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2018/19 HIGHLIGHTS

The First Peoples’ Cultural Foundation is a non-profit society and registered charity. We were established to protect Indigenous languages, arts and cultural practices in British Columbia.

In 2018/19 the First Peoples’ Cultural Foundation was able to provide more funding than ever before to support the revitalization of First Nations languages.

OVER $7.7 MILLION
invested in First Nations language revitalization projects

204
community language grants reaching every region in B.C.

OVER FIVE TIMES MORE
people received language revitalization training than last year

“Here in B.C. and around the globe, Indigenous Peoples are continuing their work to remember, reclaim, restore and revitalize their languages, knowledge and wisdom – the voices of the land and our ancestors.” - Wanosts‘a7 (Dr. Lorna Williams), Lil’watul, Member of the Board of the First Peoples’ Cultural Foundation and Professor Emerita of Indigenous Education, University of Victoria
KEEPING INDIGENOUS LANGUAGES ALIVE

Hiʔliqilaʔgelis Natasha Green and her grandfather Udzistalis Johnny Speck, Hereditary Chief, Tlowitsis, joined the Mentor-Apprentice program in 2017. Natasha was inspired to learn Kwak’wala from her fluent grandfather after the passing of her grandmother left Johnny with no one to speak fluently with. Natasha grew up with her grandparents and heard them speak at home, but had not learned to speak for herself.

Spending time immersed in the language together has had benefits for each of them in different ways. Johnny is proud that his granddaughter came and asked him to teach her and that she is putting the work into becoming fluent. He also enjoys having someone to speak with knowing that he is transferring the language to a new generation of speakers.

Natasha is taking her knew language skills and passing them on through her role as the Manager of the Kwanwatsi childcare centre and Language Nest program in Wei Wai Kum First Nation, Campbell River. The Language Nest operates in full immersion each morning and she is passing the language knowledge learned from her grandfather to the youngest generation of her community.

“All I want for our kids is for them to have that identity and be able to talk to other speakers and know that those connections are there. I hear the kids speaking ‘ki! Kwak’wala!’ and so they are reminding each other to speak in the language and that’s huge for me.” – Hiʔliqilaʔgelis Natasha Green, Mentor Apprentice Program and Manager/ Principal of Kwanwatsi Language Nest.
MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD CHAIR

On behalf of the First Peoples’ Cultural Foundation (the Foundation) Board of Directors, it is my privilege to present our Annual Report.

As an organization committed to the revitalization of First Nations languages, arts and cultural heritage, 2018/19 was a transformative year. Funding, resources, programs and training to support First Nations language revitalization grew dramatically, thanks to a ground-breaking $50 million investment from the Province of B.C. in March 2018. **Over the past year, this new investment has allowed the Foundation to support language revitalization programs and projects across the province valued at over $7.7 million.**

Due to the inter-generational impacts of residential schools and colonial oppression of Indigenous peoples in Canada, B.C. First Nations languages are severely endangered, with many languages having only a handful of aging fluent speakers remaining. This past year we funded the development of the 2018 Report on the Status of B.C. First Nations Languages, which demonstrates the urgent need to protect First Nations languages from the threat of extinction before the remaining fluent speakers pass on. Increased investment in First Nations language revitalization is a significant step in the right direction.

Revitalizing First Nations languages involves creating more speakers, one individual at a time. The Foundation focuses our investments on programs that are proven to increase language fluency and are enhanced by specialized training and resources to mobilize community capacity. In addition to language learning programs, the Foundation supports First Nations language documentation through FirstVoices.com, a leading website that garnered significant international attention in 2018/19 due to its innovative and user-friendly approach to language documentation. This past year we also invested in planning for the HELISET TŦE SÁL – ‘Let the Languages Live’ International Conference on Indigenous Languages, to be held in June of 2019 to celebrate the United Nations Year of Indigenous Languages.

While funding has increased significantly in the past year, recent research puts the estimated cost for fully funding the revitalization of First Nations languages at over $150 million per year.¹ This estimate is based on a calculation of the specific costs for programs and services that would be required to bring about the revitalization of each First Nations language in B.C. Current levels fall far below this amount.

