BRAVE NEW WORK

How can we thrive in the changing world of work?

2018 COMMUNITY SUMMIT
FINAL REPORT
Every year, as part of SFU’s deep commitment to building social infrastructure and strengthening the fabric of our society, we convene thousands of participants for a Community Summit that addresses a distinct issue affecting people’s lives.

For the 2018 Community Summit, we turned our focus to one of the world’s emergent issues: the future of work. No matter who we talked to about the theme, we were met with an avid response. Despite age, education, heritage, and sector, the topic resonated with everyone, and each could identify a context for being engaged by the discussion.

The subject matter is complex. Automation, artificial intelligence, big data, shifting demographics, and the rise of precarious employment are only some of the factors contributing to how, when, and where we work. Consistently and rapidly, work is changing, and we’re already seeing a new landscape emerge — one that, depending on your outlook, offers promise and prosperity, or uncertainty and increased inequality.

We began by designing a survey that would allow our community to articulate its outlook on the issue as well as undertaking our own review of the current research to understand how others were framing the topic. From there came many conversations, idea jams, and consultations with academics, students, researchers, businesses, governments, think tanks, and unions.

Highlighted again and again was the idea that one of the biggest barriers to creating effective solutions was the lack of shared understanding of the problem. Further to that, many articulated the

“"The new world of work is already here, and we are trying to understand this new and constantly shifting landscape. This year’s Community Summit provides us with the opportunity to consider what collective and individual actions we can take to ensure that we can all thrive.” —Janet Webber, Executive Director, SFU Public Square
need for collective action to take place across sectors, socioeconomic status, and silos — after all, we’re all a part of the new world of work. Fortunately, our Community Summits are designed with exactly this intent, to help raise awareness, allow for the exchange of knowledge, and create an environment where diverse ecosystems can form and creative, collaborative solutions can emerge.

Through our research, discussions, and the formation of exciting partnerships and collaborations, the Community Summit’s theme — Brave New Work: How can we thrive in the changing world of work? — emerged.

Looking back, I’m proud of what we accomplished, and I’m inspired by the curiosity, energy, enthusiasm, and ideas that participants brought to the events. Thank you to everyone who helped make the Community Summit a reality: partners, collaborators, supporters, attendees and lastly, the staff, interns, and volunteers that make up the SFU Public Square team — your valuable contributions are integral to the Community Summit.

We are most grateful for the generous support of the Jarislowsky Foundation. Dr. Jarislowsky’s continuing record of philanthropy and civic leadership stands as one of the best examples of global citizenship and democratic engagement. He has been active in educational, cultural, and charitable activities of many kinds, has endowed more than 23 university chairs, and contributes frequently to television, radio, magazines, and newspapers. We are also thankful for the continued support of our annual Community Summit partner Vancity. This ongoing partnership demonstrates Vancity’s incredible commitment to fostering community development and generating social impact in British Columbia.

Please enjoy this reflective report, which provides an overview of Brave New Work, stories of engagement and impact, and legacy projects. And don’t forget to subscribe to our newsletter and follow us on social media to stay up to date. In 2019, the Community Summit will tackle another emergent global issue: post-truth in the information age. I hope you’ll join us.

JANET WEBBER
Executive Director, SFU Public Square
At SFU Public Square, we believe that post-secondary institutions have both the capability – and the responsibility – to make a difference. SFU’s community of students, staff, faculty, and alumni make this impact possible. We leverage their expertise, passion, and authentic commitment to community engagement to make the Community Summit informed, relevant, and meaningful.

But more than that, we build bridges between SFU and our community partners, facilitating the exchange of knowledge, ideas, and fostering the development of new networks. And it is this ability to utilize these institutional resources that makes the Community Summit such a rich example of successful community-university partnership. At the end of the day, our work is about strengthening the fabric of society, and we could not do this work without the support of our friends and colleagues at SFU. This section outlines the incredible contributions and partnerships with our community.

Brave New Work enabled a multitude of new collaborations with many programs and departments at SFU. Chief among those new partnerships was SFU Innovates, a university-wide strategy and action plan to inspire, develop, and support impact-driven innovation and entrepreneurship. This partnership had us working closely with several SFU Innovates leaders to amplify the research, entrepreneurship, social innovation, incubation, and acceleration taking place throughout the institution.

SFU Innovates and Vancouver | Work in the 21st Century: Innovations in Research was presented in partnership with SFU Innovates, SFU Vancouver, the Beedie School of Business, and the SFU Vancity Office.

“If we hope to maximize the benefits of all this change, citizens must act collectively with a sense of shared purpose and determination. That’s the agenda for this Community Summit, to engage you, the public, on a dialogue concerning how we shape the future of work, and how we build the society we desire.”

–Andrew Petter, President, SFU
of Community Engagement. This evening featured SFU students, faculty, alumni and community partners demonstrating how our community of researchers and entrepreneurs are leading the way in making innovative impacts in the new world of work, making work more productive, safe, equitable, and inclusive.

