

# *Canada Next: Learning for Youth Leadership and Innovation*



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Institute for  
Community Prosperity

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***"Young people aren't just the leaders of tomorrow, they're the leaders of today. Their voices matter ... the things they do now can have a tremendous impact to change the world, right now."***

*- Prime Minister Justin Trudeau (Interview with the Globe and Mail, Sept. 24, 2012).*

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

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This discussion paper and literature review serves to deepen understanding of the ecology of youth leadership and innovation across Canada. It was commissioned by MaRS Studio Y, and authored by James Stauch and Devon Cornelisse of the Institute for Community Prosperity at Mount Royal University in preparation for the National Youth Leadership and Innovation Summit to be held in Toronto in April, 2016.

### ***Youth Leadership and Innovation Development in Canada***

Young Canadians have played a greater role in each of the past few decades in seeding, advocating for and leading social, economic and environmental change. Youth today will be tasked with addressing incredibly profound challenges in the twenty-first century, such as local and global food security, climate change, access to finance and a persistent gender gap. Ironically, given the burden of responsibility they will be shouldering, young Canadians are also a financially vulnerable demographic, with less inclination than previous generations to participate in the political system. They are, however, creative, diverse, socially and globally connected, and more apt to embrace risk – all critical components of innovation. Also, Canada's fastest growing demographic is Indigenous youth.

A rapidly growing number of leadership development and youth innovation programs across the country, run by non-profit organizations, foundations, universities, governments, innovation hubs and others - seek to grow the potential of Canadian youth as changemakers. Young Canadians are seeking out opportunities to make transformative, enduring and widespread positive change in communities, markets, and

public institutions, from the local level to the international. This explosion of leadership and innovation development initiatives has occurred alongside a rapid rise in entrepreneurship programs at the post-secondary level, accompanied also by the emergence of learning programs in 'social innovation', a language and set of practices aimed at systems change.

How can Canada take advantage of these trends? The profound leadership and innovation needs of the twenty-first century require strong systems leaders and innovators who can grasp, embrace and navigate complexity with courage, empathy and creativity. How can these pioneering – though, to date, scattered - efforts be supported, adapted and leveraged so that Canada invests more deeply and effectively in the next generation of system leaders and innovators?

This study finds that many of Canada's rapidly growing number of youth leadership and innovation development programs hold potential to achieve systems-level transformation with respect to social, economic and environmental well-being. The findings support the notion that a nation-wide strategy could support not only greater connectivity, but also more intentional design, delivery and evaluation of programs. The development of this review was guided by two primary objectives:

1. To gain a deep understanding of the ecosystem of youth leadership and innovation across Canada, and;
2. To provide a launching point for an understanding of, and discussion about, the broader impact and potential of leadership development for Canada's competitiveness and social well-being.

This review draws from original research conducted by the Institute for Community Prosperity regarding leadership development programs across Canada, academic literature on concepts and theories of leadership, news publications and 'grey' literature, as well as a sampling of popular writing.

## ***FINDINGS: The Youth Leadership and Innovation Development Landscape in Canada***

- Leadership is a complex topic, with multiple perspectives on its definition, understanding, and expression. It is, however, generally acknowledged that it is a component of human life that can be taught (and therefore acquired through an intentional programmatic focus), forming the basis of why leadership development programs are so pervasive.
- There are a remarkable diversity of approaches in developing leaders and innovators across Canada, employing many different tools, methods and approaches. In order to better understand this diversity, we have grouped leadership development approaches into a series of archetypes: personal leadership development, outdoor leadership, business and professional leadership, voluntary sector and service leadership, entrepreneurship and innovation leadership, social entrepreneurship, social innovation leadership, public policy influence and social activism, community development leadership, global citizenship, and Indigenous leadership.
- Leadership and innovation development programs can also be categorized by the types of participants they choose to recruit. These categories include an Organizational Change Approach, Community Change Approach, Systems Approach, and a Results Approach.
- The theories most applicable to the field of leadership development in Canada include full range, implicit, transformational, commons-based, and servant leadership. Each of these theoretical frameworks is discussed in brief.
- Because of the sheer diversity of program types, there may not be 'gaps' per se in the overall landscape in Canada, but there is certainly a lack of understanding of this diversity. In attempting to articulate a set of core competencies for effective systems-focused leadership development, we hope that individual programs may find this useful in planning, prioritizing and identifying gaps in their own programming.

