



SHIFTING CULTURES CHANGING SYSTEMS PREPARING FOR SURPRISE SIX VANCOUVER 2014 REPORT

SIX VANCOUVER PARTNERS



ABOUT THE ORGANIZERS



socialinnovationexchange.org

SIX is now the world's primary network for social innovation. It connects social innovators in order to create and spread new ideas and solutions about how society can be strengthened and improved. It works with cities, national governments, and international bodies, such as the European Commission, to improve the methods with which our societies find better solutions to challenges. We foster genuine, active connections between the people building innovative solutions, from the grassroots to the policymaking level. By promoting learning across sectors, fields and countries, and by communicating and disseminating ideas about social innovation, SIX builds the capacities of its members and enables them to work together to develop resources for social innovators around the world.



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BC Partners for Social Impact is the product of the work of the BC Social Innovation Council, which was appointed in January 2011. In April 2012, the Council presented a summary of their findings and presented an Action Plan to the BC Government. The recommendations focused on five key areas: supporting social enterprise; legislative enablement; social innovation labs; engaging communities; and learning and research. The Partners represent a wide and diverse section of BC and include leaders in nonprofits, businesses, universities, community groups, and at all levels of government. Representatives from each main sector chair the group. The Partners have three main goals:

1. Collaborate across sectors to implement the recommendations to the Action Plan;
2. Share key social innovation information across initiatives and networks;
3. Identify emerging trends, challenges and opportunities to advance social innovation.



sigeneration.ca

Social Innovation Generation (SiG) seeks to address Canada's social and ecological challenges by creating a culture of continuous social innovation. Our focus is on social innovation that has the potential for impact, durability and scale. SiG is a collaborative partnership between The J.W. McConnell Family Foundation, the University of Waterloo, the MaRS Discovery District, and the PLAN Institute. Our ultimate goal is to support whole system change through changing the broader economic, cultural and policy context in Canada to allow social innovations to flourish.

ABOUT THIS REPORT

This report was prepared by Social Innovation Generation (SiG) National on behalf of the partnership.

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WELCOME

About SIX Summer School May 27-29, 2014

Come with your curiosity.

Share your current thinking.

Discover where social innovation is headed.

SIX Summer Schools are an annual global gathering and a seven-year old tradition. Pioneered by Social Innovation Exchange (SIX), the Summer Schools bring together leading social innovation thinkers, practitioners, grassroots activists and policy makers from around the world to explore key issues facing the social innovation field.

SIX Vancouver 2014 (#SIXvan14) marked the first time a Summer School was held in North America. Vancouver welcomed nearly 160 local, national and international practitioners to connect over new ideas, critical insights, practical solutions, common experiences and stories.

SIX Vancouver was a collaboration between Social Innovation Exchange (SIX), Social Innovation Generation (SiG) and BC Partners for Social Impact (#BCPSI), representing the global, Canadian, and British Columbian social innovation communities respectively.

CONNECTING INTERNATIONAL EXPERIENCES TO LOCAL ACTION

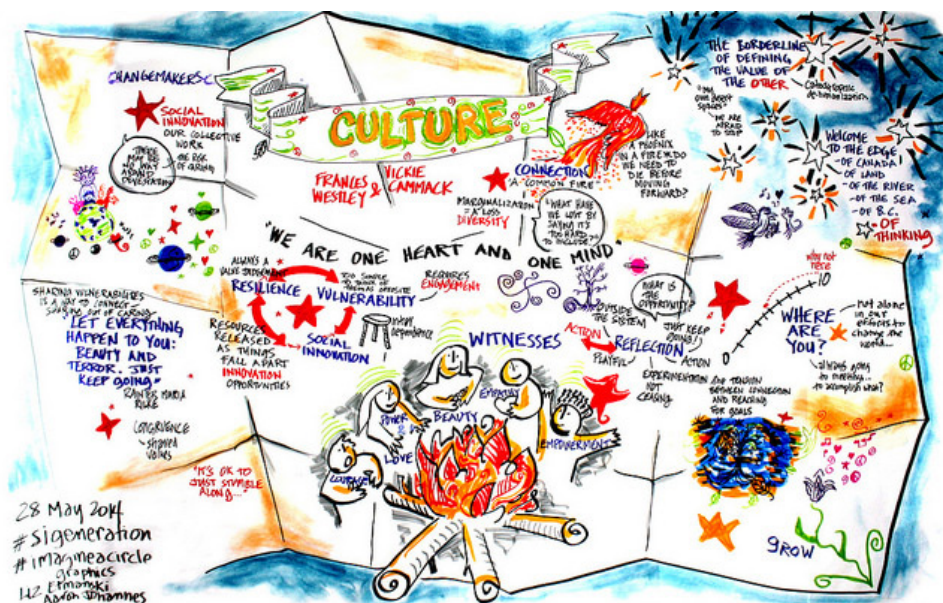
"The SIX Summer School created the conditions for an international group of radical doers and thinkers to convene with local and regional changemakers... It was through intentionally linking local Canadians with global practitioners that some of the greatest value of SIX...was realized" -- Devon Krainer, SIX Vancouver Coordinator, Excerpt From: "Where the Magic Happens: Highlights from SIX" [SiG blog 14.07.2014]

At SIX Vancouver, participants discussed how to strengthen each other's work and explored opportunities to grow as a community of practice. Canadian participants learned about key developments and challenges in other countries, while the eyes of the world turned to the social innovation movement in Canada.

The location of the 2014 Summer School was significant: it testified to the fertile culture of social innovation in Canada; celebrated Vancouver as an urban leader in sustainability and innovation; and recognized the pioneering momentum in British Columbia with BCPSI, the Ministry of Social Development and Social Innovation, and Hubcap BC.

Through site visits, workshops, keynote presentations, music, public art, and idea jams, Canadian innovators showcased the vibrancy of the local social innovation ecosystem in unique and resonant ways, engaging international social innovators not only in the national narrative and work, but also in the energy and diversity of Canadian culture. The program welcomed the 'unusual suspects' to speak, weaving in the voices, presence and resilience of First Nations communities, youth, and local activists.

SIX Vancouver encouraged critical thinking and deep introspection, inviting participants to embrace paradox: how to be passionate and self-critical; theoretical and practical; powerful and vulnerable; experienced and yet humble.



THE THEMES OF SIX VANCOUVER

Shifting Cultures Changing Systems Preparing for Surprise

SIX Vancouver challenged participants to discuss how social innovations survive, indeed thrive, despite the odds against them. Rich discussion and knowledge was shared around the tangible factors of social innovation -- strategy, policy, processes and tools.

But the 'secret sauce' of SIX Vancouver was a parallel and unique learning journey that called participants to focus their energy on the intangible conditions inspiring, shaping, or slowing social innovation: culture.

Culture plays a powerful role in social innovation. To grasp how social change happens, to explore root causes, to co-create solutions, and to hear and include the most vulnerable voices, our thoughts turn to the power of culture.

"We wanted to shake things up! We wanted people to feel a little uncomfortable. That is where the magic happens."
Devon Krainer, SIX Vancouver Coordinator, Excerpt From: "Where the Magic Happens: Highlights from SIX" [SiG blog 14.07.2014]

*Then, when he had flown a while longer,/Something brightened toward the north;/
It caught his eye they say./And then, he flew right up against it./
He pushed his mind through,/And pulled his body after.
Skaay, Haida Storyteller*

Excerpt From: SIX Participant Pack -- Welcome Letter

The welcome letter in the SIX Vancouver program invited all participants to "Go ahead. If something catches your eye over the next few days, fly right up to it. Push your possibilities and imagination through!"

What participants were collectively flying up to was the 2014 theme: How can we increase our impact? Shifting cultures, changing systems and preparing for surprise.

Shifting cultures is a process social innovators hope to engage in and will happen as an innovation challenges and disrupts existing culture in uncertain ways. Both the problems innovators seek to tackle and the solutions they create are enmeshed in webs of intersecting cultures.

Changing systems requires an understanding of the current cultural conditions holding problems in place and identifying the community assets that will help shift those conditions.

Preparing for surprise is a mindset that trains us to adapt to the amorphous nature of changing systems. It is about nimbly evolving a social innovation for greatest positive impact, and being accountable and responsive if our disruption of a system has negative implications.

To curate the journey through these 2014 themes, the program was designed to first engage the SPIRIT, then to dive into an examination of the social innovation SECTOR, including cross-sector work, before rounding out with discussions on social innovation and SOCIETY. Following the program, this report uses the same frame to share the key takeaways from SIX Vancouver.