Hosted by Joy Johnson, Vice-President, Research and International at SFU, and Laurie Anderson, Executive Director, SFU Vancouver, the event featured rapid-fire presentations interspersed with breaks for interactive demonstrations, networking, and informal mingling between audience members and presenters. Some of the topics included improving health and well-being in the workplace, social benefits of co-working spaces, challenges and opportunities for leading-edge companies in the sharing economy, and the power of social hiring policies in facilitating economic inclusion.

Work in the 21st Century showcased the projects and gave the presenters opportunities to connect with prospective collaborators, supporters, and funders, all in an effort to turn their ideas into action.

RADIUS SFU | Another key institutional collaboration was with RADIUS SFU, a social innovation lab and venture incubator focused on leveraging people, systems, and solutions to create a healthy, sustainable economy. Given their systems change expertise and the complexity of the future of work landscape, inviting them to lead an event was only fitting. Together, RADIUS SFU and the Banff Centre for Arts and Creativity developed ReframeWork, a gathering of innovators and thought leaders focused on moving from insights to meaningful systemic change.

65 participants from across Canada and Europe including government officials, technologists, educators, researchers, and entrepreneurs gathered to share their expertise on challenges and opportunities created by the future of work. Over two days, the group explored how Canada can lead in forming new systems for good work and identified rich opportunities to engage Canadians in building the new models they want to see.

The session began with a solid grounding of what “good work” means to Canadians. Following this framing discussion, participants heard stories highlighting various perspectives on how people are confronting the future and present of work across the country. During a pre-interview consultation process in the months leading up to ReframeWork, participants identified four key areas to address in smaller groups:

1. New systems for non-standard work
2. Automation for good work
3. Designing for continuous transitions
4. Share in wealth creation

After breaking out into these themed discussion groups, participants surfaced motivating questions and challenges that they were driven to explore or solve, including envisioning what work in 2035 could look like. These ideas were shared as a group and clustered to identify emerging areas of interest. After identifying patterns, the group chose top ideas and worked them into actionable exemplars, which were shared with the whole group for feedback. Finally, participants voted for ‘iconic exemplars’ amongst the experimental ideas that emerged.

Post-event, most participants have stayed in touch individually, and over 90% indicated they would like to continue to be involved in future projects.

In fact, ReframeWork was the first step in what RADIUS SFU and the Banff Centre expect to be a five year journey. The Canadian Future of Work Lab will engage citizen entrepreneurs in building tangible models of the world we want to live in, uncover and build promising innovations, and activate a network of leaders from across sectors to steward the change. Entrepreneurial action has a role to play in shaping future systems; the approach will be optimistic, creative, and proactive. As a site of experimentation, research, and development, the lab will bridge what we learn to guide policy development and institutional innovation towards the change we collectively seek. More details about this program are coming soon.

“ReframeWork did a very good job of helping us shift our understanding of the future of work and connected the network in a thoughtful way. As a result of this gathering, the people who came together can help support each other in their work.” –Jeremy Higgs, Chief Labour Market Economist, Government of B.C.
Labour Studies Program | The support of SFU’s academics is critical to the intellectual credibility of our Community Summit. Kendra Strauss, Director of SFU’s Labour Studies Program played an instrumental role in shaping Brave New Work. Early in the planning process, Dr. Strauss suggested that the Community Summit would be a great opportunity to make visible the working realities that are invisible to many of us. In order for us to create a new world of work where everyone can thrive, we must understand the experience of workers outside of our own frames of reference.

To amplify the stories and experiences of traditionally marginalized workers, we partnered with the SFU Labour Studies Program and SFU Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies to host Worker Writers and the Poetics of Labour, a two-day writing workshop, followed by a public poetry reading. This event was designed to encourage new literary voices, inviting participants to become new narrators of the working class experience and to encourage social change in workplaces for the 21st century.

For the last fifteen years, Mark Nowak, Director, Worker Writers School, has run free creative writing workshops for marginalized workers across the globe. Over two days, he led a group of participants including an office manager, a Downtown Eastside support worker, a canvasser, a freelancer, and others through formal training in poetic forms and styles before having them put pen to paper. Some participants had no formal poetry writing experience, while others were looking to build on previous education. Through the process, participants bonded and shared stories and experiences of what ‘work’ is to them. The worker writers concluded by sharing their work at a public reading presented in partnership with the Vancouver Public Library, Family friends, colleagues, and community members were given a brief but meaningful glimpse into the worker writers’ lives.

“The weekend workshop was much more than I could have hoped for and I truly appreciate the opportunity to have been a part of it.” – Sandra Djak Kovacs, Participant in the Worker Writer School

“Another Day at The Office”

She works at the computer,
Typing, deleting,
Deleting, typing,
Working to get out on time

Her sweater wraps round her shoulders,
A shield from the cold,
The thermostat is out,
Her feet freeze.

He throws the report under her nose,
“Not good enough.”
The smell of failure,
His manicured hands point and wave.

Tears well up in her eyes,
Garbled words sputter from her loose mouth,
Tears flow freely; she puts her jacket on.
He leaves without a word.

