being of our community, and are described in more detail in the Emergent Design section of this report.

The DDCC project was actively supported and funded by a unique cross section of community organizations which collectively matched a grant from the Vancouver Foundation.<sup>2</sup>

## RESEARCH DATA

Participant data, including survey, focus group, and learning circle findings, provide context for the report conclusions and recommendations. The survey information is particularly valuable, although the response rate was too low for reliable generalizability. The survey results are available at this link: <http://wordpress.viu.ca/ddcc/files/2014/10/DDCC-Survey-Summary-Report.pdf>. Course and focus group attendance numbers are detailed in Table 1. Emerging themes were organized to understand the impact the DDCC course and project had on participants. A snapshot of each theme follows.

Group	Course		Survey Response		Focus Group Attendance	
	Registered	Attended	#	%	#	%
A	23	21	6	28.6	6	28.6
B	20	17	1	5.9	5	29.4
C	19	17	3	17.6	5	29.4
D	16	16	6	37.5	5	31.25
<b>Total</b>	78	71	13	18.3	21	n/a
<b>Average</b>	19.5	17.75	3.25	17.7	5.25	29.66

Table 1: Participant Data

<sup>1</sup> Newbury, J. (2015). *Tracking the Groundswell: An emergent design of community engagement*. Brief Encounters from the Taos Institute. Retrieved from <http://www.taosinstitute.net/taos-institute-newsletter/>

<sup>2</sup> Vancouver Island University, Tla'Amin Community Health, Powell River Model Community Project, Powell River Region United Way, Powell River Diversity Initiative, First Credit Union, Powell River Friends of Film Society, Inclusion Powell River (previously PRACL), School District 47, Community Living BC, Powell River Community Foundation, Powell River Regional Economic Development Society, Powell River Employment Program Society, Skookum Food Provisioners Cooperative.

## **Impact on View of Self**

Without exception, participants noted a shift in their own perspective about other people, those people's uniqueness, and their value as community members. They felt more knowledgeable, respectful, and curious about people different from themselves and more aware of one another's distinct history and experience in our community. They also felt more articulate about the nuance of difference.

In addition, many participants could articulate some measurable increase in their sense of responsibility for others in Powell River often giving specific examples of conversations they had initiated about diversity and change, actions they had taken or new volunteer roles initiated.

Participants attributed the high impact of their experience to issues we have broadly named

*locatedness*. Their experience was contextual and took place in a learning environment specifically crafted to create safety, engage, and foster personal reflection and interpersonal connection. The energy created in the space by the demeanor and style of course leaders was frequently noted. It allowed for difficult conversations including conversations about conflict and violence to emerge in the context of mutual respect and peace. They felt safe to talk about hot topics. Participation of First Nation's elders was especially powerful. Participants appreciated the focus on the process of exploring topics together with no predetermined outcome. Some participants noted their own greater sense of identity as a citizen of our region and in some cases, a citizen of the world. Others noted the impact or the importance of the specific location for courses like this as well as for other events in our community.<sup>3</sup> Some participants noted similar issues of locatedness as making a difference in the experience of marginalized individuals in other settings.

... I have a good grounding in community development, so it wasn't new, but what was very new for that piece was getting in touch with the whole residential school experience and the whole experience of people in my community. (*Group A, Participant 2*)



### *Graphic Record of Mid-Point Summary.*



*John Louie.*

**3** Note – course deliveries were intentionally scheduled at different locales including Tla’amin Community Health, Ocean View Education Center, and Vancouver Island University – PR Campus.

## Impact on Relationships with Others

After coming here, I made friends with some people that I thought were a little bit different and I didn't really think I would. Now, they are some of my best friends at school, and I hang out with them every single day instead of just the people I always hung out with. (*Group A, Participant 6*)

ability and created connections between agencies, groups, and services previously operating more like silos. Participants acknowledged the inclusiveness in our region and sense of belonging.

However, they also frequently expressed concern for citizens who continue to experience loneliness and isolation. Participants said that prejudice and discrimination still exist in Powell River and these factors limit the social networks and supports for too many individuals, including individuals who live with a disability and older people. They noted the untapped potential for contribution from these same groups.