STREAM SPIRIT

Social innovation is enlightened by our convictions. By 'who' we are. Today's social innovators understand that their inner state of being affects how they act, which in turn affects the reaction of those they are engaged with. They pay attention to what nourishes and replenishes their spirit. -- Excerpt From: SIX Participant Pack -- Program

The first stream of SIX Vancouver was a deep dive into the personal headwaters of our work – our spirit. What calls an innovator to action? Can an innovator get in his or her own way, inhibiting the relationships essential for truly transformational change?

SIX called on every individual to bring his or her whole self to the experience: as a changemaker, community member, ally, family member, and friend. Who we are enlightens our evaluation not only of a problem, but also of the solution and the people important to and implicated in both.

In a series of provocative sessions, participants critically reflected on and replenished their spirits – their values, intentions, assumptions, and beliefs.

WHAT STRUCK A CHORD?

It made me realize we lack critical reflection in our work. There is an assumption that what we do is good and beneficial and [we] need a critical view to question these assumptions.

KEY INSIGHTS FROM SPIRIT SESSIONS

HOW TO DEVELOP AN INNOVATION MINDSET

From Developing an Innovation Mindset, led by Jacqueline Simmons

Social innovation is not simply about measurable outcomes. It is about fostering an innovation mindset. The first step toward nurturing new mindsets is to think critically about relationships and the patterns of interaction between people: the spoken and unspoken rules of engagement, flows of information, and power structures. Understanding the existing patterns within a system informs how a social innovation can transform those patterns to create new interactions and shift the system.

THE THREE TYPES OF INNOVATORS

From The Sacred Headwaters of Social Innovation, led by Louise Pulford & Al Etmanski

Disruptive innovators see things that are broken and get to work. They seek to disrupt the status quo to solve an embedded and complex problem. Without disruption, systems stay the same!

Bridging innovators understand the new vision, but also the limitations of the old system. They are the mentors, the cultural translators, introducing a social innovation and beginning to shift mindsets.

Receptive innovators – or intrapreneurs – prepare the system for the social innovation. They advance ideas around inevitable barriers. Importantly, receptive innovators understand the landscape of stakeholders and can give great insight into unforeseen consequences.

OUR NEMESIS CAN BE OUR TEACHER

From Exploring our Nemesis, led by Cheryl Rose

Everyone has a unique lens, a perception of the world. But more often than not, that perception is internalized as truth – limiting enabling partnerships. The qualities of a nemesis might be highly useful if one can humanize the other and let go of needing to be 'right.' It is possible to gain value from someone else's experience, without contradicting important personal values. Similarly, what if certain elements of a system might not need to change? Is it possible to creatively destroy part of a system, while holding onto what works?

THE SACRED HEADWATERS OF SOCIAL INNOVATION

From The Sacred Headwaters of Social Innovation, led by Louise Pulford & Al Etmanski

When an innovator feels lost – whether through uncertainty or overconfidence – he or she can return to the sacred headwaters: love, care and empathy. If "necessity is the mother of invention," these are the impulses of necessity. They are the essential elements for pushing novelty through systems. But disrupting systems means disrupting lives. Being conscious forces the important question, is the disruption for the better?

SIG
@sigeneration

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#socinn resilience, vulnerability are 3 legs of same stool. #socinn needs vulnerable pop^ & resilience needs #socinn - F. Westley #SIXvan14

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Geraldine Cahill
@GCahill

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"We have to decide when we dive whether we can go deeper or if we want to come to the surface bc it's scary." #SIXVan14



Frances Westley, Photo Credit: Komal Minhas

Vulnerability becomes creative and builds social innovation only when engagement happens. It's not about individual elements, it's the relationships between them. It's not about 'too much vulnerability,' it is about vulnerability isolated...vulnerability cut off.
-- Frances Westley, J.W. McConnell Chair in Social Innovation, University of Waterloo

The Spirit sessions began in introspection and then expanded to consider how our spirit influences the power and integrity of our relationships, partnerships and sources of inspiration and creativity.

WHAT EXAMPLES INSPIRED?

The greatest opportunities and the greatest challenges facing social innovation came out during the Spirit sessions, with two sessions in particular surfacing the power of diversity and the danger of ignoring it.

SHIFTING CULTURES: VULNERABILITY AND RESILIENCE

Dr. Frances Westley, J.W. McConnell Chair in Social Innovation, University of Waterloo

In conversation with Vickie Cammack, Founding Director of Tyze Personal Networks

Vulnerability and resilience are cornerstone concepts in social innovation theory, but how do they translate to real life?

Frances and Vickie brought these concepts out of the theoretical realm and into the unfiltered truth of everyday life and practice:

We are all vulnerable at different times; we all have parts of ourselves that feel excluded, isolated. And yet, if we do not understand or respect the vulnerability in ourselves, we cannot connect with the vulnerability in others and understand how to work with people unlike us. If we are afraid of our own vulnerability, then we fear even more the vulnerability of others.

Marginalized voices are the greatest stakeholders of change and often the most experienced collaborators, with hard-won insights on how to work through vulnerability towards resilience. Vulnerability is interdependent with social innovation and resilience.

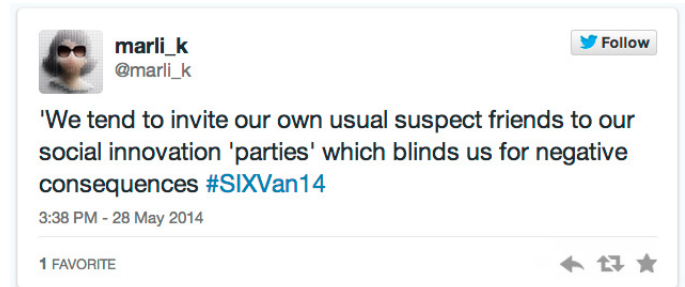
PREPARING FOR SURPRISE: THE SHADOW SIDE OF SOCIAL INNOVATION

Led by Tim Draimin, Executive Director, Social Innovation Generation

Social innovation is not a neutral or objective field. It is full of both positive and negative unintended outcomes and hidden intentions. This is the shadow side of social innovation.

Social innovation is a values-led, solutions-driven process tackling complex problems. It is passionate work and love can be blinding; enthusiastic good intentions are not impervious to misstep. Working in complexity invites unpredictability, uncertainty and plenty of room for different perspectives, understandings, and balances of power.

There is a growing awareness that benevolent ambition to catalyze systems change must be balanced with research, partnership with marginalized communities, long-term time horizons, constructive criticism, humility and critical thought. The responsibility to consider the unintended consequences of even the best intentions heightens as social innovations scale – and their potential impact expands.



WINDOW OF OPPORTUNITY

Reflection by Allyson Hewitt

Senior Fellow of Social Innovation at MaRS and Director of SiG@MaRS

Culture is the sum of attitudes, customs, and beliefs that distinguishes one group of people from another. Culture is transmitted through language, material objects, ritual, institutions, and art, from one generation to the next.

If this is how we understand culture, what does it take to be a cultural translator? What does it take to work within the mainstream culture to infuse it with the hope and potential of social innovation?

This was something I reflected on at SIX, as we gathered in beautiful British Columbia -- an experience that offered a culture of inclusion, honouring the past, preparing for the future, and embracing our collective vulnerability.

Our journey began with, and hearing from, our Aboriginal peoples, honouring their land, and sharing their culture. Locating the event at the Musqueam Community Centre meant we were welcomed to a sacred space. Before entering, we were brushed with cedar, a traditional blessing for purification and attracting positive energy, feelings, and emotions. This is certainly one way we can infuse mainstream culture with the opportunity for innovation: to root it in tradition, to honour the past, and create the way in for the new.

Shifting culture also requires vulnerability. Through their conversation on vulnerability, Vickie Cammack and Frances Westley created a space for us to acknowledge that we are in fact all struggling to do the best we can in challenging situations and to recognize that this brings a deep humanity (along with the fierce intellect we often focus on) to our work.

In our session on becoming a cultural translator, Kristin Wolff and I reflected on the challenges, and many missteps, we faced in finding a place that works for us, a place that honours our whole selves as change makers. We discussed how infusing mainstream culture with the energy of social innovation is a matter of finding synergies and that sometimes, it is good enough to start with recognizing and celebrating those small victories that ultimately give way to greater change.

IN CLOSING

The spirit behind social innovation is powerful: it can drive positive impact and inclusion or it can manifest as a form of hubris that marginalizes the other and fosters unintended harm in the name of a singular vision of good. The spirit sessions exposed the intangible dynamics – the 'soft' traits – that define our perspectives, our convictions, and in turn, the success of our work.