There is less research on the costs of revitalizing Indigenous arts and cultural heritage, but we do know that they receive lower amounts of funding than mainstream arts and heritage. We have not seen increases in funding for arts and cultural heritage comparable to language revitalization funding and will continue

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¹. See Language Resources on the FPCC website: www.fpcc.ca
to advocate for arts and cultural heritage programming as these are vital components of rebuilding First Nations cultural systems. The Foundation has a strong focus on securing ongoing sources of significant, stable funding through an investment strategy that will yield long-term results.

While additional funds and capacity are essential to supporting the vitality of First Nations languages, arts and cultural heritage, increased investments in language revitalization have made significant impacts in only one year. Thanks to the leadership of First Nations communities and our supporters and partners, more people – especially young people – are learning and speaking First Nations languages. More tools, resources and capacity also exist to document the languages using the FirstVoices.com platform and enable a greater number of individuals to learn their languages.

Our sincere gratitude to everyone involved in these efforts. Together we will ensure that First Nations languages, arts and cultural heritage survive and flourish – a legacy that will benefit us all.

HÍSWKE SIAM,

John Elliot, Board Chair.
ABOUT THE FIRST PEOPLES’ CULTURAL FOUNDATION

The First Peoples’ Cultural Foundation (the Foundation) is a charitable First Nations-led organization dedicated to empowering First Nations in British Columbia to revitalize their languages, arts and cultural heritage.

The Foundation works closely with First Nations communities in B.C. to deliver funding that addresses the urgent need to protect and restore First Nations languages, arts and cultural heritage. We also work in partnership with the First Peoples’ Cultural Council (FPCC), an established leader in the revitalization of First Nations language, arts, and cultural heritage, to deliver programs based on best practices with proven outcomes.

With the support of our partners and funders and the hard work of community leaders, the initiatives that the Foundation funds are delivering inspiring results:

• Language immersion programs for all ages are creating new speakers and reducing the risk that endangered languages and vital cultural heritage will be lost.

• Language documentation resources are using innovative technology to provide communities with the tools to document their languages so that language learners can connect with their languages and cultures regardless of where they are in the world.

• Training and resources are supporting communities to develop comprehensive, community-led language plans that meet their unique language revitalization needs.
OUR MISSION
To inspire and empower First Nations to revitalize and enhance their languages, arts and cultures.

OUR GOALS

• Generate financial support and resources for language, arts and cultural programs for the First Nations of British Columbia.

• Create awareness of the rich and diverse languages of the First Nations of British Columbia; the wisdom, knowledge and culture they express and their contribution to our collective heritage as British Columbians and Canadians.

• Address social issues by recognizing that a strong cultural identity is fundamental to the health of individuals and communities.

• Foster a sense of commitment among philanthropic organizations to invest locally in British Columbia First Nations arts, languages and cultures.

• Facilitate opportunities for First Nations individuals, groups and communities to direct and invest in the revitalization of traditional art forms and preservation of First Nations languages and cultures.
THE URGENT NEED TO REVITALIZE FIRST NATIONS LANGUAGES, ARTS, CULTURE AND CULTURAL HERITAGE

The lands now known as British Columbia are home to an incredible cultural diversity of First Nations. There are 34 distinct First Nations languages in B.C. The province’s diverse geography has generated specialized knowledge, harvesting and ecosystem management practices, ceremonies, arts, teachings, social and political structures and languages that reflect each Nation’s unique experiences on the land. Since time immemorial, these unique ways of being have strengthened First Nations communities and enabled a sustainable lifestyle infused with cultural values and resiliency.

The impacts of colonization on First Nations have been significant. In 2016, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) released its report acknowledging the cultural genocide perpetrated on Indigenous people in Canada by the colonial state. This cultural genocide was a multi-pronged assault on the well-being of First Nations people and communities.

It involved assimilatory policies and practices such as:

- The infamous residential school system, which forcibly separated First Nations children from their families and communities,
- The Indian Act, which separated First Nations people from their lands and banned their most sacred cultural and political practices, and
- The social and economic exclusion of First Nations people from full participation in Canadian society.