– Sandra Djak Kovacs
Career and Volunteer Services | During our research phase, we heard a lot about underemployment and the growing sense of a disconnect between employers’ needs and graduating students’ experience.

To address this disconnect, we collaborated with Tony Botelho, Director, SFU Career and Volunteer Services to co-present Preparing Students for the Future World of Work. This day-long event for career educators and advisors focused on how post-secondary institutions can ensure their students are ready to meet employment demands after graduation. This sold-out talk was presented in partnership with the Canadian Association of Career Educators and Employers (CACEE) as a shoulder event to the 2018 B.C. Career Development Conference.

Internationally-renowned career theorist Jim Bright spoke to how we can modernize career education and advising so that it reflects current employment realities and resonates with students. Dr. Bright emphasized that in order to adequately prepare students for the world of work, educators and advisors must teach their students skills like opportunity identification, strategic thinking, and resilience, along with encouraging multi-track scenario planning (and scenario abandoning).

Kris Magnusson, Dean, Faculty of Education, SFU, echoed many of Dr. Bright’s observations during a talk that encompassed the new B.C. curriculum and how and why career education fails, stressing that a career is a constellation of roles and learning throughout an individual’s life. Nancy Johnston, Vice Provost, Students and International, Pro-fem at SFU, further emphasized the need for students to be agile, responsive, flexible, and prepared for multiple careers throughout their lifetimes, and made the case that learning the different ways a skill can transfer is just as important as the skill itself.

After a group discussion and Q&A period, SFU career educators stayed for a closed door debrief session to discuss how the learnings from the event can be applied to their interactions with students to better prepare them for the changing world of work.

KRIS MAGNUSSON’S 5 CAREER SURVIVAL SKILLS

Self-assessment and reflection
Identify opportunities
Connect what I have to offer with what is needed
Documenting impact and demonstrating effectiveness
Communicating impact

“I found the presentations very timely and relevant to the work we are doing in terms of training and educating advisors. We will add new context to how we teach and train the Appreciative Advising framework to new advisors. Thanks for a fantastic event!” – SFU Staff in attendance

Institute for the Humanities | In recent years, the concept of a “universal” or “guaranteed” basic income has gained significant popularity and is often brought up as a response to the systemic employment gaps that, some would argue, characterize the new world of work. To discuss this policy, we partnered with Samir Gandesha, Director, SFU’s Institute for the Humanities, to host Basic Income: Progressive Hopes and Neoliberal Realities.

The event brought John Clarke, Organizer, Ontario Anti-Poverty Coalition, together with Jenna van Draanen, member of the board of directors, Basic Income Canada Network; Duane Fontaine, PhD Candidate, Graduate Liberal Studies Program, SFU; Trish Garner, Provincial Organizer, B.C. Poverty Reduction Coalition; and Michal Rozworski, union researcher and economist, for a critical discussion on a basic income policy in Canada.

Clarke opened by challenging the assumption that a basic income would alleviate poverty. Panel respondents weighed in with their takes before fielding audience questions on the feasibility, potential benefits, and consequences of such a policy. The event brought the important intersection of policy and inequality firmly into the conversation around the future of work.

The partnership continued several days later with an academic symposium called Art, Labour, and the Future of Work. Over two days, deans, professors, graduate students, and researchers from SFU and abroad presented, critiqued, and discussed scholarship that envisaged an automation-driven world without employment and interrogated our traditional conceptions of labour. Panel topics ranged from Marxist and Gramscian conceptions of cultural hegemony, to examinations of life as a non-value creator, to labour through the lens of cultural production and authorship.
City Conversations | No Community Summit is complete without a special edition of SFU City Conversations, a free monthly public dialogue on topics affecting civic life, hosted in partnership with SFU Vancouver and SFU’s City Program. For this particular conversation, we partnered with the Simon Fraser Student Society (SFSS) Women’s Centre to co-create Making Visible the Invisible: The Intersectionality of Invisible Labour, an exploration of how different intersectional identities are systematically disadvantaged and burdened by stereotypical and gendered notions of labour.

Our guest moderator, Ellen Woodsworth, Founder and Chair, Women Transforming Cities, led a discussion between experts from SFU and the community, including Kendra Strauss, Director, the SFU Labour Studies Program; Habiba Zaman, Professor, SFU’s Department of Gender, Sexuality, and Women’s Studies, and Natalie Drolet, Executive Director–Staff Lawyer, Migrant Workers Centre. The conversation was focused on the fact that certain workers, particularly women, people of colour and migrant workers, are often exposed to greater degrees of inequality and expected to take on invisible, unpaid labour including domestic, emotional, and care work. For everyone to thrive in the new world of work, we must reappraise how we value all configurations of labour.

The benefits of this collaboration were vast. Beyond creating the space for community voices and knowledge exchange, it gave us the opportunity to strengthen our relationship with the SFSS, co-create programming, and raise awareness about the programs and services offered by the SFSS Women’s Centre.