STREAM SECTOR

The heroic, 'do it yourself,' model of social change makes for a good story, but isn't possible in practice. Social innovators need to work within and across organisations, to think and act together for social innovation. What tools, processes, and strategies can support our everyday work? Which organisations have focused strategically on shifting culture for change and how do they do it?

-- Excerpt from: Participant Pack -- Program

Complex social challenges and systems change necessarily implicate all sectors; social innovators work within and across sectors to nurture and scale innovations. Given this reality, the relationships, connections, and interactions that coalesce to affect transformative change will not always engage willing or interested partners.

The Sector sessions oriented away from individual relationships and towards organizational and sector relationship building: the interactions that shift organizational cultures, build new networks, and disrupt systems. Working with, or needing to work with, such disparate actors make relationships the bedrock of social innovation.



KEY INSIGHTS FROM SECTOR SESSIONS

YOU CAN EXPERIMENT WITH ENEMIES AND STRANGERS

From *Experimenting With Enemies & Strangers*, led by Joeri van den Steenhoven, Adam Kahane & Jesper Christiansen. It is possible for people who don't know, agree with, or even trust each other to work together creatively towards common solutions. Like it or not, people must work beyond friend and ally networks, with all manner of partners. The alternative is being stuck or fighting each other.



Change happens at the speed of trust
-- Stephen R. Covey, Author, *"The Speed of Trust: the one thing that changes everything"*

A QUESTION OF SCALE

From *Scaling and Replicating Cultures*, led by Dana Shen & Darcy Riddell

Scaling is as significant as it is challenging and, often, contentious. Opinions diverge about what it means and how to do it. At its heart, however, scaling is about expanding the impact and durability of a social innovation to transform a system.

The question at the heart of discussions on scale was: How to scale a social innovation, while maintaining the quality and values of an innovation and without policing the innovation into bureaucratic oblivion? As growth happens, the demands of scale introduce new stakeholders, risks, and pressures. In the face of such challenges, building, maintaining and adapting relationships (and policy) around the core values of a social innovation is essential.

"We have a preconceived idea that scale is a measure of impact: how can we change how the system thinks, if scale is our measure of impact instead of human-centered design? The essence of social innovation may not be 'measureable' by scaleable metrics."

-- Mariko Takeuchi, *Human Centered Design Innovation Lab*

METHOD SPOTLIGHT

Public and Social Innovation Labs (PSI Labs) are a leading example of how to facilitate connection and collaboration, reframing the way disparate stakeholders come together. PSI Labs are a nascent field where collaborative teams of unusual suspects are convened to enhance the collective capacity to solve complex problems through systems thinking.

PSI Labs are growing a library of methodologies and approaches, along with a body of evidence, on how to design spaces for trusting engagement, fostering new relationships, neutralizing power dynamics, leading from empathy and common purpose, and drawing on the collective value of diverse stakeholder assets and perspectives.

FLIPPING THE POWER IN FUNDING

From Flipping the Power: Investing in Relationships, Not Just Dollars

Led by Alice Evans & Stephen Huddart

Funding and seeking funding in social innovation is not just about delivering projects; it is about strengthening an ecosystem to generate different solutions and improve our collective capacity to solve problems through:

Transparency: explicit dialogue on theories of change, risk tolerance and decision-making

Sharing: knowledge, best practices, and emergent opportunities

Disseminating power: invest in collaborations to jointly target complex problems

Awareness: maintain a situational awareness of existing momentum

Leverage: source site of symbiosis where funding can exponentially drive momentum

Alignment: work together to align goals and mandates

Trust: invest time in maturing trusting relationships and designing the conditions for trust

The hard work of relationship building is hardly formulaic, but the Sector sessions outlined emerging methods and ideas on how to nurture new relationships and collaborative networks. What is common across those methods – and connects back to the Spirit -- is the principle to honour, host, and engage diverse voices.

WHAT EXAMPLES INSPIRED?

The insights from the Sector sessions were backed by two exemplary stories of mobilizing new and unusual relationships to drive change from the inside out:

SHIFTING CULTURES: VANCITY

Tamara Vrooman, CEO, Vancity Credit Union

In conversation with Michel Venne, directeur general de l'Institut du Nouveau Monde

Tamara shared the story of how Vancity radically reoriented its organizational culture toward community wellbeing and saw that change ripple outward.

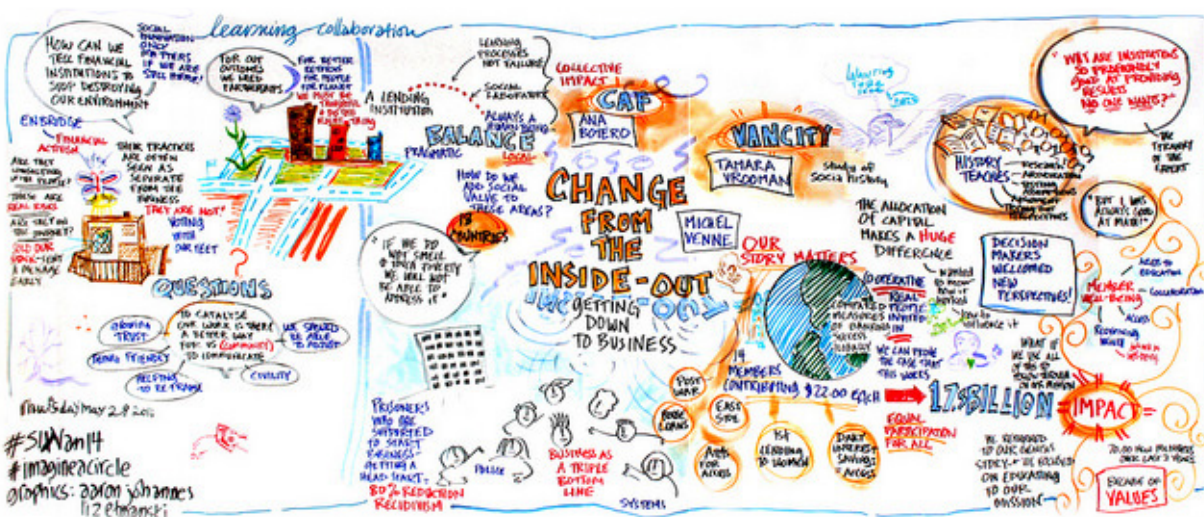
The allocation of capital is one of the strongest determinants of the future society we want to create. If we want to change the system, we have to change finance; it requires collaboration, transparency, and inviting the engagement of others.

Vancity is a co-op. Its very raison d'être is different from a bank and it understands that banking is a verb, not a noun. Yet as the co-op grew, it shifted away from its genesis in community and reoriented on growth for growth's sake. More recently, in an about-face, Vancity reconnected with its origin story and made member wellbeing its top metric and deciding factor for the allocation of capital. The result? Vancity is growing faster with higher profits, higher retention of staff and members, and a stronger impact on community.

The etymology of wealth is wellbeing. A huge cultural and behavioural shift is needed for traditional banks to embrace new concepts of value – but Vancity hopes to prove the case that when your members thrive, you actually build a better bank.

WHAT STRUCK A CHORD?

Vancity Credit Union's innovation and flexibility and it's determined harnessing of its core business and business assets to do good made me radically rethink my view of the role and potential of business.





CHANGING SYSTEMS: THE POWER OF LABS

From *Experimenting With Enemies & Strangers*, led by Joeri van den Steenhoven, Adam Kahane & Jesper Christiansen

What does it actually look like to bring a room full of antagonists together to sow a new future together?

At SIX Vancouver, Adam Kahane (Chairman of Reos North America) told the story about convening a lab in Columbia to find ways out of the nation's decades-long conflict.

The team that came together had never been in the same room before: cabinet officers, trade unionists, business men, environmentalists, illegal arms groups, self defense forces and more.

It was a striking example of how it is possible for people who do not know each other, agree with each other, or even trust each to come together -- in the right circumstances with the right 'container' [conditions] -- and not only talk to each other, but to work together towards solutions.

Later, a guerrilla fighter, and former lab participant, prevented the murder of a communist leader who had also been at the lab -- because they had taken part in the same nine-day lab process. This life-saving incident showed the genuine connection and transformation that can happen, even between perceived enemies.

Sixteen years later, a public official who had participated in the lab attributed Colombia's progress in resolving its conflict to that lab. Even though it might seem impossible, we can work creatively and in deeply impactful ways with our opponents.

WHAT STRUCK A CORD

The Summer School drove home the importance of relationship building, especially among groups and individuals, that are not the usual suspects.

It was clear at SIX Vancouver that there is a community of early social innovation adopters working across sectors around the world. The challenge now is how that cohort of practitioners can foster a more robust culture of continuous social innovation throughout society.