Ongoing colonial oppression, in the forms of discriminatory child welfare practices, inequitable funding and the failure to invest in basic infrastructure in First Nations communities, continue to further compound the inter-generational effects.

One of the most significant impacts has been the severe endangerment of the First Nations languages, arts and cultural heritage in B.C. According to the 2018 Report on the Status of B.C. First Nations Languages, fluent speakers of a First Nations language make up 3.0% of the total B.C. First Nations population, a decrease of 1.1% from 2014. Just over half of fluent First Nations language speakers are aged 65 and over.

As the Elders who carry this knowledge pass on, the number of fluent speakers, traditional artists and Knowledge Keepers is declining, and those who are still with us are struggling to keep up with the demand to share their knowledge before it is lost.
First Nations languages are more than just a way of communicating – they express the worldview, values and identity that are inherent to a culture. Language is a link to one’s ancestors, history, geography, beliefs and spirituality. Language allows for the transmission of culture and knowledge from one generation to the next. It is intimately interconnected with arts and cultural heritage and contributes to a healthy cultural system that sustains and nourishes individuals and communities.

As links with language and culture are rebuilt, First Nations communities experience profound impacts such as improved health, sense of belonging and stronger opportunities for economic and academic success. Research and community feedback have demonstrated that investing in rebuilding cultural systems disrupted by colonial oppression acts as a protective factor, improving indicators such as the rate of youth suicides, diabetes and other aspects of physical and socio-economic health. Investment in First Nations languages, arts and cultural heritage is an investment in the well-being of First Nations communities.

First Nations languages, arts and culture are also a fundamental part of the cultural heritage of B.C. Every year thousands of tourists engage in Indigenous tourism and Indigenous art is ubiquitous. Indigenous arts and cultural heritage are important contributing factors to B.C.’s economy and are interwoven into the fabric of our collective social identity.

First Nations communities are experiencing a cultural resurgence and increasing numbers of young people are engaging with their languages, art and cultural practices. The 2018 Report on the Status of B.C. First Nations Languages found that there are 13,997 First Nations language learners as of 2018. This includes an increase of 2,135 (9.1%) active learners since 2014. Of learners, 78.1% are 24 years old or younger – a promising sign that younger generations are increasingly taking important steps to reconnect with the traditional knowledge systems severed through cultural genocide.

In this age of truth and reconciliation, there is a unique opportunity to achieve results by investing in First Nations cultural revitalization. The more endangered a language, arts, or cultural practice becomes, the more complex and costly it is to revitalize. There are both economic and social benefits of acting decisively to make strategic and impactful investments in the long-term vitality of First Nations language, arts and cultural heritage as soon as possible.

More resources and opportunities for First Nations people to learn their languages and engage in cultural heritage and artistic practices are urgently needed. The Foundation works with our partners to empower First Nations communities to revitalize their languages, arts and cultural heritage for the benefit of First Nations and all Canadians. We believe this work is paramount to building a just and culturally rich society and we invite you to join us in this important endeavor through support for the Foundation.
PREPARING FOR LONG-TERM SUCCESS

Investments in First Nations language revitalization in B.C. are making a difference for First Nations communities. As a result of a $50 million investment by the Province of B.C. in March 2018, First Nations individuals and communities throughout the province benefited from more grants, training, resources and outreach than ever before. Existing programs have expanded and immersion programs that support the development of fluent speakers of First Nations languages are available to more First Nations communities around the province.

These new levels of funding brought increased opportunities and lots of hard work for communities and program teams who spent the year ramping up activities and outreach for existing language programs.

In addition to expanding existing programs, one of the most significant impacts of additional funding is that communities can move beyond limited one-time project funds and are now receiving larger and more long-term funding commitments based on community-identified language priorities. This means that communities no longer have to operate in a scarcity mindset and can start to build continuity and long-term capacity for language revitalization work.

Given the diversity of First Nations in B.C., each community has different needs, priorities and readiness to develop and implement language revitalization strategies. The past few years have seen a shift in perspective amongst language champions in B.C., with communities directing the Foundation and our partners at First Peoples’ Cultural Council (FPCC) to support comprehensive community-based language plans as an alternative to project-based models of funding.