Continuing Studies | Much of the discourse around the future of work is framed around young people and their futures. But what about the growing segment of older adults who are finding themselves working past what are traditionally considered “retirement” years? In a collaboration with SFU Continuing Studies, we co-hosted a special edition of Philosophers’ Cafe, Work and Purpose Later in Life. This extremely popular and well-attended free community dialogue, hosted by Roz Kaplan, Director, and Mark Smith, Program Coordinator, SFU Liberal Arts 55+, brought together community members and mature students for a discussion about the future of older adults in an increasingly intergenerational workforce.

Both practical and philosophical, the event covered a range of topics including the challenges unique to older workers at a time when retirement is becoming an increasingly distant reality, to understanding what workforce and economic participation looks like as seniors move past the point of traditional retirement. This topic clearly resonated with the community; due to overwhelming demand, a second edition of this event took place at SFU after the conclusion of Brave New Work.

Sustainability Office | After receiving Sustainable Office Gold Certification from SFU’s Sustainability Office in 2017, we took it to the next level by certifying all Brave New Work activities as Sustainable Events with Gold Certification. This included ensuring each event made an effort to reduce energy consumption, eliminate unnecessary waste, refuse items with unnecessary packaging, and select low-impact, local, and sustainable food options.

Community Ambassadors Program | We also had the privilege of collaborating with the SFU Community Ambassadors Program during several events to provide paid work opportunities in diverse roles including event hosting, photography, and videography. The SFU Community Ambassadors Program, guided by SFU Surrey, creates opportunities for capacity building and economic participation among individuals facing barriers to traditional employment. Economic inclusion is an important part of ensuring that everyone can thrive in the new world of work, and SFU Public Square jumped at the chance to create new opportunities for nine community members we were proud to call Ambassadors.

“The Community Summit provided a wonderful platform for Community Ambassadors to be involved in a high-caliber learning event that explores cutting edge topics, and we look forward to future collaborations!” –Rachel Nelson, Associate Director, Partnerships and Programs, SFU Office of Community Engagement
“I really enjoy volunteering for SFU Public Square because it allows me to get more involved in events, both on campus and in our community. The events I have attended are topical and focus on participation and dialogue, which connects to what I am learning in my certificate in Sustainable Community Development.” –Sarah Duggan, SFU Public Square Volunteer

As volunteers, work-study students, and interns, these students gained valuable real world experience in areas such as research, marketing, event planning, and design. At Community Summit events, students joined alumni and senior community volunteers to form volunteer teams, gaining event hosting, outreach, and on-site communications experience.

These students were fully-integrated members of the team, attending staff meetings and regularly meeting with a supervisor to receive professional development support and constructive feedback on their work. Their experience with SFU Public Square helped them grow as professionals and prepare for future work experiences. And in return, their meaningful contributions at all stages of Brave New Work were critical to the success of our Community Summit.

We were also pleased to support the work of SFU student groups, inviting Embark Sustainability, the Graduate Business Student Association, and the Student Health Advisory Committee to design their own events and make them a part of the Community Summit. During the event development phase, we acted as advisors as they developed framing, designed the event format, and invited speakers. We then provided event logistics and promotional support, helping them amplify their events and reach new audiences.

We strongly believe in these types of student-led partnerships; by empowering SFU’s student community and building capacity, we benefit from their meaningful contributions to the Community Summit. In turn, they receive support where they need it, gain experience, and engage their communities on the issues that matter to them the most.

Embark Sustainability | In the early planning stages of Brave New Work, a partnership was struck between Embark Sustainability, a student-led non-profit, and SFU Public Square. Embark’s mission, to engage SFU student members in change making and inspire sustainability leadership, led to the development of Climate of Work, an event addressing the future of work through the lens of climate change and sustainability.

The event, hosted at CityStudio Vancouver, showcased three climate action leaders in the local community. Each gave a short presentation on how their work relates to climate change and how the global climate
I really appreciate SFU Public Square’s effort to raise awareness towards labour issues and execute changes within workplaces. This was a great learning opportunity for me as a student. Congratulations SFU Public Square for hosting a successful event!” –Claudia Chan, student from Labour Movements: Contemporary Issues and Images LBST 301W

Crisis impacts our labour force and sectors not typically associated with climate change. Hilary Miller, Client Advisor, Climate Smart, discussed the importance of integrating climate adaptation strategies to all sectors of work, including for-profit businesses. Veronica Bylicki, Co-director, CityHive, illustrated how civic engagement is at the core of youth mobilization towards climate action. George Benson, Strategic Initiatives Coordinator, City of New Westminster, emphasized the integral role of storytelling in communicating the impacts of climate change. He also highlighted the importance of constantly learning to be able to integrate sustainability in all sectors of society.

Following the presentations, each speaker hosted three intimate networking sessions. This space for dialogue enabled both participants and speakers to connect directly, creating a sense of community in the face of climate change, along with sharing invaluable advice for transitioning from the university to a sustainable career.

Climate of Work uncovered the immediacy for climate action in all fields of work and provided clear examples of how that might take shape. Participants left the space having made connections between climate change and various fields of work including city planning, health, and finance.