## ***FINDINGS: Understanding Impact for Canadian Leadership and Innovation Development Programs***

- Communities that have strong local leadership have a tendency toward lower crime rates, more effective government institutions and better schools. They are more likely to nurture innovation.
- Only between 10% and 20% of organizations who invest in leadership development actually evaluate the effectiveness of programming on performance outcomes. The inherent difficulty of causation and attribution connecting leadership programming with later personal and societal successes, and a lack of awareness of impact assessment tools are among the many factors that contribute to evaluation avoidance. Many components of good program design, especially with respect to designing programs to demonstrate impact, are underutilized. A number of these components are outlined in the review.
- There are five main considerations when designing youth leadership programs for impact:
  1. Incorporating formative, summative, and utilization-focused evaluation;
  2. Articulating a theory of change;
  3. Mapping and modeling the system within which the program is embedded;
  4. Incorporating collective design and action learning; and
  5. Strategically recruiting program participants.
- The idea of establishing shared metrics to measure and evaluate the collective impact

of the youth leadership and innovation development system will be discussed at the National Summit. A starting point is to think about criteria for evaluating leadership development. This paper suggests a variety of criteria to consider as starting points.

## ***Recommendations for Further Action and Research***

Based on this review, the following ***eleven recommendations*** will help strengthen the youth leadership and innovation landscape in Canada in the pursuit of transformational social, economic and cultural impacts.

1. A ***national strategy*** on youth leadership and innovation would assert leadership development as a policy priority, building on the priority identified by Prime Minister Justin Trudeau in identifying a Ministerial portfolio for “Youth”, a role he has personally assumed.
2. The fostering of a ***Made-in-Canada leadership learning network*** would greatly enhance our collective knowledge of youth leadership and innovation development.
3. The creation of an ***evaluator’s toolbox***. The tools, criteria and other considerations around understanding impact referred to in the latter portion of this document could be adapted to a practitioner-focused program design and evaluation guide, highlighting pathways and tools best suited to particular approaches.
4. ***Further research on understanding impact*** of leadership and innovation development programs is essential. Many more examples are needed of how programs are able to glean insight into their impact.

5. The **connection between leadership and innovation** could be explored further, and **better language** could be sought to clarify both concepts. Each is contested, with ill-defined boundaries and can be easily bent to fit different worldviews, ideologies and agendas.
6. The **role of post-secondary institutions**, requires much more analysis, both in terms of the current state of play and the potential of such institutions in nurturing next generation leadership in the service of innovation. Secondary education is also excluded from this research.
7. Indigenous Peoples – First Nations, Inuit and Métis - are the youngest and fastest growing demographic in Canada. **Additional insights and examples from Indigenous leadership and innovation development** are needed.
8. More research is needed into **the earliest 'seeds'** of leadership development. This review focuses on youth and adult learners, but there is evidence to suggest that early experiences create a greater likelihood that leadership can flourish at a later age.
9. The role of technology to connect groups of youth across Canada, including **the use of 'virtual worlds' to work on complex challenges** in a gamified 'changemaker sandbox'-type setting, is an underexplored area that shows potential for enhancing civic engagement and collaborative leadership .
10. This study focused almost entirely on English Canada, also referencing English language literature exclusively. A comparable body

of research is needed on youth leadership and innovation development in **Francophone Canada**.

11. There is a need to discover more **examples and promising approaches from outside Canada** of youth leadership and innovation.

This review is a starting point for a national conversation on youth leadership and innovation. It provides context for understanding how we work together to help young Canadians thrive in their lives, careers and communities, as outstanding leaders, innovators and citizens; as builders of community and shapers of the next Canada. There may be no single better opportunity for social investment in Canada than investing in young people involved in systems change.

## **INTRODUCTION**

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This literature review serves as a framework for discussion, in order to deepen our understanding about youth leadership and youth innovation. It aims to illuminate whether, and to what degree, various youth leadership development approaches are likely to be effective, and whether there are certain approaches that are more likely to produce outcomes that give rise to and support innovation, and ultimately help Canada thrive economically and socially. If we have a better understanding of what methods help Canadian youth embrace complex local, regional, national or global challenges, and what approaches help youth seed or grow new opportunities in their communities, then we are better positioned to lay the groundwork for a thriving future for Canada.