The art of social innovation is the art of collaborative partnership across silos. Relationships can be catalytic or impedimentary – the significance of collaboration does not erase the dynamics of power. The Sector sessions explored hard-learned lessons for fostering the conditions for collaboration and boundary spanning leadership.

WINDOW OF OPPORTUNITY

EXPLORING THE TERRAIN OF CULTURE AT SIX SUMMER SCHOOL

REFLECTION BY DARCY RIDDELL, PH.D CANDIDATE IN SOCIAL INNOVATION, UNIVERSITY OF WATERLOO

What happens when social innovators from over twenty countries gather to exchange stories, tools and inspiration? I was excited to find out, at my first SIX Summer School. I'm part of the Canadian contingent of social innovation academics and practitioners, housed at the Waterloo Institute for Social Innovation and Resilience. I had a hometown experience in Vancouver, with people from across the globe coming to my doorstep.

The SIX 2014 themes were culture shifting, systems change and preparing for surprise - influenced by the Canadian hosts, whose school of thought draws on resilience and complexity theory, emphasizing the systemic nature of social innovation.

Canadian practitioners have also spent over a decade learning how to scale and increase the impact of innovations. With this experience, some people are realizing that to achieve deep and lasting change, we must go beyond spreading tools, financial arrangements, techniques, or policies. The choice of culture shifting as a theme was intended to generate dialogue and sharpen insights into the less visible dimensions of transformation required in the face of almost insurmountable global challenges. Also evident in the conference design was intent to learn from the wisdom and experience of First Nations, and to amplify the less-often heard voices of both women and youth.

So, what does culture shifting mean, in the context of social innovation? Culture represents the realm of values, beliefs, identity, behaviours, and social practice. Cultures can shift rapidly or be deeply entrenched. Culture is humanity, care and creativity given form - through art, technologies, artifacts, and bonds of meaningful relationships. As social innovators, culture is the context of our work and its engagement and change is part of our goal. Many of the problems we seek to solve, such as poverty, inadequate access to health care, inequality, social exclusion, or unsustainable consumption have deep cultural roots. These roots are continuously re-enacted by our media, storytelling and rituals -- culture is participatory. When culture is on the table, it is about me and we. Culture leads inward to our psyches and deeper to our spirits; it inspires us to think outward towards community and belonging.

In light of this, SIX kicked off with a morning plenary about the role of culture in our organizations and society, specifically engaging the role of vulnerability in social innovation. Led by Vickie Cammack – Founder of Tyze – and Dr. Frances Westley – J.W. McConnell Chair of Social Innovation at the University of Waterloo – this session surfaced some of the cultural fault-lines within the conference community. Throughout the day, participants voiced differing opinions about the importance of the personal, spiritual or psychological aspects of the social innovation journey.

Frances and Vickie explored the personal challenges of being a changemaker, quoting Robert Frost on how our own “desert places” – our own vulnerability – scares us most. Frances reflected that we can easily turn our backs on these places and warned that, in so doing, we also turn our backs on vulnerability in others. She quoted Joseph Campbell to remind us that “where you stumble, there lies your treasure.”

What role then does culture and vulnerability play in the work of social innovators and within the SIX community? Where are we stumbling and where is our treasure?

SIX brought together people with many cultures, languages, and worldviews. My experience was that over three days together, we stumbled upon unarticulated assumptions about what we value, why we are doing social innovation, and how change happens. These are, at their heart, cultural questions with cultural answers.

The diverse national cultures of social innovation -- be they European, North American, South American, or East and South Asian -- orbit around differing definitions and understandings, which are not always evident. Some questions I heard from first-time Canadian participants were: What are the core values of this community? What do people really mean by social innovation? Social innovation for whom?



Photo Credit: Komal Minhas

That there is a lack of clarity around the goals and “the good” of social innovation is evident in the ongoing jockeying over definitions of the term. While lack of a shared value definition could be seen as supporting a ‘big tent’ approach to social innovation, we may be stumbling here, and should pause to look for treasure:

Do we share common goals and values in the social innovation community? If so, what are they? Enterprise? Innovation? Impact? Social good? Justice? Resilience? Value Creation? Creating sustainable, post-capitalist systems?

I had an Aha! moment at the Social Frontiers academic gathering following SIX. The social innovation academic community is like a vibrant crossroads bazaar. It’s also a big mess. Everyone comes from somewhere else, selling their wares, and bringing different paradigms, epistemologies and research methods. We don’t share language or disciplinary assumptions and we lack integrative frameworks and toolsets. In a sense, we are all immigrants to the field of social innovation.

I think the global community of practice at SIX faces these same challenges of cohesion and identity -- and amidst this cacophony of approaches and practices our greatest treasure may lie. Such treasure could be discovered if we embark on a shared cultural journey to map and honour the terrain of our constituent worldviews, histories, and practices.

This cultural journey might explore our different sub-cultures of social innovation and the values and theories of change behind them, as we seek the story of the whole. Beyond national, language, and cultural differences, diversity is present in the kinds of work we do, the specialized tools we use, and the purposes for which we use them.

Some sub-cultures of social innovation are more obvious than others:

- “Lab folks” share a strong culture. There are different flavours of labs, but design and ethnographic methods prevail, and their activities converge around the radical redesign of social services through experimentation and prototyping.
- Social finance and investment folks represent another sub-culture, with philanthropists forming a related group. Social enterprise-focused folks represent another still.
- Systems-change folks seek catalytic change and embrace multi-sector convening, field-building, and policy change as primary practices.
- The cultural ambassadors of social innovation create and resource diverse containers for cross-pollination among innovators, through hosting collaborative spaces, hubs, and incubators.

Meanwhile, some discourses are marginalized in our midst. How can we listen better to ensure their inclusion? For example, I am questioning whether I have a home in social innovation, because so few participants at SIX were actively bridging social and ecological challenges, despite our rapidly worsening planetary crisis.

The SIX Summer School convenes practitioners with an incredible breadth of disciplinary knowledge, training and skills - from finance, public policy, and management, to social work, education, community development, social enterprise, and activism. But for this group to understand and catalyze “culture shifts” at larger scales, we will have to get our own house in order: by translating experiences across disciplinary and experiential chasms, valuing the translation of language and meaning, and sharing stories to allow a more coherent culture of social innovation to emerge.

This cultural challenge/opportunity might sound familiar. It’s a microcosm of our global condition. If this community of social innovators can continue stumbling in the cross-cultural terrain, we may discover great treasure to offer in deeper service to people and planet.

STREAM SOCIETY

The world is changing and it is our job as social innovators to pay attention to these changes. These sessions will explore what we should pay attention to, what we should nurture and how we should react.

Presentations and dialogues will explore nurturing the conditions for social innovations to grow as opposed to thinking you can force change. -- Excerpt from: Participant Pack -- Program



Social systems are complex and dynamic. Societies evolve or resist unpredictably to change and pressure. Social innovation draws heavily on ecological metaphors because biological ecosystems are analogous to this complexity: you cannot disrupt an ecosystem in predictable ways. Change cannot be forced.

By paying close attention to ongoing pattern shifts, however, it is possible to uncover opportunities to nurture and cultivate specific impacts. The Society sessions were about exchanging lessons and insights on pattern change.

WHAT STRUCK A CHORD

Shifting culture is critically important, but we often don't talk about it or undertake activities that are specifically focused on culture change. We expect that if we change strategies, processes, etc., the culture will adapt, but we don't realize that if we work on the culture as well, we will strengthen our ability to change or to respond to the unexpected.

KEY INSIGHTS FROM SOCIETY SESSIONS

THE PATH TOWARDS GOOD GOVERNANCE

From Nurturing Good Governance, Led by Molly Harrington, Sadhu Johnston & Aditya Dev Sood
Government structures are often risk averse, hierarchical and inherently anti-innovation. With this in mind, participants talked about ways to decentralize problem solving and share risk as a way to create a good governance system. Listening and watching for grassroots initiatives or student ideas that are more expert about local issues provides an opportunity to offer leadership support to the people who are making change happen.

The path to strong governance also means taking baby steps with pilot projects, knowing that decisions can be reversed if ideas fail. It is a way to help the public be more comfortable with failure and see it as a necessary step towards innovation. At the same time, co-creating policy with the best consultation of diverse stakeholders can also produce the wrong outcomes. Sometimes the bravest thing to do is to stop something from unfolding.

WHAT STRUCK A CHORD

The underlying problem of relationships between government, business and community, is that no one trusts that if they give up wealth (or power), it will be given back to them.

NUDGING ORGANIZATION CULTURE

From Nurturing Organizational Culture, Led by Chris Sigaloff, Derek Gent + David Phipps

Hand-in-hand with the path to good governance is shifting organizational culture towards a positive culture of social innovation. Often, this is a process of nudging people toward new mindsets (including an innovation mindset).