Beedie School of Business Graduate Business Student Association (GBSA) | During faculty consultations in the planning stages of Brave New Work, the Beedie School of Business approached us with the idea of a business student-led event focused on the future of work. This conversation blossomed into Beyond Bitcoin: Blockchain and the Future of Work, an event designed for future business leaders, and developed entirely by the GBSA.

To determine the graduate business students’ primary interests, the GBSA conducted student consultations and launched a survey to narrow the prospective focus. Not surprisingly, there was considerable interest in how blockchain technology could be used in financial services, along with its implications on supply chain management and legal frameworks. The GBSA then worked to create a panel that was diverse and representative of the various areas of blockchain, featuring experts from tech, law, supply chain management, and finance. SFU School of Communications Professor Dr. Peter Chow-White provided an opening presentation and also moderated a panel of experts discussing potential use-cases.

The blockchain event was timely for the full-time MBA students. Students in attendance were able to bring new knowledge into the classroom and open up further discussions as to how blockchain can change work for the better. The experience has resulted in plans for the GBSA to use the event as a springboard, with the hopes of creating an annual speaker series on topics that are new and noteworthy to graduate business students and the greater community.

Health Promotion | In September, SFU Public Square attended Week of Welcome events at all three campuses, talking to new and returning students about their thoughts, hopes, and concerns about the future of work. Across all campuses, students envisioned a future with workplaces that place more emphasis on maintaining good mental health. They also expressed concern around receiving mental health support to help mitigate the stressors that come along with being both students and workers.

In order to start a conversation about the future of workplace well-being, SFU Health Promotion and the Student Health Advisory Committee developed Building Your Resilience: Learn Key Strategies for Enhancing Your Success Now and in the Future. At this interactive, student-focused event, attendees learned strategies for enhancing well-being at school and work during presentations by members of SFU’s Health Promotion and Career and Volunteer Services teams. Then, in small breakout groups facilitated by students from the Health Sciences 449 class, attendees identified opportunities to embed greater resilience throughout SFU. Some key themes to emerge focused on enhanced support services, built environment, and social engagement. These student-generated themes will be used to inform both SFU’s Mental Health Strategy as well as SFU’s Healthy Campus Community initiative.

Classroom Partnership Program | SFU Public Square was thrilled to continue its annual Community Summit Classroom Partnership Program by collaborating with three SFU faculty members. Students in Labour Studies classes taught by faculty Noah Quastel and John-Henry Harter were given the option to join the SFU Public Square team at various events during the Community Summit and receive course credit for their involvement. As part of their coursework, students in Paola Ardiles’ Community and Health Services class facilitated student dialogues on mental health in the aforementioned Building Your Resilience event, and wrote reflective journal entries about what they learned about community health services by participating in a facilitation process.

The Classroom Partnership Program gave 28 SFU students the opportunity to learn first-hand about the realities of labour and workplace issues from industry, labour, and government professionals and bring these insights back to their coursework. To learn more about this program, visit the “student opportunities” section of the SFU Public Square website.
Once we realized that to properly prepare ourselves for programming on the future of work we would need to take the conversation across sectors, platforms, communities, and even nations, we thought it important to ensure we convened speakers from outside of Canada. Given that the new world of work is global in scope, and has profound effects at the local level, we endeavoured to manage a strategic balance throughout the Community Summit.

**The New World of Work: Thriving or Surviving?** For the signature Brave New Work event we collaborated closely with our long-term exclusive presentation partner, Vancity. As a values-based financial institution with a focus on community investment, Vancity is committed to preparing and supporting its members as we move into the new world of work. With their thought leadership and generous support, we were pleased to co-present two world-renowned speakers leading America’s transition to the new world of work; Van Jones and Anne-Marie Slaughter.

The event began with Chepximiya Siyam’ Chief Janice George welcoming thousands of attendees to the Traditional, Ancestral, Unceded Territories of the Musqueam, Squamish, and Tsleil-Waututh First Nations. SFU President Andrew Petter then took the stage to introduce the event and the moderator, CBC’s award-winning journalist Laura Lynch.

Jones and Slaughter each delivered a keynote presentation on how we can thrive, and not just survive, in the new world of work. The presentations brought in each speaker’s expertise, drawing from their public policy work with previous US federal administrations, activist, law, foreign policy and academic work, as well as with their respective foundations.

“When we talk about work and work of the future, we need to be embedding and embracing our connections; with each other, with our communities, with the planet... We can create the world that we want, one community at a time.”

—Anita Braha, Chair, Vancity Board of Directors
Anne-Marie Slaughter is the former Director of Policy Planning for the U.S. State Department and currently the CEO and Founder of the New America Foundation, an organization dedicated to renewing the American economy in the digital age. She reiterated the urgency of addressing the “future of work” because significant change is already underway.

During her presentation, Slaughter highlighted three important future-proofed sectors of the economy: the circular economy, the care economy, and the craft economy. During pre-event lobby activities at the theatre, attendees mingled with local social enterprise owners in the Vancity “thriving” marketplace. Slaughter argued that these socially responsible businesses making “craft” products are critical in ensuring the resilience of any economy.