Arlette Raaen and Olivia Murphy.

Participants spoke about the impact the course had on their relationships with one another and with others in the community. They talked about both their expanded relationships and their concern for those who remain lonely and isolated. Participants noted greater connections with one another and felt that their experience had deepened and/or extended their networks across traditional divides like age, culture, religion, sexual orientation, and

... some of the folks I work with, it is difficult to have them in groups at times because people ignore them. It is not a good feeling ... I think about the unconscious reasons why prejudice and discrimination continue to exist ... we have to start working at the roots of prejudice and discrimination because there is as much oppression going on now; it just looks different. (*Group A, Participant unidentified*)

## Impact on Capacity to Contribute to Social Well-Being

Almost all participants articulated an increased capacity to contribute to social well-being in our region or felt invigorated in their ongoing efforts. This result was in contrast to the confusion they expressed about their role and contribution to the region's economic well-being. Most participants were already connected to social development or readily talked about their work. They embraced conversations about overcoming barriers and problem-solving issues like reduced funding, insufficient time, policy constraints, duplication of service, and long standing divides.

I start looking at the glass half full philosophy. If we can't do it on the left, let's try it on the right. It makes you think more creatively. (*Group A. Participant 1*)

## Impact on Capacity to Contribute to Economic Well-Being

Participants struggled to articulate the impact of their educational experience on their capacity to contribute to the economic well-being of our region. This was in part due to their more individual or personal focus on their own survival and the survival of their loved ones.

In addition, the language surrounding economic well-being was foreign to most and was seen as bigger or outside of their purview. They tended to understand economic well-being within quite narrow norms defined by capitalism, including traditional roles of leader and follower.

Information sharing and course revisions for the final offering lead to better results and participants prioritized food security, an emphasis on reduced carbon footprint, and cooperative models.



(L to R) Laura Cocksedge, Trina Bailor, Gauri Nair, Ryan Little, Brendan Clark.

I think we have to start by redefining our measurement of economic success.

*(Group A, Participant 5)*

Through my lens, when I hear the words economic development or when I engage with people and that term comes up, it's almost like my knee jerk reaction and in my kind of peer group, it is synonymous with politics. It's political. *(Group A, Participant unidentified)*

## Capacity to Sustain Contribution over Time

It's really interesting to hear peoples' stories, and I find that people need to tell their story of their life again and again and again... I think it is important from the perspective of diversity in creating community that needs to be honoured in how we listen.

*(Group C, Participant 2)*

Participants' believed that to sustain their contribution to the social or economic well-being of our region over time they needed ongoing opportunities to share stories and experiences. They said a central location or hub was needed to help reduce silos and avoid duplication of effort. They believe small actions by many create a ripple effect that will lead to larger scale change. They believe that making the course content accessible

to a broader audience especially business people will bring about change. They noted the important role youth must play if we hope to emerge a new and better future. They believe learning more about alternative economics is also a key.



## Actions Taken By Individual Participants

Participants identified 61 specific actions they had taken since their participation in Defining Diversity, Creating Community. They saw the ripple effect of their actions as important. Participants also generated ideas for projects or further actions they believe might positively impact our social and economic well-being. These lists are available in the full report available at this link: <http://wordpress.viu.ca/ddcc/files/2014/10/Defining-Diversity-Creating-Community-Final-Report-Final.pdf>.

### Ripple Effect

....sometimes it can be a tiny little thing that will either have a trickle effect and other people will join in or just that one tiny thing you have done is enough for that day. It is better than having done nothing. (*Group A, Participant unidentified*)

The word hopeful keeps coming to mind. Hopeful, you know like, it keeps coming to mind for me because I believe we can make a difference. (*Group C, Participant 3*)

### Learning Circle

A learning circle is distinct from a focus group because it is about generating new ideas together. The role of participants is to listen, reflect, and add to what they have heard rather than simply give their own opinions. It's an important tool to generate new knowledge. Learning Circle participants said that a community that is thriving both socially and economically:

- Reduces the emphasis on material wealth
- Actively includes one another other
- Sustains and empowers youth
- Stays engaged and focuses on contribution
- Appreciates one another and celebrates even small successes
- Learns from history
- Is both multi-generational and multi-cultural
- Shares a collective vision

We've got a ton to learn from the International Community, just a ton.... we are missing out on a huge opportunity here and we've got just as much to learn from those collective cultures as we do than we are going to learn in this group here today. (*Learning Circle, Participant 13*)

We attack the very people that are putting themselves out there to try and better our community ... The thing is that we have to celebrate their passion for your community that they would do that. We shouldn't be attacking them. We might not agree with what they have to say, but that is what this is about. (*Learning Circle, Facilitator 2*)

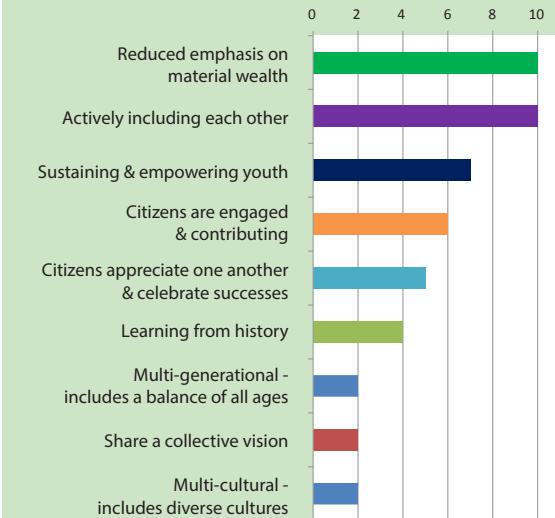
Learning Circle participants identified the following roles for citizens in a community that is thriving socially and economically (rated in order of most to least mentions by participants):

1. Engage others and intentionally share leadership
  2. Take risks and let go of some of our fears about the future
  3. Make Powell River a place to return to; a place to call home
  4. Take personal responsibility

Participants said that in a thriving community the citizens are consciously opening doors, actively inviting others in, accepting invitations to be part of something new, working to get out of their own

## Citizens want to be involved...

We can invite people, but when people are unsure about how to make that first step or how to engage or what to do, you know, that maybe then calls on that leadership, that ten percent of citizens, to take somebody's hand, you know. I will walk beside you; I'll do it with you. (*Learning Circle, Participant 11*)



*Learning Circle discussion, from most to least mentions.*

boxes, and sometimes taking risks to do so. They said that when citizens are actively engaged and contributing they don't rely on government and schools to fix problems but instead rely on one another. They spoke about the satisfaction that comes from contributing and understanding that your community needs you; that you matter. They endorsed the idea of leaders mentoring others.



*Wayne Hanson captured key themes expressed by participants at the Learning Circle in a graphic record (above).*

## CONCLUSIONS

It is easy to conclude that the Defining Diversity: Creating Community project goals and objectives were met and in fact exceeded. Providing an education experience like Defining Diversity, Creating Community had a powerful impact on participants individually and collectively. Measurable shifts in individual perspectives and roles – and increased responsibility – are well documented and are largely credited to the qualities called **locatedness** discussed on Page 3. Collectively, groups felt better networked with one another and more able to extend their network. They felt energized and able to take actions that impacted social well-being. They articulated strategies for sustaining citizen contribution over time including sharing experiences and stories, involving aboriginal leadership and youth, centralizing information about volunteer and other opportunities, and continuing projects like this that shift mindsets. They confirmed that many small shifts and actions can result in large scale change and in fact we are continuing to see this impact rippling outward in our community.

Participants explored the meaning of economic well-being and began an exploration of their vision for a thriving Powell River where success is measured by many quality of life factors rather than only material well-being. They assert that factors like inclusiveness, youth leadership, citizen engagement, diversity, and celebration are the hallmarks of a community in which people want to live, work, and raise their families. Participants are interested in a local economy, in local food security, in recycling, and in cooperatives. They see these as foundations for an alternative economy that complements the more traditional development.