Community-based language plans allow communities to self-determine how they approach language revitalization and identify long-term, holistic strategies tailored to their unique needs. The development of these plans takes several years as they require extensive community consultation.

Patricia Prince and Sylvia Jack at the Planning for Language Revitalization workshop, Prince George B.C. Image provided by FPCC
To lay the groundwork for the development of community-led language revitalization plans, in 2018/19, the Foundation invested in programs that contributed to community-based infrastructure to support language revitalization, including the recruitment of qualified community language champions, the development of new resources and targeted skills-building programs.

The Foundation supported the development of new approaches and grant streams for language revitalization planning, with the goal of providing comprehensive training in communities alongside grant funds. Regional coaches were hired to work directly with communities to support the shift to multi-year language planning processes based on each community’s level of readiness and priorities.

The Foundation also supported the development of infrastructure used by FPCC to measure the impact of investments made in language revitalization. A new online grant portal will create a user-friendly interface for individuals and communities to submit their funding applications and reports. The portal is an efficient tool for compiling and analyzing data on grant program results and allows funding recipients to easily share images and stories that demonstrate how funding provided by the Foundation is making a significant difference in their lives.

Research and community engagement were important activities in 2018/19. The Foundation funded the development of the 2018 Report on the Status of First Nations Languages in B.C., which provides critical data on the urgent need to protect endangered First Nations languages and the impact of language revitalization programming. We also provided funding for extensive community engagement with First Nations communities and leaders, as well as outreach and training for communities throughout B.C. on language planning, grant-writing and language revitalization.

Our focus this year was on impactful investments to set communities up for long-term success and to mobilize capacity to respond to increased opportunities for First Nations language revitalization. This will provide a strong foundation for continued efforts by First Nations communities to rebuild their ancestral languages and cultural systems.

“Language is at the core of who we are, our history and our laws. As Indigenous people, it sets the parameters for how we live and take care of ourselves.”
– Tracey Kim Bonneau, Mentor-Apprentice Program Apprentice, Syilx Nation in Penticton

814 people were trained in language revitalization skills in 2018/19

66 Mentor-Apprentice teams completed over 19,000 hours of intensive language immersion training in 2018/19

Hundreds of young children and their families participated in language learning through 22 pre-school Language Nests
PARTNERSHIPS AND INVESTMENT

One of the Foundation’s primary goals is to create ongoing, sustainable sources of funding to enable long-term investments in the revitalization of First Nations languages, arts and cultural heritage. We do this by focusing on increasing our revenues and investing capital strategically to achieve long-term growth.

Over the past year, we have fostered strengthened relationships with our valued partners and engaged more broadly with philanthropy initiatives committed to investing in the revitalization of First Nations languages, arts and cultural heritage. As awareness of our work grows, we plan to increase our funding base through new partnerships.

The Foundation employs institutional investment management, with an overall strategy that includes approaches designed to ensure the safe and secure delivery of grant funding while also achieving long-term capital growth and income generation. The Foundation has a Statement of Investment Policy and Procedures (SIPP), which it reviews annually to stay up to date with economic conditions. The larger grant amount from the Province of BC is invested in short-term cash equivalent investments that will protect the capital, generate reliable income and maintain a solid financial base for the delivery of urgently-needed language grants over a three-year period. Additionally, we have designed a long-term strategic asset allocation for the Foundations’ Legacy Fund which reports positive results in 2018/19, with an impressive 10.98% rate of return. Over the long-term, we will continue to grow our investments to create a sustainable funding base for continued support for First Nations arts, languages and cultural heritage.