Nudging will often involve:

- Developing an impetus for change, an essential step to engaging stakeholders
- Orienting focus on the mission, quality and vision of the social innovation
- Acknowledging the harm of blame cultures in deterring change or people's willingness to experiment
- Enabling organizational cultures to be evolutionary through a process of dynamic learning that adapts as positive new processes, ideas and interactions unfold
- Critically reflecting on the skills and mindsets being encouraged in training.

"I've been trained to run the system, not to change the world."

Dana Shen, Director, Family by Family

COMMUNITY-LED SOCIAL INNOVATION

From Nurturing Health, Led by Simon Tucker, Andrew Barnett & Dave Doig

There is a growing body of practice that recognizes social innovation requires working with all stakeholders. Engagement and trust emerge from community, not for community. Community-led solutions processes take an asset-based approach to complex problems, surfacing communities' strengths and empowering the positive agency of community members.

These processes are generating transformative results, with exemplary initiatives emerging all over the world, including: Australia (Family by Family), the UK (Merevale House), Washington DC (Youth Courts of DC) and Winnipeg (Winnipeg Boldness).

WHAT STRUCK A CHORD

*The idea that people can trust the system is an illusion. We trust people, not systems.
We trust the driver, not the car or the lights.*

WHAT EXAMPLES INSPIRED?

CHANGING SYSTEMS: THE SHARING ECONOMY

From Nurturing Wealth, Led by Stephen Huddart, Geoff Mulgan & Ken Gauthier

An emerging new economy is radically transforming our relationship with 'stuff:' the sharing economy. It is a grassroots movement that values access over ownership.

'Modern' infrastructure was built for another era of utilization; it is time to explore how it could be matched to current and future needs. By introducing a new economic principle – access over ownership – the sharing economy is a unique chance to re-imagine the values driving our economic systems and re-write the social contract.

However, as the sharing economy begins to see an uptake in interest by larger companies, organizations and governments, it will require careful attention to grow the movement in the direction of community wellbeing, rather than profit maximization or class-isolation.

Seoul, South Korea, is leading the way with legislation passed in 2012 to make Seoul sharable. The Mayor of Seoul, Mayor Park, emphasizes that the driving force behind Seoul's many sharing initiatives is community and connectedness. Seoul's theory of change: once community and connections are in place, environmental and economic outcomes will follow.

HONOURING PLACE

The stories and insights shared by Canadian First Nations at SIX Vancouver -- including the Musqueam Nation (our gracious hosts on Day 2), the Haida Nation, Sliammon First Nation, the Nuu-chah-nulth, and the Carrier Sekani Nations -- were fundamental to the three-day experience, illuminating the roots of Canadian culture and history. A global conference, many participants had never learned about the history, strength and ingenuity of Canada's Aboriginal peoples.

WHAT STRUCK A CHORD

I believe that many of the things that we are “innovating” are actually a return to the ways of the past, and that indigenous culture has a great deal to teach us about community and community approaches to problem-solving.

WINDOWS OF OPPORTUNITY

“We are all in recognition of the fact that something in the system within which we operate is broken. And we are trying to find a way to fundamentally shift how things operate to improve on that. I think we are all serving different social causes, but at the end of it, or at the root of it, we are all trying to improve our systems, our societies, for the well being of humans.”

Mariko Takeuchi, Human Centered Design Innovation Lab



SIX Vancouver called on six diverse international voices – ‘Ambassadors’ -- to witness six thematic threads during the Summer School: power & love, empathy, generations, courage, beauty, and empowerment.

This call to witness honours the oral tradition of the Musqueam people, a tradition where multiple witnesses are called to listen to and witness an event to collectively reflect its truth. Each theme framed a window of opportunity to reflect on the state of the global social innovation community and the way forward toward common purpose.

Sharing their reflections at the Closing Plenary, the collective call of these Ambassadors was for balance – to balance power and love, purpose and process, soul and technology:

“Power without love is reckless and abusive. Love without power is sentimental and anemic. We must learn to live with both and fight with both.” Adam Kahane, Chairman of Reos North America

While love is what calls social innovators to action and generates a sense of connected community, the role of power cannot be ignored. The growing sensibility is that we are part of a single whole, but there are many ‘wholes’ and they are all real -- they are each rooted in a particular mindset and experience. There are vastly different perspectives on the value of a problem, experience, or solution.

To honour future generations, we must acknowledge that though we did not create all the current systemic problems, we do have to solve them together. This solutions-process needs to be intergenerational.

There is a constant pressure to find ‘universal truths’ and ‘silver bullets’ – the ‘beautiful’ answers - that can force an over-simplification of our understanding and our solutions. We must have the courage to act within complexity.

“Courage is not knowing what to do and doing it anyway” Aditya Dev Sood, Founder & Chairman at Bihar Innovation Lab

The positive counterbalance to this pressure to solve quickly, and with fewer resources, is the art of partnership and collaboration. Empowerment in the social innovation community stems from connecting with the partners and collaborators that can amplify the need to do things differently.

IN CLOSING

“There’s a new sense of possibility coming out of this meeting; a sense that one’s own work is now connected to a whole emerging landscape of actors and partners, and thinkers and activists, investors and so on.”

Stephen Huddart, President and CEO of The J.W. McConnell Family Foundation

Systems change is about welcoming, encouraging, provoking and unlocking mindset shifts and underused assets. The Society sessions emphasized that this challenge can only be met by valuing social capital and inclusion. It is about engaging the capacity of people’s potential to be part of the solution – and seeing them respond to the power of their own agency.

PROMISING METHODS & PRACTICES

In addition to the luminous session insights, several promising methods and practices were discussed and explored. Outlined here are just a few of the exemplary processes that surfaced:

1. BEST PRACTICE: MAINTAIN THE ESSENCE AT SCALE

From: *An Inspiring Example, Led by Vicky Colbert*

Vicky Colbert, Founder and Director of the Fundación Escuela Nueva, told the story of creating and scaling the Escuela Nueva model.

A seminal pedagogical model that transforms how children both learn and access education, the success of the model created a double challenge: maintain the integrity of the pedagogy, while evolving it to honour new social and cultural contexts. In response to this challenge, Vicky founded the Fundación to serve as an anchor institution for the social innovation. Based on her experience, Vicky's top 10 lessons for social innovators are:

1. It is possible to improve the quality of schools in poor areas.
2. More of the same is not good enough. If a program is not responding to the needs of society, it is time to try something different, such as shifting from the transmission of knowledge to the social construction of knowledge.
3. We must learn together to live in peace.
4. Think systemically for large-scale reform.
5. The very essence of an innovation can be pedagogical.
6. To scale up, transform complex solutions into simple, essential methods.
7. Every partner is important. It is crucial to work with government, civil society and the private sector.
8. Research is essential to the integrity, sustainability and continuous innovation of a model to prove that we know what works
9. Share control of the decisions that affect people's lives; you achieve better participation.
10. Everyone can be a changemaker.

2. BEST PRACTICE: NEGOTIATING RISK (PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION)

From *Negotiating Risks, Led by Raheel Mohammed*

Risk is always present when you are implementing projects in communities. Raheel Mohammed, Founder and Director of Maslaha, shared the Maslaha framework of risk, which liberated and empowered the organization to work creatively to create change in diverse communities.

The three principles for negotiating risk:

1. Widen the language – collaborate with community to develop a vernacular that makes sense to them, resonates, and nurtures community ownership of the solution.
2. Use a multi-resource approach – welcome in as many resources as possible to communicate the message and enact the project: different community leaders, celebrities, platforms, languages, and media. Root it in the 'local.'
3. Constant movement - Not all risks are of equal immediacy or consequence. Adapt your response to the type and intensity of risk. Move forward with awareness and respect for the changing "rhythm of risk."

3. METHOD: COMPETITIONS & CHALLENGE-PRIZES

Competitions and challenge-prizes can accelerate change through a collaborative process. As a social innovation strategy, competition can be designed to catalyze community creativity and collaboration. At their most basic, competitions attract and prototype new ideas, potentially stimulating markets. At their best, a competition process will engage communities, raise awareness, and mobilize and energize mass action, stimulating and inspiring transformation.

From "The Craft of Incentive Prize Design: Lessons from the Public Sector" by Jesse Goldhammer, Kwasi Mitchell, Anesa "Nes" Parker, Brad Anderson & Sahil Joshi (Deloitte University Press, 2014).

See also: "Challenge Prizes: A Practical Guide" (Nesta 2014).