Participants share the city's priority which is to attract young people and young families back to Powell River. Information about living and investing in Powell River is available at the following link: <http://powellriver.info/liveinvest/>. In order to achieve this goal participants believe that leaders must intentionally

### Start Younger / Engage Youth

I think you have to start at a young age ... developing resiliency in your community and individually. The world is moving and changing so fast as it is, that we need to be able to adapt and I think if we start really emphasizing adaptability and resilience, then when people get together, they won't be trying so hard to hold onto the norm and what they are used to. (Group A, Participant 5)

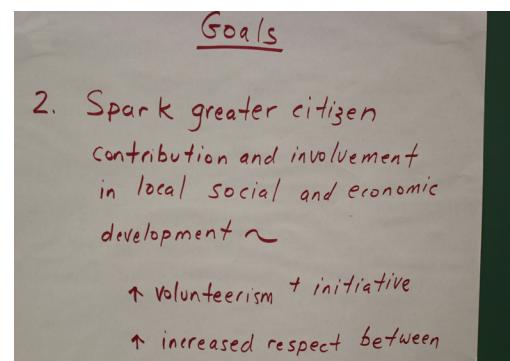


Ruby Barclay, Youth DDCC Co-Facilitator.

engage others and share leadership. This involves taking risks and working in new ways with people we may traditionally have disagreed with or avoided. One survey participant summed it up this way, "In a smaller community .... if the power brokers are not invested, little will be accomplished."

Participant insights inspired and contributed to an important curriculum refinement that will increase the impact of future course deliveries. The efficacy of an educational approach to social and economic change is demonstrated by the richness of the findings. The project also revealed three limitations with this approach to citizen engagement and socio-economic change, and suggested avenues for further development of research methods:

1. **A mutual project could help participants sustain their interconnectedness.** Several participants noted the high levels of passion engendered by their experience. They felt engaged and ready for action. They suggested that a greater leap forward could be taken during the last afternoon of the course. For example, a collaborative project utilizing combined assets could be framed. Some participants stayed connected beyond the course delivery and others did not. Those that didn't were surprised.
2. **More diverse forms of and forums for community engagement are required.** The cross section of citizens we engaged was limited in part due to the type of activity and in part due to the time commitment required from participants. Business owners as well as people with full time jobs in the corporate sector told us that they could not afford the time away from their work so the two day course attracted a disproportionate number of students, retirees, and those working for employers able to send them on paid time. We were pleased with the levels of participation of youth and first nation's citizens in the course delivery. However, participation in the follow up survey, and the focus groups trended toward the older, female, Caucasian participants. Perhaps this trend indicates a lack of interest or fit with these types of activities for others.
3. **Design to inspire connection and new action.** The demographics of our participant group also leave some questions about the project's capacity to address the complexities of small communities and some of the historic divides. Examination of the successes and limitations of the project began during project implementation, providing us with an opportunity to make adjustments and connect new initiatives to the project along the way. Emerging projects included the Groundswell Conference, the Groundswell Documentary Film, the Let the Sparks Fly interviews published in PR Living Magazine, and the development of audio walks in the Powell River region. These projects have each lead to next projects, as citizens connect and reconnect inspiring new action. Without these emerging projects the DDCC project would have had less impact.



Notes from the Learning Circle.



## EMERGENT DESIGN

Very generally, the emergent design concept assumes that a project's direction and components will evolve depending on the contributions of its participants. It is a way of drawing out solutions more responsive to the skills and needs of the local community. During the course of the DDCC project, the process produced these additional initiatives:

### Groundswell 2014 Conference

In spring of 2013, a Vancouver Island University Research Award was granted to augment the Defining Diversity: Creating Community project with a local conference. Initially the conference purpose was for those involved in the project as well as students at VIU and Brooks to learn more about community engaged research. A planning group was convened to develop a meaningful program. This group included representatives from several sponsoring organizations, project participants, Vancouver Island University personnel, VIU's elders in residence, and other interested citizens. Though membership was fluid commitment was not and a new vision emerged. As a result a conference agenda took shape that provided a lived experience of community engaged research and responded effectively to the current community dynamics.