Our partners in 2018/19 included:

- The First Peoples’ Cultural Council
- The Province of British Columbia
- UNESCO
- Royal BC Museum
- New Relationship Trust
- Department of Canadian Heritage
LANGUAGE FOR LIFE: Nourishing Indigenous Languages in the Home is a toolkit to support Indigenous families in bringing their languages into the home. It is currently available for download here: www.fpcc.ca/language/Resources/
OVERVIEW OF PROGRAMS

GRANTS TO COMMUNITIES

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<th>CATEGORY</th>
<th>APPLICANTS</th>
<th>TOTAL REQUESTED</th>
<th>SUCCESSFUL APPLICANTS</th>
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<td>N/A¹</td>
<td>5</td>
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<td>204</td>
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In 2018/19, the Foundation supported the delivery of over $7.77 million in grants to communities based on community-identified language priorities. This funding was accompanied by increased training, tools, resources and coaching to ensure successful programs that lead to lasting change.

¹. FirstVoices grants were delivered to targeted communities by invitation only in 2018/19.
KEY RESULTS FOR LANGUAGE PROGRAMS IN 2018/19 INCLUDE:

✓ The number of community language grants has grown to 204.

✓ The Mentor-Apprentice Program, which pairs language learners with fluent speakers for an intensive, year-long language immersion program, experienced significant growth with 66 mentor-apprentice teams joining the program, up from 27 teams last year.

✓ Language Nests provide early language immersion for infants, toddlers and pre-school aged children. The number of Language Nests in B.C. increased from 14 to 22 this year. The size and duration of grants also increased from single year funding of up to $25,000 in 2017/18 to funding of up to $50,000 per year for three years in 2018/19.

✓ B.C. Language Initiative grants, which provide funding for a wide range of language revitalization projects, increased from 12 projects to 62 – growth of +416%. The size and duration of grants also grew – in the previous year, applicants could access a single grant of up to $15,000. In 2018/19 grant recipients were able to apply for up to $100,000 per year for three years.

✓ Language Revitalization Planning support increased with the addition of two new language revitalization coaches in 2018/19. These coaches travel to communities and provide on-the-ground support to help advance community-led language revitalization efforts.

✓ Language Gathering and Sharing grants funded 41 regional language events that brought people from different communities together to share their language revitalization success stories, resources and plans.

✓ 814 people received training in language immersion and revitalization.

✓ Communities added more than 10,000 new data points to FirstVoices – 47.2% are audio, 18.5% are words and 20.9% are phrases.

✓ Language resources and tools were developed to support community language revitalization, including a Language Planning Toolkit and a Language for Life resource.
BC LANGUAGES INITIATIVE

The B.C. Language Initiative supports projects to revitalize B.C. First Nations languages through documentation, immersion programs, materials and curriculum development, traditional and cultural programming and community collaboration.

Examples of the type of language strategies funded by the B.C. Language Initiative include:

• Learning environments that involve 100% immersion in the language, such as one-on-one relationships between a mentor and an apprentice language learner

• Traditional and cultural programming where learners can be immersed in language, such as language and culture camps and traditional activities, including dancing and singing.

• Documentation activities such as recording, archiving and transcribing language speakers using audio, video, interviews, digital and written documentation.

• Development of tools to support language learning, such as exercises, games, books, teaching manuals and videos.

In 2018/19, 62 First Nations communities and organizations received almost $5 million through the B.C. Language Initiative to support projects in every region of the province, a significant increase from the previous year when only eight projects were funded.

In addition to funding more projects, the amount of funding per project also increased. In 2017/2018, the B.C. Language Initiative provided $15,000 per project. In 2018/2019, the project maximum increased to $100,000 with the average funding per project at $76,821.

This increase has led to opportunities for more individuals to connect with their languages, longer-term programming and the growth of community capacity.
62 FIRST NATIONS COMMUNITIES AND ORGANIZATIONS RECEIVED ALMOST $5 MILLION THROUGH THE BC LANGUAGES INITIATIVE. INCLUDED HERE ARE A FEW EXAMPLES OF PROJECTS FUNDED:

**DEASE LAKE**
This project recorded fluent speakers, developed curriculum and a dictionary and Teaching Grammar.

**BELLA COOLA**
Language and Culture Camp, Documentation and Archiving.

**SQUAMISH**
This project is a Mentor Apprentice Program, with teachers of preschool to grade 5.

**PORT RENFEW**
This project documented audio and video of elder speakers for archive.

**CHILLIWACK**
This project is a Community Immersion Pilot Program, using archive Elders, and last Fluent Elder.

**MERRIT**
Language Immersion, Materials Development.

**BUICK**
Language Camp: this project supported an immersion language and culture camp for youth.

**VANDERHOOF**
This project taught parents the language to support their children’s language learning early on.

**WILLIAMS LAKE**
This project documented audio and video of elder speakers for archive.
Increasing learning and speaking opportunities for all ages is vital to language revitalization, but language acquisition is most effective when started at a young age. The Language Nest Program is a unique approach that offers a full language immersion environment for babies, toddlers and preschoolers. This program aims to create a new generation of fluent First Nations language speakers who can then carry forward language and cultural knowledge to future generations.

Language Nests also help parents of young children learn the language and integrate it into their daily lives. Through the program, families have a chance to build inter-generational ties with fluent Elders and Language Nest teachers, who participate in the program as language and culture experts.
MENTOR-APPRENTICE PROGRAM

The Mentor-Apprentice Program pairs fluent speakers with language learners in a highly-structured, year-long program that includes 300 hours of language immersion work. Mentor-Apprentice teams can also apply to the program to complete a second and third year of immersion learning to deepen their knowledge of the language.

The program has a well-earned reputation as a highly effective way of learning a First Nations language that aligns with traditional approaches to education, such as mentorship and learning from Elders and Knowledge Keepers. Demand for the program continues to grow and was higher than ever in 2018/19.

THE COMPLETION RATE FOR THE MENTOR-APPRENTICE PROGRAM HAS BEEN STEADILY INCREASING AND THIS YEAR WAS 92%, AN EXTREMELY HIGH NUMBER GIVEN THE RIGORS AND DEMANDS OF THIS INTENSIVE IMMERSION PROGRAM.

In 2018/19, the number of Mentor-Apprentice teams increased by 244% to 66, from 27 teams in 2017/2018. This included 44 new teams, 16 returning teams and 6 graduating teams.

“[The] Mentor-Apprentice Program is the most forward-thinking program in Canada because it understands the needs of our community.” – Tracey Kim Bonneau, MAP Apprentice, Syilx Nation in Penticton who is working with her fluent Nsylxčn-speaking uncle, Christopher Eneas as her mentor
“With multi-year funding, bigger grants and fewer limits on the number of grants that can be received, B.C.’s First Nations communities are no longer competing for much-needed resources. Now, we have more security and stability to make real progress towards the revitalization and reclamation of our languages – and that’s very exciting.” – Edösdi (Dr. Judy Thompson), Director of the Tahltan Nation’s Language Reclamation Department
The Foundation funded two language revitalization coaches who visit communities to deliver in-person workshops and provide custom training on language revitalization planning.

Through building relationships and supporting communities to mobilize existing capacity to address language revitalization goals, these coaches are preparing communities to engage in long-term planning based on their unique needs and priorities.
Silent speakers are individuals who can understand, but do not speak their languages. Often past experiences of trauma, racism and colonial oppression create barriers that prevent individuals from speaking their language. Silent speakers now have a new tool to assist them to take pride in their language and share their knowledge.

In 2018/19, a successful pilot phase of Reclaiming My Language: A Course for Silent Speakers was completed, with grants to five communities funded by the Foundation. Based on a program developed in Norway and Sweden by and for Indigenous Sami people, the model uses cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT) to support silent speakers to overcome barriers to using their First Nations language in their homes and communities.

Participants from the pilot projects were instrumental in developing this program, which will expand in the year ahead with a new grant stream. The Foundation is honoured to have supported the early stages of this new program and looks forward to seeing it grow to support more silent speakers in future years.

A participant of the pilot program described her experience as follows:

“I feel so much stronger as a Native person. Strength in knowledge. I felt ashamed of my level and shame to speak in a non-native setting. This course has built up my courage to speak in any setting and be proud to be a strong native woman. Passing this on to my grandbabies.” – Reclaiming My Language Pilot Project Participant
SPECIAL LANGUAGE GRANTS

The Foundation made important contributions to two unique language revitalization projects in 2018/19.