Vicky Colbert, Photo Credit: Komal Minhas

4. METHOD: CO-PRODUCTION

From Social Innovation Generation on Co-Production

Co-production is a process of designing and delivering public services in partnership with citizens and professionals that values professional training and lived experience equally. It is a form of blending best practices, including: community resilience; network and field building; well-being and happiness research; and asset-based community development.

How do you know if your service is co-produced?

- Is it an asset-based approach?
- Are you working to build the capabilities and capacities of those involved?
- Does it develop mutuality and true partnership between professionals and users?
- Does it grow networks beyond the usual suspects to facilitate connection and knowledge sharing?
- Does it blur roles, valuing both professionals and users as critical to delivery ?
- Does it create opportunities for professionals to act as catalysts, coaching and mentoring service users?

5. METHOD: ART PROCESS

From Rainbow of Desire, Led by David Diamond

"You cannot legislate healthy behaviour"

Art processes not only organically cultivate resilience, but can be mobilized to intentionally help prepare communities for change or to enact the change itself.

Co-creating theatre with communities (including service providers) is a hands-on method for exploring and solving complex problems. By inviting community members into the theatrical process, people can start to voice what no one wants to say and reflect on their community. It is, in essence, a 'fiction' that tells the truth.

The process is action-based dialogue that invites people to 'rehearse' their real life experiences and possible solutions. As fellow participants interpret each other's experiences, different realities, strengths and opportunities are uncovered. These are the seeds of potential solutions. In the performance, people can see they have philosophical allies. They can witness and testify to common experiences and to a common impetus for change.

Sometimes the greatest barrier to change is one person, or a group of people, thinking or fearing that they will not be heard.



David Diamond, Photo Credit: Komal Minhas

THE ART OF RESILIENCE

Music, art, performance and rituals were a vibrant part of the SIX experience. The arts can influence the mindsets, interconnection, belonging and agency of individuals, communities and institutions. They offer a powerful opportunity to drive innovation, collaboration and co-creation, cultivating our creativity and resilience.

With play and imagination, artists facilitate destabilizing the status quo, uncovering truth, and giving voice and visibility to the vulnerable – keeping marginalized stories alive and enhancing the vibrancy of communities. In doing so, artists and art are "agents of cultural shift."

From "The Art of Resilience, The Resilience of Art" (2013)

THE ROLE OF CULTURE & CULTURAL SHIFT

Culture is a way of life. Everything we do, each day, is cultural.

Culture describes the interactions between our values, behaviours, routines, habits, assumptions, and expectations. Culture is our wealth, our richness, our resilience and, at the same time, culture can be our inertia, entrenching complex problems in society. We are embedded in culture, even as we try to understand, nudge and shift it with creativity and innovation.

As social innovations disrupt systems, they challenge and disrupt cultures and cultural flows; the durability, scale and impact of innovations are connected to shifting cultures towards enhanced resilience. As the Summer School unfolded, the collective understanding and discussion of culture became increasingly complex, as participants explored culture in terms of:

DIVERSITY

Innovation depends on diversity. We need to create opportunities for diverse, even adverse, voices to interact and connect in new and previously unforeseeable ways. But diversity is more than an operational force for optimizing innovation. To embrace diversity is to value difference and be willing to experience it.

WHAT STRUCK A CHORD

The more diversity we have, the more interesting, and different, conversations and ideas can flow.

STORYTELLING

"The truth about stories is that that's all we are."

-- Excerpt from *The Truth About Stories: A Native Narrative* by Thomas King

Stories are more than a communications strategy or marketing experience – they connect us to strangers, nurture empathy, and guide our organisations and communities.

Stories offer a window for understanding the conditions perpetuating a problem or challenging change.

Cultural codes invisible or unknown to outsiders come out in our stories.



When we take the time to speak the unspeakable, we can begin to overcome the fear, inertia, misunderstanding and assumptions entrenching our problems. By narrating our experiences, and listening to the experiences of others, we open up the possibility of deeper understanding and connection.

When we own our stories, we reclaim our agency; the power of telling our story ignites the possibility of change. As communities voice their realities, they are liberated to imagine a different future and see alternative future scenarios.

LANGUAGE

How we identify ourselves, or a group of people, imposes an entire set of expectations. Is a family in trouble or "troubled"? Language can impose violence or it can heal and connect. It can drive isolation or celebrate history and community.

SiG SiG
@sigeneration

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David Roche: The truth of the story is found in the listener...their aha! That is a moment of #socinn #SIXvan14

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“When you belong to a minority group, language expresses difference, not only with different words, but also by carrying a history”

– Michel Venne, directeur général de l’Institut du Nouveau Monde

PLACE AND SPACE

Our spaces – an office, a city, or a community centre – shape who is welcome, who speaks, who has authority, and whether a space inspires or dissipates collaboration.

INCLUSION: AN ETHIC OF CARE AND EMPATHY

Language, storytelling, space and place are all frameworks for either meaningfully engaging or isolating diversity. We must try to embody practices of inclusion and collaboration in daily action. Empathy and care are at the heart of this practice -- the interlinking intentions that open the doors to inclusion.

In the three days of SIX Vancouver, the collective wisdom of the participants evidenced a deep appreciation of the strong undercurrents of values that shape the seas of social change; moving forward will require us all to take the plunge and swim in those currents to better understand them.

CULTURE SHIFT

Culture is organic and emergent: it is not engineered.

The concept of shifting culture can be misleading, implying a simple causality that doesn’t exist: if you do x, then a culture will become y. This was the fine line walked at SIX Vancouver 2014: how to practically discuss opportunities for nurturing or transforming cultures towards enhanced resilience without presuming force, simplicity, or power.

The resonant learning of SIX Vancouver sounds simple: culture nurtures and influences us and we can nurture and influence culture. It is a dynamic process. Place and space, diversity, stories, language and inclusion are not definitive of culture, but they are cultural elements that can reframe our perspective of a problem and in doing so, unearth new solutions. These frameworks deepen our understanding, connection and empathy with different stakeholders implicated in a complex problem.

As our understanding deepens, we begin to see that we are not problem-solvers, but solutions-facilitators – that the answers and opportunities lie in surfacing to the fullest extent the culture around a problem and nurturing cultural shift to shape a solution with durability and impact.



AN INTERVIEW WITH SIX VANCOUVER CURATOR Al Etmanski

Al Etmanski, Photo Credit: Komal Minhas

A Canadian social innovator and local Vancouverite, Al Etmanski was a core composer of the SIX Vancouver 2014 theme of culture shifting. His role, intention and spirit was that of a conductor, confidently guiding attendees to explore the silent, invisible and critical dimensions of culture -- the habits, attitudes, beliefs, values and stories we tell about each other which, if not addressed, can erode our success.

Key to re-envisioning the otherwise familiar score of an international conference was ensuring that a variety of voices and instruments were heard and seen. For SIX Vancouver, this meant increasing the presence and empowering the design talent of young people, Aboriginal and First Nations people, grassroots activists and women leaders.

This was Al's hope: "We wanted to make sure no one perspective dominated," he explained, "and enough airtime was available for voices seldom heard."

Al's opening challenge to the Summer School attendees was: "to understand how the scent of the sea air and the shape of the mountains shaped a culture of resilience for First Nations in British Columbia." He invited us to relax, remain curious and to float through the conference with an open mind and heart.

It was a disruption of the status quo to invite some of the most experienced social innovators to be the listeners, instead of the speakers. But for Al, the opportunities that arise from listening and feeling the music of others are the next frontier of inspiration. He was nudging the community to hear the rest of the orchestra.

There was not a universal embrace of how the Summer School was curated. There was discord about a perceived gender imbalance -- that too many of the keynote speakers were women. Yet it was the interview with Vancity's President & Chief Executive Officer, Tamara Vrooman, on "Change from the inside out," that impressed the entire community, inspiring and empowering participants with the possibility of radical organizational change.

Al highlighted this paradox: "We expect people and institutions and societies to change, but aren't aware of our own blind spots, how awfully hard it is to change our perceptions -- to let go of cherished beliefs and practices."

This was the intended nature of the Summer School -- to disrupt authority flows; to engage with new voices; to welcome and honour local community.

There was a second force at play behind SIX Vancouver for Al: to give lift to the national, provincial and local social innovation agendas. For this reason, the Summer School was co-sponsored by SiG (the national partner) and BC Partners for Social Impact (BCPSI, the local partner). BCPSI also coordinated Social Innovation Week Vancouver around the Summer School - a youth-led and designed week of eight additional events leveraging the presence of global expertise to advance the BC agenda. This strengthened BCPSI as a BC provincial collaborative platform, catalyzing new connections, collaborations and events among provincial changemakers and across generations.