The review was conducted by the Institute for Community Prosperity at Mount Royal University for Studio Y at the MaRS Discovery District, with additional guidance from a team of Advisors who operate youth leadership or community innovation programs in various regions within Canada.

The document also serves as a knowledge foundation for a national conversation on leadership development in Canada, premised on three questions:

1. ***Why is it important to invest in youth leadership development and innovation in Canada?***
2. ***What results can we expect from such programs?***
3. ***How could a youth leadership and innovation strategy help Canada thrive?***

## **WHY HERE? WHY NOW? *The need and opportunity for youth leadership development in Canada***

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While young Canadians have made incredible strides over the past few decades in seeding, advocating for and leading social, economic and environmental change (Ho, Clarke and Dougherty, 2015), Canada has an extraordinary opportunity to invest more deeply and effectively in the next generation of leaders and innovators. A growing number of governments are interested in innovation, while NGOs, philanthropic foundations and movements are turning to leadership development as a vital part of the social change toolkit (Leadership Learning Community, 2015; Henein & Morrisette, 2007; Stauch & Cornelisse, 2016). A rapidly growing number of programs – locally, nationally and internationally – seek to catalyze youth potential into transformative social change. In what ways can we measure the success of these programs? What does Canada stand to gain from leadership development initiatives?

While “leadership development” has a long history in the context of business or government, the last decade has witnessed an explosion in the number of leadership development programs focused on civil society and the social economy. Similarly, there has been a rapid increase in innovation education, in tandem with a burgeoning number of entrepreneurship programs at the post-secondary level, and – particularly germane to this review – the emergence of ‘social innovation’ as a language and set of practices aimed at systems change, both on-campus and off (Scaled Purpose, 2016; Ashoka, 2013). In fact, there may be no single better opportunity for social investment in Canada than investing in young people involved in systems change (Stauch, 2012). An increasing number of educational institutions and socially-concerned

organizations are seeking to create a learning path for either practitioner-citizens or student-citizens to build on their passions and skill sets to create transformative, enduring and widespread positive social, economic and environmental change.

With the prospect of new federal government interest and investment in youth employment and leadership development, Canadian leadership learning programs are poised to play an important role in laying the groundwork for addressing a variety of complex challenges. From rising inequality to climate change, there is an immense need for skilled leadership and the presence of an innovation 'muscle' among those working to address these and many other issues. But we also know that contemporary leadership practices have either not adequately addressed these issues, or are implicitly responsible (Sen and Eren, 2012). As such, leadership development appropriate to the twenty-first century must be visionary, innovation-focused and committed to increasing the economic, social, political and environmental well-being of people, communities, regions and nations (Sen and Eren, 2012).

## **HOW THIS REVIEW IS STRUCTURED**

We begin this review by establishing what we mean by the concept of 'leadership' for the purposes of this paper and national dialogue process to follow. We describe how leadership is distinct from management, and why we choose to focus on transformational theories and practices of leadership development, particularly those that focus on transformations of entire human systems (whether social, commercial or both in combination).

We then describe a set of leadership program archetypes and theories that are transformational

in scope and ambition, map these to a series of social change theories employed in the leadership context in Canada, and illustrate a range of program models that utilize or model these approaches. As part of this, we also explore whether there is a shared language of leadership among those who write about the nurturing and development of change-makers, and whether this shared language allows us to suggest a set of program archetypes.

The heart of this review explores the *impact* of leadership development work. The range, scale, and diversity of leadership programming in Canada, including program structure and cohort composition, is outlined, and we look at how frequently evaluation tools are used to understand impact (as well as what types of tools are employed). This is followed by a description and preliminary assessment of a variety of impact measurement methods that hold promise for defining program success and understanding and demonstrating impact. Conversely, this will provide a helpful frame for discovering which program approaches are more likely to struggle to show results. We also explore strategies for moving from understanding impact on the person to mapping a program's likelihood of impact on the broader complex challenges we face – challenges that include failing ecosystem integrity, clean energy transition, reconciling Indigenous and non-Indigenous experiences and worldviews, removing barriers to participation and access, and eradicating poverty, to name just a few.

We also describe a set of core competencies that appear to be essential to a positive, systems-transformational leadership learning experience – namely *empathy*, *creativity* and *courage*. The review also looks at the growing scholarship around Indigenous leadership, of particular

importance for a thriving Canada, particularly when considering youth. Finally, we include a series of recommendations for practitioners, other researchers and investors and designers of leadership programs to consider.