**Our Living Languages** is an award-winning interactive exhibition at the Royal BC Museum, which celebrates the resilience and diversity of First Nations languages in B.C. At the museum, visitors have an opportunity to learn about the history, beauty and complexity of First Nations languages and to hear first-hand from the people and communities who are working tirelessly to document and revitalize the 34 languages in B.C.

In 2018/19, the Foundation provided a grant to the museum to support a travelling version of Our Living Languages, with the goal of increasing the profile of First Nations languages in B.C. This project will provide opportunities for communities to contribute content to the exhibition so that it remains a powerful and relevant resource for learning and engagement with local and global audiences.

**The Endangered Languages Project** (ELP) is a collaborative online resource for people involved in documenting, teaching and revitalizing the world’s most at-risk languages. ELP is guided by a team of global language experts and serves language communities by providing resources, technology, ideas and information. ELP promotes linguistic diversity and provides important online collaboration tools.

In 2018/19, the Foundation’s support helped ELP deliver several important activities:

- A new help desk to provide technical support service for language revitalization champions.
- A free eight-week online webinar on language documentation, which provided new tools, knowledge and connections for over 450 people from 62 countries.
- A stronger visual identity and online communications presence.
# FIRSTVOICES

## USING THE LATEST TECHNOLOGY TO PROTECT AND DOCUMENT INDIGENOUS LANGUAGES

FirstVoices is an online Indigenous language documentation resource developed in 2003 by FPCC to aid in the protection of the 34 First Nations languages in B.C. It provides a space for First Nations to document their languages by recording and uploading words, phrases, songs and stories to a secure, centralized and Indigenous-owned database. In recent years, FirstVoices has gained international recognition for using the latest technology to assist communities engaged in language documentation, teaching and cultural revitalization.

The Foundation takes great pride in our continued investment in the suite of innovative tools offered through FirstVoices. This ground-breaking resource has been developed by and for First Nations to:

- Document and reclaim endangered languages by capturing a permanent record of sounds, words, phrases, songs and stories.
- Support language learning through teaching tools that supplement face-to-face language education.
- Unite people with their languages regardless of where they are living in the world and provide vital opportunities for people to connect and communicate with their home communities using their language.
- Increase collaboration by bringing together language leaders from neighbouring communities of the same language to work together on language archives.
- Share knowledge and resources amongst First Nations rather than having each community develop their own systems without support.
- Reduce the burden on Elders and fluent speakers who are called upon to pass on their language knowledge.
- Increase the visibility of Indigenous languages through the use of leading-edge technology that makes Indigenous languages visible in everyday life.
KEY 2018/19 ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

- Communities added more than 10,000 new data points to FirstVoices – 47.2% are audio, 18.5% are words and 20.9% are phrases.

- Four new B.C. language archives were launched: Tāltān, Haïłzaqvḷa (Heiltsuk), Sgüüxs and Homalco.

- In 2018, 30 community members participated in a multi-day FirstVoices training sessions. An additional 43 participants took part in other FirstVoices workshops and information sessions.

- More webinars, online help tools and a video conferencing feature were added to FirstVoices, increasing support for users worldwide.

- New features have also been added, including increased speed, ability to upload large batches of data more efficiently, increased searchability of words and phrases, and options to register for the site and approve who is registering.

Geraldine Gunanoot, Language Coordinator in Stellat‘en, is excited to see the work being done with FirstVoices and the impact it’s having in the community. “When we explain the program to the Elders, they get excited and they want to be recorded. They say that they want to leave a legacy behind and they want to be part of the revitalization of the language.”
FIRSTVOICES FACTS

The FirstVoices language archive contains thousands of text entries in many diverse First Nations language writing systems, enhanced with sounds, pictures and videos. There are currently 54 B.C. First Nations archives and 17 archives from outside of B.C. on FirstVoices.com.

FirstVoices content is entirely owned, controlled and managed by community language administrators and is protected by secure data systems. The tool aligns with the First Nations principles of ownership, control, access and protection (OCAP), a standard that was established in 1997 to protect First Nations data and intellectual property rights.