Van Jones, President and Founder of Dream Corps, CNN host, and the former green jobs special advisor to the Obama administration, delivered a talk that emphasized the need for individuals to be flexible, responsive, and able to pivot to new challenges. He argued that technology is advancing so rapidly that developing a linear plan is not a viable strategy for thriving.

Jones also asserted that the traditional, male-dominated corporate structures in North America have created the conditions for our society to collectively waste genius. A team functions best when it has diversity of thought, leveraging the perspectives of those from different countries, cultures, and classes. Hiring diverse teams not only breaks down racist, sexist, and classist barriers to participation, it also leads to better and more innovative outcomes.

Both speakers emphasized the unpredictability of what the future holds, the need to be imaginative, and the immediacy with which we need to prepare ourselves. After the presentations, Lynch moderated a discussion between the speakers, bringing the conversation firmly into the Canadian context, touching on workforce housing strategies, leveraging the employment experience of newcomers, and potential policy changes to improve the lives of workers in Canada.

To enable in-person and online audience members to participate in the discussion, Lynch opened up the conversation by encouraging viewers to use Slido, a digital engagement tool. During the conversation, hundreds of audience members used their smartphones to ask burning questions and cast thousands of votes for their favourites submitted by themselves or others.

At the conclusion of the conversation, Anita Braha, Chair, Vancity Board of Directors, closed by emphasizing the importance of embedding and embracing connections, with each other, with communities, and with the planet.

The inspirational conversation extended beyond the walls of the Queen Elizabeth Theatre and the thousands of participants attending, resonating with digital audiences nationwide. Hundreds of viewers tuned into the live webcast, streamed via Facebook Live and YouTube, with hundreds more having watched the archived video on Youtube at the time of writing. The buzz on social media was palpable as well; during the event, the Twitter hashtag #bravenewwork was the #1 trending topic in Canada. Canadians are rightfully concerned about their employment prospects, their retirement, and the futures of their children, and the level of interest on digital platforms signals the urgency and necessity of such a conversation.
This urgency and pertinence of the Community Summit theme was echoed by media outlets across Canada. Stories about Brave New Work and labour issues appeared in print and radio outlets like The Vancouver Sun, The Province, StarMetro Vancouver, CBC Radio One, News 1130, and News Talk 980. Reporters wrote stories about gender in the workplace, universal basic income pilot project explorations in Canada, and the growing threat of workplace automation, along with event previews and reviews. Several stories were picked up by other outlets across Canada including The Montreal Gazette, The Windsor Star, The Regina Leader-Post, as well as major online outlets including CBC, Yahoo! News Canada, and Yahoo! Finance.

CBC Radio One also produced several segments in tandem with the Community Summit. On launch day, Stephen Harrington from Deloitte Canada joined On the Coast with Gloria Macarenko for a conversation about how Canada, in the face of automation, can create more opportunities for meaningful, high-value, future-proofed human work. A few days later, Veronika Bylicki and Cicely-Belle Blain, two independent workers participating in the Urban Worker Project Skillshare, were invited to speak about the challenges faced by young workers in the gig economy. The next morning, Habiba Zaman, Professor, SFU’s Department of Gender, Sexuality, and Women’s Studies, joined Stephen Quinn on The Early Edition for a discussion about the exploitation of migrant labour and Canada’s temporary foreign worker program. The radio segments amplified the voices of several Brave New Work participants, raising awareness of the issues and the Community Summit overall.

We also continued our Community Summit op-ed series, an annual partnership with The Vancouver Sun. Ten thought leaders contributed written pieces running each day of the Community Summit, expanding on themes addressed during the Brave New Work programming as well as drawing attention to other important facets of the topic. The op-eds created new entry points into the conversation, added depth to the discourse, and brought new perspectives to light, all in an effort to raise awareness and generate new public interest in Canadian labour issues. In all, earned media coverage reached more than eight million people, bringing conversations about inclusive innovation, labour policy reform, unionization of independent workers, and the role of education in facilitating a bright future of work for all into homes across Canada.

ALL EARNED MEDIA, OP-EDS, AND COVERAGE ASSOCIATED WITH BRAVE NEW WORK CAN BE FOUND IN THE “MEDIA ROOM” SECTION OF THE SFU PUBLIC SQUARE WEBSITE.
A primary goal of each Community Summit is to act as a platform to amplify existing efforts, encourage new collaborations, and foster ecosystem development, all in support of building social infrastructure. During the planning and execution of Brave New Work, we partnered with 24 external organizations, including all levels of government, businesses, professional service organizations, NGOs, public institutions, unions, and research institutes to create dynamic, current, and engaging programming. The partnerships were strategic, in that these organizations and individuals are well-positioned to continue the work post-Community Summit. Brave New Work provided a unique opportunity for knowledge exchange, scaling potential impact, and encouraging innovation.