Hosting both SIX Vancouver and Social Innovation Week connected BC institutions and organizations to social innovation. It was a vibrant sensemaking journey that led to a diversity of local and provincial players seeing something integral in social innovation -- further nurturing a growing national narrative that Canada is a Social Innovation Nation.

For Al, SIX was a declaration: it is time for a new platform. We are a critical point. It is time to pushback against the standard chorus of voices and the emergent status quo of social innovation. It is time to experience change ourselves, to learn in process, and embrace shift.

SIX Vancouver lit the fire of community and change from the inside out. It sparked new mindsets, new players, new ideas, and a new space for local legacies, youth leaders, First Nations, Metis and Inuit, and grassroots activists. It was just what Al had in mind.

REFLECTION SIX DIRECTOR Louise Pulford

After several years, we are beginning to see a pattern of how and why SIX Summer Schools work well. We have learnt so much designing and convening the Summer School events with different people around the world. Each year at SIX, we challenge and develop our own culture and we will continue to do so. Here are some reflections on this year's event in Vancouver.

THE IMPORTANCE OF CREATING A SHARED EXPERIENCE

Together with our local partners, we pay a lot of attention to how we want participants to feel, interact with each other, and experience the Summer School. SIX, as an event and a network, aims to create a non-hierarchical space that is rooted in the culture of the host organisation.

Hosting the event in the Musqueam Community Centre, and beginning with visits to locations where cultures have shifted in Vancouver, was instrumental to ensuring this. Using art, music, theatre and comedy throughout the event also helped bring disparate individuals together, encouraging people to move beyond their comfort zones and enabling them to feel free to be challenged and challenge others.

Whilst setting an engaging theme, which pushes participants to think in a new way, is important, SIX is really about the people and the rich exchange between participants. Aditya Dev Sood, Founder and CEO of the Centre for Knowledge Societies in India (host of next year's SIX Summer School, November 2015 in New Delhi) described being in the presence of the other participants as "enabling and ennobling."

The value of SIX is sharing experiences – the experience of previous events, of pre-interviews, sessions, videos, stories, and blogs, both during the event and afterwards, through the SIX network, until the next year. The SIX experience is cumulative.

Most importantly, we start from the same point – we want to see a fundamental shift in how society operates and believe that change is not just about strategy, it's about culture.

REFLECTING ON LANGUAGE AND COLLABORATION

Language is a key element in our ability to collaborate with each other. Whilst a body of literature is being developed around systems change and systemic innovation, the underlying assumptions that individuals, organisations and societies hold -- the way we perceive, think and feel -- are less well documented or discussed.

Working together to overcome invisible barriers to change is hard, but it's even harder if you don't understand the words you are using. The challenge at SIX Vancouver was not the English language, it was the language of government, or community, or banking, or Asian communities of practice, or Latin American, or European. We need to pay more attention to different reference points and experiences. Innovation is relative to a time and place, but that doesn't mean we don't have a lot to learn across borders.

Being a cultural translator, connecting the dots and bridging conversations in ways that build movements of people committed to better ways to meet our collective needs, is vital in SIX's global network, as well as in the wider world.

We are grateful for the leadership and persistence of Al Etmanski, who took the time to work through the challenging discussions of what culture means to different people and organisations around the world.

THE POWER OF SIX

SIX Summer Schools create an energy between people and within a particular place. Where we host a SIX Summer School is an important decision. It is important that the city and country can make the most of the experience of hosting 100+ of the world's leading social innovation thinkers and practitioners. As with the workshop on the new Social Innovation Endowment in Alberta, and the meeting of several North American and European funders to discuss how to better support social innovation in North America, SIX events should leave a legacy. The SIX network is a great resource and can significantly contribute to developing and reinforcing an agenda.

In addition, the international network provides perspective for everyone. Cheryl Rose, who was instrumental in the program design, described the event as a touch point for social innovation in Canada – a time to be proud of what Canadian social innovators have accomplished. Stephen Huddart, President and CEO of The J.W. McConnell Family Foundation, witnessed a new sense of possibility coming out of this meeting – a truly transformative experience for this movement in Canada.

WHY IT WORKS

SIX Summer Schools remind us that our work is connected to a growing, global landscape of actors, partners, thinkers, activists and investors. SIX events inspire and give us confidence.

By joining a SIX event, participants are joining and contributing to a global movement. SIX events aren't just great events – they are made by a culture that has been collectively developed at and in between events, activities, conversations, and collaborations over the last 7 years.

The reason the Summer School works is because of its network effect.

A SOCIAL INNOVATION NATION

By Stephen Huddart, President & CEO, The J.W. McConnell Family Foundation
Excerpt from: The J.W. McConnell Family Foundation June 2014 Newsletter.

Recent events suggest that the field of social innovation is maturing to the point where it is possible to envisage adaptive, evolutionary shifts in our social, economic, and environmental systems.

Consider: May 26, MaRS Solutions Lab hosted Labs for Systems Change, the third and largest global gathering of practitioners leading this type of work. In her remarks to the gathering, Frances Westley, J.W. McConnell Chair in Social Innovation at the University of Waterloo, described how our understanding of psychology and group dynamics; design thinking; and complex adaptive systems theory—together with data analysis and computer modeling—affords us new ability to examine and improve institutional behaviour, and to generate testable solutions to wicked problems.

Meanwhile, May 26-30 was Social Innovation Week in Vancouver, produced by BC Partners for Social Impact and SiG. A public Ideas Jam and an academic conference were among several events surrounding the global Social Innovation Exchange (SIX) Summer School, which Canada was hosting for the first time. SIX Vancouver 2014 was opened by BC's Minister of Social Innovation, Canada's first, who predicted that in five years every government will follow suit: crowdsourcing ideas, introducing hybrid corporate structures, employing new social finance measures, and supporting civic engagement in the search for solutions to our most pressing challenges.

With its recent announcement of a \$1 billion endowment for social and cultural innovation, Alberta is also moving in this direction.

This is not just work for governments, corporations, philanthropic foundations, and community organizations. A recent blog by Joe Hsueh, of Foundation partner Second Muse, titled "Why the Human Touch is Key to Unlocking Systems Change," quotes Peter Senge: "What is most systemic is most personal." A reminder that change begins with ourselves, with shifts in our own habits, and our customary ways of seeing and dealing with others.

JOURNEYING TOGETHER

Change is hard and shifting culture even harder. Perhaps the joy experienced at SIX Vancouver 2014 can in part be explained by a sense of shared struggle – struggle within one's organization, struggle within communities, struggle within oneself. The stories and exchanges surfaced the 'creative tensions' that exist in social innovation and the wonderful diversity of radical thinkers and doers in the space.

This report covers several days and multiple discussions about change processes, ideas that are working and some that are not. During SIX Vancouver, we were able to peel back the many layers of ongoing exploration and experimentation with social innovation processes. Away from this gathering, we can't wait to have all the recommended approaches in place to get started. In social innovation and public sector innovation work, we must prepare the conditions as best we can and begin the journey. We will learn together along the way, adapting the work with feedback from the system.

Cultural norms can make change difficult, throwing up assumptions and narratives that influence how we perceive, think about, or feel about a problem and possible solutions.

As we journey forward, let us listen with empathy to the different stakeholders to understand what roles are needed to bring unusual partners together towards common solutions. Let us lead the way in shifting from a culture that fiercely values independence toward a culture that celebrates and invests in interdependence. And because we are interdependent, let us cultivate a spirit of collaboration. It is both fundamentally valuable and fundamentally valued in social innovation.

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Nesta...