Community-based teams (which include fluent speakers, language champions and people with technology skills) are trained in how to collect, edit and upload words, phrases, songs and stories to FirstVoices. They receive ongoing technical support to develop and manage their own language and culture archives using FirstVoices.

FirstVoices features innovative apps including FirstVoices Keyboards, which allows users to type using First Nations characters, and dictionary apps for several B.C. First Nations languages. To download visit: firstvoices.com/en/apps
‘In order for a language to continue to thrive, we need to see it used in schools but also in people’s personal lives,’ former FirstVoices Coordinator Shay Boechler says. ‘Technology influences everyone, especially younger generations. Putting language into their domains—on phones and devices—is really important.’ – Georgia Straight
STATEMENT OF OPERATIONS 2018/19

REVENUES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2018/19</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grants</td>
<td>$9,622,472</td>
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<tr>
<td>Donations</td>
<td>$22,727</td>
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<tr>
<td>Interest and Other Investment Income</td>
<td>$1,067,080</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>$10,712,279</td>
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EXPENDITURES

GRANTS AWARDED

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>B.C. Language Initiative</td>
<td>$4,787,916</td>
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<tr>
<td>Language Nest</td>
<td>$1,028,045</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mentor-Apprentice</td>
<td>$842,811</td>
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<tr>
<td>Language Revitalization Planning</td>
<td>$530,413</td>
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<td>Reclaiming My Language</td>
<td>$103,513</td>
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<tr>
<td>Special Language Grants</td>
<td>$250,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>FirstVoices grants</td>
<td>$229,700</td>
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Subtotal $7,772,399

GRANTS AND PROGRAM MANAGEMENT

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<th>2017/18</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wages and benefits</td>
<td>$749,444</td>
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<tr>
<td>Program administration</td>
<td>$1,007,190</td>
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<td>Administration and overheads</td>
<td>$89,885</td>
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Subtotal $1,846,519

Total $9,618,918

NET EXCESS OF REVENUE OVER EXPENSES

$1,093,361

NET ASSETS – BEGINNING OF YEAR

$107,390

NET ASSETS – END OF YEAR

$1,200,751

AUDITED FINANCIAL STATEMENT

Audited financial reports for 2018/19 are available online at: http://fpcf.ca/reporting-financials/
CONCLUSION

The Foundation is committed to building a future in which all First Nations in B.C. have the resources and capacity to access and revitalize their languages, arts and cultural heritage. With guidance from communities, the Foundation is investing in programs that create meaningful results, with significant impacts on the well-being of First Nations communities and the sustained cultural diversity of B.C.

Recovering from the continuing impacts of colonialism on Indigenous people and their languages and cultures is a long-term endeavour that will require years of sustained funding. The path to rebuilding systems damaged by cultural genocide must be led by First Nations people, with collaborative support from our allies and partners across multiple sectors.

Over the long-term, it is critical that we grow our base of support – expanding existing partnerships with governments and non-governmental agencies and increasing our networks in the field of philanthropy to build a solid foundation for ongoing work. We have a strong history of achievements. The growth we experienced in 2018/19 has proven that the Foundation is well-placed to manage and effectively distribute significantly larger amounts of funding.

With low administrative costs and overhead, the Foundation is able to maximize the resources that go directly to support communities. Working with established partners such as the First Peoples’ Cultural Council means we can confidently invest in programs that have powerful impacts. The Foundation is a perfect fit for donors that want to make meaningful contributions to reconciliation and support for Indigenous rights.

There are exciting opportunities ahead as we ramp up programming for languages, arts and cultural heritage. We are expanding current programs and adding new programs, including enhanced language planning approaches and programs to fund diverse opportunities in First Nations arts and cultural heritage. We will continue to invest in research and best practices that support the cultural regeneration of First Nations communities. We will work to influence policies and decision-making that will benefit the communities that count on our support.

As we move forward in our work, we invite partners and collaborators to join us. There is a long yet rewarding journey ahead and the Foundation will continue to focus on lasting results and meaningful change to create a future in which First Nations languages, arts and cultural heritage in B.C. are thriving.