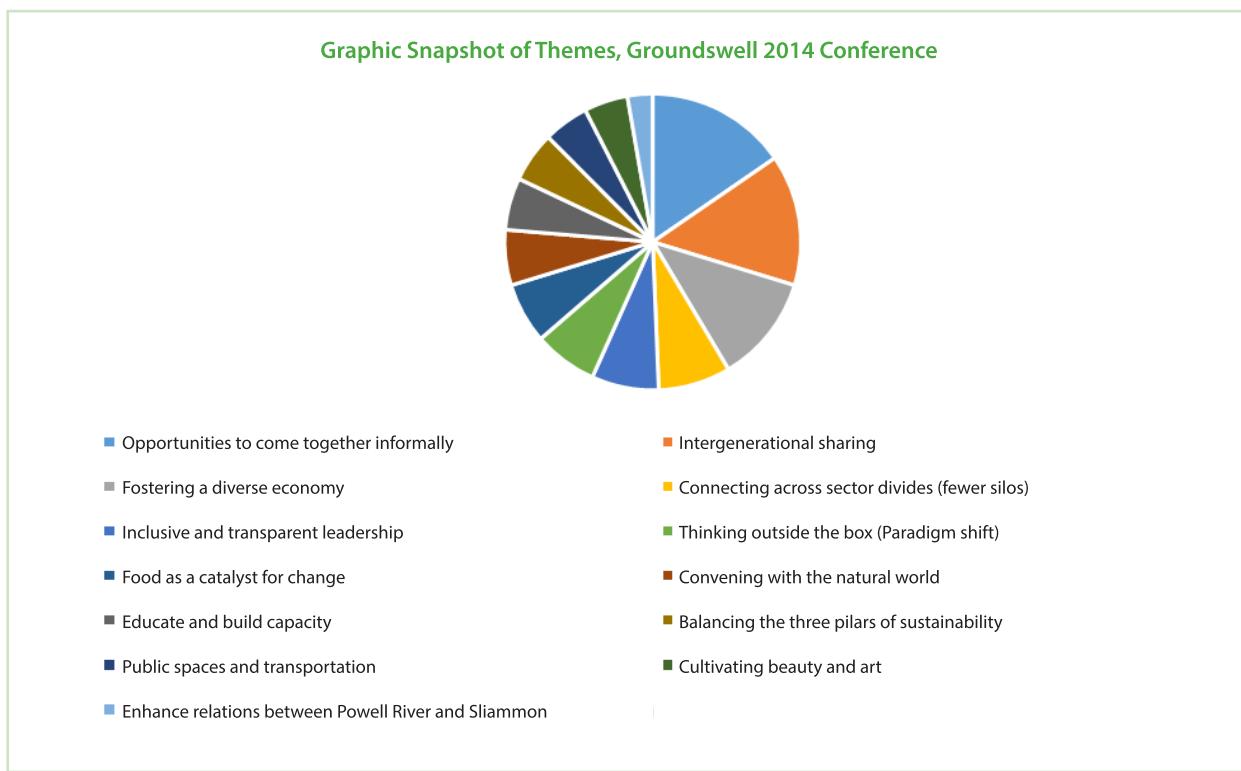
On January 29, 2014, the Groundswell Conference 2014 was held at Vancouver Island University (VIU) in Powell River. This day-long event brought together over 160 community members and inspired "creativity, ideas, and relationships that advance the wellbeing of our community." It curated space for generative dialogue.



Work from the Groundswell 2014 Conference - an example of the "ripple effect".

Janet Newbury, with support from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada and on behalf of the Groundswell planning committee, authored a Post-Conference Summary Report<sup>4</sup>. She identified and described priority themes and connected potential actions to each theme.

Newbury suggested that, "It is often the case that priority themes captured in research projects fall into distinct categories or focus areas. But it is worth noting that most of the themes generated at this conference emphasize the need for *connections among existing efforts to be established*, rather than privileging certain existing focus areas or developing new priorities. ....It is not the identification of - *but the relations among* - various focus areas that seemed to be of greatest significance for conference participants" (pp. 4-5).