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vancouver
foundation



APPENDIX: RESOURCES AND REFERENCES

ALL LINKS ACTIVE AT TIME OF PUBLISHING

1. Social Innovation Exchange SIX Summer School 2014
2. Official Tumblr & blog of the 2014 SIX Summer School
3. Twitter handle and history: #SIXVan14
4. SIX Vancouver 2014 Storify
5. SiG Social Innovation Canada Resource Page: SIX Recap & Blogs
6. SiG Knowledge Hub
7. Grapevine UK
8. Fundación Escuela Nueva
9. Family By Family
10. Tyze
11. The Asset-Based Community Development (ABCD) Institute
12. The Change Lab, Reos Partners and SIG Workshop, 2011 [video]
13. Family By Family: Australian social innovation in action, MaRS Global Leadership and Inspiring Action for Social Impact Talk [video]
14. Transformative Scenario Planning: Working Together [book]
15. Dancing At the Edge – Competence, Culture and Organization in the 21st century [book]

LAB RESOURCES

1. SiG Social Innovation Labs page
2. SiG Knowledge Hub page
3. MaRS Solutions Lab
4. WISIR Social Innovation Lab Projects
5. Reos Partners

REPORTS

1. Innovation in Policy, MindLab and Nesta, October 2012
2. Radical Redesign The Australian Centre for Social Innovation, August 2011
3. Co-Production, Social Innovation Generation, March 2014
4. The Craft of Incentive Prize Design: Lessons from the Public Sector, Deloitte University Press, June 2014
5. Challenge Prizes: A Practical Guide, Nesta, 2014
6. i-teams: The Teams & Funds Making Innovation Happen in Governments Around the World, Nesta and Bloomberg Philanthropies, June 2014

Program

Tuesday, May 27

Theme: Arriving

Location: Lind Hall, False Creek Community Centre and site visits around Vancouver

Address: 1318 Cartwright Street, Vancouver

TIME	PROGRAM
9am - 10am	Bonus Site Visit Tour of Insite, Vancouver's safe injection site. Join the bonus morning tour, which compliments the Drug Policy site visit in the afternoon. Location: 137 East Hastings street, west of Main street on the north side
12 noon	Welcome at Lind Hall, False Creek Community Centre Opening Lunch Site Visit Orientation
1pm - 4:30pm	1pm All site visits leave from False Creek Community Centre Address: 1318 Cartwright Street, Vancouver Site Visits 1. Greenest City/Sustainability <i>hosted by One Earth</i> Address: Strathcona Business Improvement Association Resource Park (1245 E Hastings St.) & City Studio (1800 Spyglass Pl) 2. Learning from Indigenous Peoples / First Nations Culture <i>hosted by Michael Yahgulanaas</i> Address: Museum of Anthropology, 6393 NW Marine Dr 3. Community Wealth <i>hosted by Vancity Credit Union</i> Address: Vancity Head Office, 183 Terminal Avenue 4. Drug Policy and Safe Injection <i>hosted by Adam Kahane & Donald MacPherson</i> Address: Portland Hotel, 20 West Hastings Street just west of Carrall and Hastings on the south side
4:30pm - 5pm	Buses return to Granville Island Hotel and Best Western Hotel (718 Drake St.)
6pm - 9:30pm	Welcome to SIX! Dinner - Granville Island Dockside Restaurant Welcome to Vancouver, BC, and Canada! "This is Canada" entertainment

Wednesday, May 28

Theme: Diving Deep

Location: Musqueam Community Centre

Address: 6777 Salish Drive, Vancouver

TIME	PROGRAM
7:45am - 8am	Bus to Musqueam Community Centre Bus pick up at Best Western Hotel (718 Drake St.) at 7:45AM, and at Granville Island Hotel at 8:00AM
9am - 10am	Musqueam Nation Welcome and Official Opening of SIX
10am- 11am	Opening Address: How does culture affect our spirits, organizations and societies? What does this mean in different cultures and contexts? Frances Westley in conversation with Vickie Cammack Responders: Ada Wong, Chris Sigaloff and Dana Shen
11am - 11:30am	Break
11:30am - 12:30pm	Concurrent Sessions - Spirit Social innovation is enlightened by our convictions. By 'who' we are. Today's social innovators understand that their inner state of being affects how they act, which in turn affects the reaction of those they are engaged with. They pay attention to what nourishes and replenishes their spirit. <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Exploring our Nemesis - Cheryl Rose• Shifting from Hubris to Humility - Delyse Sylvester• The Shadow Side of Social Innovation - Tim Draimin• Creativity and the Imagination: the Language of Beauty - Cassie Robinson• The Sacred Headwaters of Social Innovation - Louise Pulford & Al Etmanski• Developing an Innovation Mindset - Jacqueline Simmons
12:30pm - 12:45pm	Plenary Shareback
12:45pm - 2pm	Lunch - Traditional Foods interspersed with Stories A trio of respected storytellers, David Roche, Chene Swart and Eli Enns, will refresh us during lunch.
2pm - 2:45pm	Musqueam Grounds Walks, talks, catching breath: reflection and conversation

Wednesday, May 28 cont'd:

Concurrent Sessions - Sectors Social innovators have to be wise travelers. The heroic, 'do it yourself,' model of social change makes for a good story but isn't true in practice. Social innovators need to work within and across their organisations, to think and act together for social innovation. What tools, processes, and strategies can support our everyday work? Which organisations have focused strategically on shifting culture for change and how do they do it?		
	CONCURRENT SESSIONS	DOUBLE SESSION
2:45pm-3:50pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experimenting with Enemies and Strangers - Adam Kahane, Joeri van den Steenhoven & Jesper Christiansen • Negotiating Risks - Raheel Mohammed & Sarah Schulman • Flipping the power: investing in relationships, not just dollars - Alice Evans & Stephen Huddart 	Rainbow of Desire - David Diamond The Rainbow (of fear) and Desire is a beautiful theatre technique that Diamond has adapted from Augusto Boal's Theatre of the Oppressed to honour multiple sides of a complex story. If you participate in this session, you must engage in the full 2.5 hour session (there will be a short break).
3:50pm - 4:10pm	Break	
4:10pm-5:15pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "You're doing what?" Becoming a cultural translator - Kristin Wolff & Allyson Hewitt • Scaling and replicating cultures - Dana Shen & Darcy Riddell • Taking a relational approach: how to design trust - Carla Cipolla & Vanessa Timmer 	Rainbow of Desire cont'd
5:15pm - 5:40pm	Closing Session: Inspirational example of an organization making culture changes - Vicky Colbert	
5:40pm - 6:10pm	Buses return to Granville Island Hotel and Best Western Hotel (718 Drake St.)	
7pm	Dinner on Granville Island at Backstage Lounge (1585 Johnston St #2)	
8:30pm	A casual, reflective evening featuring a facilitated cross-generational dialogue. A "Generation Y-er" and a Baby Boomer discuss the elements of power, love and culture in the context of social change. The event is open to the public and participants of the SIX . Produced by Gen Why Media, creators of the Bring Your Boomer dialogue series. Featuring April Rinne, Sarah Schulman, Tara Mahoney	

Thursday, May 29

Theme: Surfacing

Location: Emily Carr University of Art and Design, Granville Island

Address: South Building-Lecture Theatre 1400 Johnston Street

TIME	PROGRAM
9am - 9:15am	Welcome Back
9:15am- 10:15am	Change from the inside out - Getting down to business Large institutions are often difficult to change, especially those that are well established with a history of working in a certain way. However, old ways are not always best. This session will explore how these giants think and act to get better results with Tamara Vrooman and Ana Botero.
10:15am - 10:30am	Break
10:30am - 12pm	Concurrent Sessions - Working Together: Life in Practice (Emily Carr University of Art and Design, North and South Buildings) This concurrent will explore challenges and opportunities in this sector through real life cases from organizations and/or initiatives. Groups will move through a process where they act as peer consultants, stimulating learning by all. Global and local case studies
12:15pm - 1pm	Lunch at Bridges Restaurant (1696 Duranleau Street, Granville Island)
1:15pm - 2:45pm	Concurrent Sessions - Systems in Society (Emily Carr University of Art and Design, North and South Buildings) The world is changing and it is our job as social innovators to pay attention to these changes and how we react. This session will explore what we should pay attention to, what we should nurture and how we should react. Presentations and dialogues will explore nurturing the conditions for social innovations to grow as opposed to thinking you can force change. <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Nurturing Wealth - Stephen Huddart, Geoff Mulgan & Ken Gauthier• Nurturing Good Governance - Molly Harrington, Sadhu Johnston, & Aditya Dev Sood• Nurturing Caring - Donna Thompson, Vickie Cammack & Jon Huggett• Nurturing Organizational Culture - Chris Sigaloff, Derek Gent & David Phipps• Nurturing Health - Simon Tucker, Andrew Barnett & Dave Doig
3:00pm - 3:45pm	Thinking and acting like a Movement (Bridges Restaurant, 1696 Duranleau Street) David Diamond Ambassadors of Culture, Empathy, Generations, Courage, Empowerment and Beauty
3:45pm - 4:15pm	Closing plenary of SIX Vancouver
4:15pm - 5:00pm	Closing drinks at Bridges Restaurant
6:15pm - 9:00pm	FUEL Dialogues hosted by Cause and Affect Hear the edge of future thinking in design, food, technology and sustainability from global visionaries as they discuss/debate their challenges, share their insights, and describe what's coming next in a unique forum that is bound to shift personal understanding of the "way we live." An after party starts at 9:30pm with food, music and good company. Ada Wong, Geoff Mulgan Time: Doors open at 6pm, and event dialogues begin 6:30pm. After party kicks off at 9pm Location: Vancouver Playhouse, 600 Dunsmuir St, Vancouver