Deloitte Canada | One of our strongest partnerships was with Deloitte Canada, an organization with which we collaborated to create the Community Summit launch event The Future of Work in Canada: Emerging Trends and Opportunities. Beyond acting as a presenting sponsor, senior members of the Deloitte team provided invaluable expertise gleaned from decades of research and consultation with some of the world’s leading firms. Several representatives from Deloitte Canada were involved in other Community Summit activities, speaking on panels, attending workshops, and contributing an op-ed to our annual Vancouver Sun Community Summit series.

During the opening panel of The Future of Work in Canada, Stephen Harrington, Senior Manager, Talent Strategies, Human Capital, Deloitte Canada, delivered a high level presentation drawing from Deloitte’s...
“Diversity is a fact, but inclusion is a choice. How companies choose to address diversity is where inclusion comes in.”

–Tara Van Zuiden, Deloitte Canada

“The Intelligence Revolution: Future-proofing Canada’s workforce. Over the course of the rest of the day, interactive panels made up of senior staff from leading organizations including Microsoft, RBC, BC Hydro, LinkedIn, Vancity, and Futurpreneur discussed topics ranging from how universities and businesses can work together to enhance mobility from education to employment, to how alternative business models can enhance the way we work, to how to ethically integrate automation and A.I. into both established and emerging organizations.

During a panel discussion on how to leverage the “buzz” of diversity, equity, and inclusivity into real, tangible outcomes, Tara Van Zuiden, Senior Manager, Talent Strategies, Deloitte Canada, emphasized that “leaders cast a long shadow” when it comes to driving organizational change and holding others accountable.

During registration and break times, attendees were encouraged to visit Deloitte’s interactive booth, featuring software that enables its users to determine the degree to which their organization can reshape its existing workforce with automation, remote work, and outsourcing. The booth further complemented the theme of the event, creating new opportunities for businesspeople to understand the effects of technology on their own organizations.

Deloitte Canada’s involvement in the Community Summit was of significant benefit to SFU Public Square and Brave New Work attendees, and the partnership created new opportunities for businesspeople to exchange knowledge with new audiences and take part in workshops with other leading organizations, institutions, and governments addressing the future of work in Canada.

“Yesterday was a magical day at #skillshare2yvr. My entire life I’ve always been my own boss, building my own career without many mentors and it’s felt very lonely.”

–Skillshare participant

Urban Worker Project | Another important partnership was with the Urban Worker Project, a national non-profit initiative aimed at raising the issues and the voices of independent workers, an increasingly large segment of the population. Studies suggest that by 2020, as many as 45% of Canadian workers will be self-employed, freelancers, or on short-term contracts, all considered independent and all without the rights, benefits, and protections afforded to traditional full-time workers. Under the leadership of former Member of Parliament Andrew Cash, the Urban Worker Project is working to build a movement for policy and political changes that can help make work better for this rapidly growing segment of the Canadian workforce.

To connect directly with independent workers in Vancouver, the Urban Worker Project hosted its second annual Skillshare during Brave New Work. The Skillshare offered a full day of à la carte programming including panel discussions, workshops, and “ask an expert” consultations to workers who are “independent by choice” (like freelancers and entrepreneurs) and “independent by chance” (like seasonal and contract-based workers.) From branding to rate setting, goal development to career mentorship, participants learned practical skills from veteran independent workers, allowing them to better navigate the sometimes lonely and confusing world of independent work.
The Skillshare was a resounding success, equipping a cross-sectoral, intergenerational, and intercultural group of independent workers with tangible skills and knowledge for the largely contingent new world of work. The day also created the space for labour activists and policy makers to come together with senior independent workers for a much-needed conversation about improving protections for independent workers. Finally, the Skillshare bolstered the Urban Worker Project’s west coast profile, amplifying and diversifying their geographic reach, and helped advance their goal to make work better for independent workers.

City of Vancouver | To directly address local opportunities and issues, we partnered with the City of Vancouver to co-host Creating a Diverse and Resilient Economy in Metro Vancouver. The conversation was focused on how local governments can work together to facilitate the growth of industries from the future from a land-use perspective. Before a room filled with planners, developers, urbanists, politicians, and citizens, Gil Kelley, General Manager of Planning, Urban Design, and Sustainability, City of Vancouver, and Heather McNel, Director of Regional Planning, Metro Vancouver, brought impactful opening remarks that touched on how land use shapes the future of a region.

A diverse group of panelists featuring Bryan Buggey, Director, Strategic Initiatives and Sector Development, Vancouver Economic Commission; Peter Hall, Professor and Director of SFU’s Urban Studies program; Shachi Kurt, Executive Director, Angus Reid Institute; and Andrew Petrozzi, Principal and Vice-President, Research (B.C.), Avison Young, outlined trends and issues related to employment that local governments should consider in preparing for the future through the lens of shifting demographics, zoning, and planning in the regional economy.

During a panel discussion moderated by Gordon Price, Fellow, SFU Morris J. Wosk Centre for Dialogue, panelists weighed in on many topics including the region’s affordability, the long-term viability and vitality of a downtown core as a place of business, the need to continue developing transportation infrastructure, and some possible effects following B.C. winning its supercluster bid.