## Groundswell Documentary Film

Claudia Medina and Zoë Ludski with the assistance of VIU student Lisa Millar had filmed most of the event. With funding from the Powell River Community Foundation, the Powell River Model Community Project, and the Powell River Regional Economic Development Society, this footage was edited into two documentary films made publically available to promote further community engagement in the region's social and economic well-being. The films can be viewed online: [https://viutube.viu.ca/public/media/This+is+a+Groundswell++-+7+minutes/0\\_xeo5qx4t](https://viutube.viu.ca/public/media/This+is+a+Groundswell++-+7+minutes/0_xeo5qx4t)

<sup>4</sup> Newbury, J. (2014). *Groundswell 2014: Post-conference summary report*. Retrieved from <http://wordpress.viu.ca/ddcc/files/2014/03/Groundswell-2014-Post-Conference-Summary-Report.pdf>



# Let the Sparks Fly

These bimonthly articles updated the community on Groundswell events and engaged long term business people and new entrepreneurs in discussion of what the Groundswell meant to them. The purpose of these articles was to share the insights of long-time and new community business leaders with the community and to increase the engagement of business-minded folks in the Groundswell.

# Audio Walks

Interested citizens began to develop audio walks in the Powell River region. As the project progressed new partnership opportunities emerged. Learn more here. <https://projectartpr.wordpress.com/>

*Funding has been secured by the Powell River Employment Program Society (PREP) in partnership with the City of Powell River for a Groundswell 2016 Conference. A follow up project to the Let the Sparks Fly articles has also been funded, called Illuminating New Economic Possibilities. This project is led by Vancouver Island University and engages the Powell River Chamber of Commerce Members.*

## RECOMMENDATIONS

The scope of this project, its impact and the emergence of so many related initiatives and intersections, makes drafting recommendations somewhat daunting. Our hesitation is to inadvertently restrict the synergies and activity that has been unleashed rather than fuel it. Perhaps then, these recommendations should be treated as clues and current best guesses gifted to other community minded citizens in hopes of sparking further engagement toward our social and economic collective well-being.

### *Strengthen Role of Education and Educators*

Find ways to offer the *Defining Diversity, Creating Community* course locally and in other communities facing similar challenges. The course could be offered as part of the high school experience, as a continuing education opportunity at VIU or through contributions, grants and awards among the wider community. Requests for a youth-only course as well as for another delivery on Tla'amin territory have been made. If the course is offered again the call to action on the second day could be strengthened.

### *Move Beyond Powell River and Generate Knowledge Exchange*

The social and economic situation in Powell River is not unique but our approach to change may be. Partnerships with other universities and communities hold potential to scale up the innovative work being done in Powell River while providing rich opportunities for knowledge exchange in multiple directions. Powell River can share the lessons learned from the *Defining Diversity: Creating Community* and other local development projects but can also learn from communities responding to similar challenges. One approach would be for Vancouver Island University to seek partnering opportunities with other post-secondary institutions who share our interest in community engaged scholarship.



Learning Circle participants and facilitators.

## Value Diversity in Our Relationships

This project confirmed that the course Defining Diversity: Creating Community engages participants in a deep exploration of the diversity of people who are part of our region. The course challenges participants to examine their own capacity to discriminate against and devalue fellow citizens in a way that liberates participants to re-examine and change these patterns. The experience led to new and deeper relationships, creating a synergy with likeminded people. It also supported a more collaborative and understanding approach between people previously divided.



Group discussions at Groundswell 2014.

This project attracted a range of ages, cultural and socio-economic backgrounds, however as noted in the findings, this project did not appeal to everyone. Therefore, in order to continue to increase collaboration across differences, varied approaches and modalities for engagement are recommended. Researching other approaches to engagement especially those that generate excitement and involvement for youth, aboriginal citizens, business owners, employees in the corporate sector, those holding elected office, and those working for local governments will be important going forward.

Another way to advance collaboration across divides could be to continue the grass roots process that is one of the hallmarks of this project, while strengthening the partnerships with the municipality, the regional district, and Tla'amin tribal council. A second Groundswell conference could provide an opportunity to work together in a more transparent and concerted way. With momentum running high, the presence of these key partners could model a shift in mindset, a commitment to collaboration and respect across differences, a truly asset-based approach to community development, and a shared vision of a sustainable social and economic future.

## Create a Shared Vision

New partnerships and new ways of engaging citizens could provide a forum to further define the region's shared vision for a sustainable future. Conversations that explore our collective definition of quality of life in our region and that confirm a lower emphasis on material wealth could be a starting point. There is a large body of research about quality of life indicators to draw on. Educating about and promoting this information can provide the steady heartbeat needed for sustainable social and economic development. However, embracing a future with lower material expectations but with a higher quality of life requires us to learn about and utilize alternative economics. Bringing what has been traditionally alternative into the mainstream requires courage and the support of a shared vision.

Developing and sustaining a shared vision will also require conversations and engaged activities that help citizens understand that social and economic well-being are interconnected. This project revealed that citizens see them as quite distinct. Generally citizens feel empowered to impact social change but are more passive in their view of economic development. Yet research shows that both social and economic well-being rely on citizen participation. The Defining Diversity: Creating Community Project began some work to better link social and economic well-being. We recommend continuing and expanding this effort in order to deepen a shared vision for the region's future.

### **Expand Leadership Skills**

This project revealed the importance of cultivating these leadership skills and traits:

- A deep desire to serve the community
- A commitment to shared leadership and to mentorship of new leaders
- Authentic collaboration skills; a genuine willingness to trust others and trust a collaborative process
- An enthusiasm for making the circle bigger and more diverse
- An emphasis on developing relationships and emerging a shared vision (focus on the *who* and the *why*) and a willingness to spend substantial time in this process
- A willingness to suspend the details of the how in order to explore the *who* and the *why* balanced with the capacity to implement effectively once the time is right.
- An aptitude for curating space for community dialogue



Youth panel.

The project also confirmed that we need more young people and aboriginal citizens in leadership roles.

### **Shift Toward Action**

At several junctures in this project participants noted they were ready for action. While the tendency of most project managers is to move to action too quickly, there is a consistent message from project participants and Groundswell 2014 conference attendees that the community is ready for something bigger to happen now. There is a sense of urgency to advancing our communities social and economic well-being. The message is that the exploration phase can continue but that simultaneously more concerted actions are required. The challenge with moving to action is that we will make mistakes, step on toes, and bump in to one another. The community needs to be prepared for the reality of implementing something new. We will need to understand that as with all new behaviour there is a learning curve. We will need to understand change processes and when mistakes happen and misunderstandings resurface we will need to be resilient. We will need to regroup, trust, listen, learn from each other and try again. Reflection and evaluation are essential elements after implementation of new ideas especially when those ideas involve new ways of interacting with one another. Therefore, with a cautionary reminder about the importance of a reflective process, an increased focus on actions is recommended.



## SUMMARY

The Defining Diversity: Creating Community project demonstrates the value of developing community-engaged research projects with the capacity to change and respond to emerging circumstances and opportunities. The three original goals of the project were met – perhaps even exceeded - but in unexpected ways. (1) We built on *community capacity, resilience, and sustainability*, as demonstrated by feedback from educational offerings, focus groups and the learning circle. Measurable shifts in individual perspectives and roles, and increased responsibility are well documented. (2) *Increasing citizen contribution and involvement* was also demonstrated as, collectively, participant groups felt better networked with one another and more able to extend their network. They developed strategies for sustaining citizen contribution over time, including sharing experiences and stories, involving youth, centralizing information about volunteer and other opportunities, and continuing similar projects which shift mindsets. Participants explored the meaning of economic well-being and began an exploration of their roles. (3) *The efficacy of an educational approach to social and economic change* was demonstrated by the richness of the findings from surveys, focus groups and the learning circle. Participant insights inspired and contributed to important project refinements that increased the impact of further research and community activities. This approach confirmed that many small shifts and actions can result in large scale change.

However, participants in the DDCC project have moved beyond our original focus on education and research. We received a consistent message from participants that there must be a shift towards action, which can happen concurrently with additional research activities. There is a sense of urgency to advancing our community's social and economic well-being. Moving forward, we recommend that additional community development projects be undertaken using a similar emergent design model – fueling greater innovation and meeting the pressing need for social and economic evolution in Powell River, a community in transition.