Outputs from the day will be utilized by the planning staff from the City of Vancouver and Metro Vancouver, both of whom were on hand to participate in the conversation during breakout discussions. The conversation functioned as a lead-up to the establishment of Metro Vancouver’s Industrial Lands Strategy Task Force and will help guide the development of the City of Vancouver’s employment lands strategy.

Shoulder Events | SFU Public Square supported several partners in hosting thematically-linked shoulder events during Brave New Work. To generate opportunities for union participation in the Skillshare, the Urban Worker Project hosted The Future of Labour Organizing: Opportunities and Obstacles. This discussion served as a unique opportunity for unions and labour activists in more traditional working arrangements to come together with independent workers for a creative dialogue about how to organize and serve all workers in the new economy.

Discussion participants included representatives from the BC Federation of Labour, Ironworkers, International Union of Operating Engineers, BC Health Sciences Association, International Longshore and Warehouse Union, Canadian Media Guild Freelance Branch, ACTRA, United Steelworkers, BCGEU, the US Freelancers Union, and Belgium freelance co-operative Smart EU.

The Brookfield Institute for Innovation and Entrepreneurship, a research institute based at Ryerson University, produced reports examining innovation and entrepreneurship in Canada which were instrumental in the research and ideation stage of the Community Summit. As such, we were pleased to welcome Sarah Doyle, Director of Policy and Research, and Nisa Malli, Senior Policy analyst, to the Community Summit to share some of the institute’s recent findings. But, to maximize their participation, SFU Public Square supported the Brookfield Institute in convening a roundtable of experts in Vancouver to support their research on the intersection of innovation and inclusive economic growth in Western Canada.

At many points during the planning process, we reached out to the Vancouver chapter of the World Economic Forum’s Global Shapers Community. In turn, we supported them in hosting Shape 7, a process to convene Vancouver’s young leaders, understand their concerns regarding the future of the economy, and convey those concerns to the Government of Canada as part of its 2018 G7 Presidency.

“Public Squares are for gathering, conversing, sometimes arguing, and dream scheming, and this year’s Community Summit created a platform for us to host the type of frank, constructive, and creative labour discussion we always hope will take place. Creating an opportunity for labour movement union activists and hybrid organizations that are working to improve conditions for workers to come together and relate will have enormous impact on the coming challenges for workers. It was exciting to see such a conversation start in SFU’s Public Square.” –Andrew Cash, Co-Founder, Urban Worker Project
"A rare and valuable opportunity to collaborate with people representing many sectors and perspectives... my own perspective was challenged and broadened, and I left with less dread, more hope, and a sense of agency and responsibility to support my own organization to reframe our work in a way that will serve citizens through a turbulent future." –Katie McPherson, Chief Resilience Officer, City of Vancouver

THE WORK CONTINUES

Legacy Projects | Our goal in hosting this Community Summit was to convene participants with diverse backgrounds, areas of expertise, and perspectives, encouraging collaboration and fostering the growth of an international network of leaders who are actively working to co-create a brighter future of work for everyone. Although Brave New Work has come to a close, the work on this complex issue continues. With respect to the longtime researchers and leaders in this field, there are still significant opportunities for continued exploration, experimentation, collaboration, and action.

Many of our partners, collaborators, and attendees have continued the work within their own organizations and in partnership with others. Here are some of the ways that the legacy of Brave New Work continues to live:

• Chloe Waretini, a participant in several events, launched The Future of Work is Human, a collaborative consulting firm created to help organizations focus on human-centered workplace design and culture;
• The Toronto Design Offsite Festival will renew its focus on the future of work theme in 2019;
• Western Economic Diversification is leading a ‘caring culture’ experiment within their own organization to ensure it is an exemplar of providing good work;
• RADIUS SFU and the Banff Centre are continuing work on the development of the prospective three year Canadian Future of Work Lab;
• The Metro Vancouver Industrial Lands Strategy Task Force is working to plan for the future of land use throughout Metro Vancouver.

Even after hosting 15 events in 10 days, our work continued with new partners and collaborators. A few short months after Brave New Work concluded, we worked with several partners to host The Future is Cascadia: Building Global Competitiveness, a roundtable workshop for business, government, and academia on how to leverage momentum around the Digital Technology Supercluster project on the eve of the BCTECH Summit.

So, how can we all thrive in the changing world of work? It starts with working together, and we all have a role to play.

ORGANIZATIONAL IMPACT

Leaders at Junxion, an international consulting firm, were so moved by the conversation between Van Jones and Anne-Marie Slaughter (and the Community Summit overall) that it has informed their organizational direction:

"Over the past couple of weeks, SFU Public Square presented Brave New Work, which was framed around an increasingly important question: How can we thrive in the changing world of work? It’s a question we’ve been contemplating... For the past couple of years, we’ve been evolving the way we work at Junxion to meet the demands of the digital era—the ‘new world of work’. We’re writing plans framed not around future milestones, but on building new capabilities that enable our clients’ organizations to respond to rapid change, new demands, and the shifting shape of work."

–Mike Rowlands, President & CEO, Junxion
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