Note that, although innovation and leadership are distinct concepts, we have chosen to situate innovation as a set of mindsets, concepts and skills under the broader rubric of leadership throughout the document. A more thorough inquiry into the relationship between leadership and innovation is needed beyond the scope of this review.

## **WHO ARE YOUTH?**

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There is no agreed-upon definition of “youth”. The UN defines youth as 15-24 years of age, while UNESCO recognizes that youth is a fluid category that is better “understood as the period of transition from the dependence of childhood to adulthood’s independence and awareness of our interdependence as members of a community” (UNESCO, 2012). Many programs and studies referred to in this review define youth differently, often up to and including the mid-30s. Still others include youth, but not as an express focus. For the purposes of this review, we have chosen to interpret youth quite broadly, casting the net large enough to include programs offered (or partially offered) to young people in their late twenties and early thirties.

A youth lens is important when one considers young people’s enhanced ability relative to other demographics to be imaginative, take risks and be tuned into the big issues facing our country and our world (Ho, Clarke and Dougherty, 2015). As will be argued later, the competencies identified as creativity, courage and empathy lie at the core of effective leadership development. Canadian youth

are also diverse, and more globally connected, than any previous generation. Indigenous youth are Canada’s fastest growing demographic, with nearly half of all Aboriginal peoples being under the age of 25 and identifying as 6% of the total Canadian youth population (Statistics Canada, 2012).

Youth today will be tasked with addressing incredibly profound challenges, such as local and global food security, climate change, access to finance and a persistent gender gap. Ironically, given the burden of responsibility they will be shouldering, young Canadians are also a financially vulnerable demographic with less inclination to participate in the political system. In 2013, youth were 23-37% less likely to vote than seniors, and significantly less interested in politics (Turcotte, 2015). At least a quarter of Canadian youth self-identify as “politically inactive” (Ibid.) and are likely to remain so for the remainder of their life. Youth unemployment, at 13%, is double the national unemployment average. In addition, the precarity of employment – via part-time and short-term contract work - is adding to the economic vulnerability of Canadian youth (Goar, 2016).

## **WHAT IS LEADERSHIP?**

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There are a number of ways we can think about leadership – to the extent that we believe such a normative concept exists and can be identified. Moreover, there is no objectively right or wrong approach to deciding what *leadership* really means. There are thousands of books printed each year on the subject. There is ample ‘pop’ literature – browse any airport bookshelf for confirmation. A large volume of ‘grey’ literature also exists on the subject of leadership – books, articles and reports - reports from think tanks, NGOs, foundations and government. These documents can contain

a high degree of inductive or deductive insight and are an invaluable source of real world case studies and practice-based learning. There is also a growing – and massive - body of scholarly literature in many different fields of study, employing all manner of theoretical and analytical frameworks. At least thirteen academic journals in the US alone are devoted to the study of leadership. Many other journals, such as in behavioural sciences and management studies, also regularly include leadership topics. While there are many decades now of scholarship on the notion of leadership, writing on leadership *development* is much more recent, but no less diverse and complex (Day, et al, 2014). This subjective diversity and complexity also applies, in many ways, to the notion of “innovation”.

The diagram below is a rough illustration of the terrain from which the literature for this review is drawn. The non-leadership literature cited is mainly related to innovation or social innovation.

How do we recognize leadership as distinct from the absence of leadership? Near-universally recognized leadership markers run the gamut from the ability to communicate a compelling

vision, to motivate others, to achieve results, to innovate and to guide groups of people and/or organizations through change. When we clear the blizzard of writing on the subject, a commonly (if not universally) shared conception of leadership development is the notion of action, or activation, as an end. In contrast to education, knowledge is not the end goal. This is why leadership development programs far more commonly sit outside the domain (or at least the core domain) of educational institutions.

Theorizing about leadership is an innately subjective phenomenon, and theories about leadership are as numerous as the people who study it (Verlage, Rowold, & Schilling, 2012). There are few areas of practical importance that have produced the same breadth and range of divergent, overlapping, and inconsistent theoretical and educational models as the study of leadership has provoked. Tensions between disciplines contributing to leadership studies are rife with theoretical and methodological controversies, so it is important to be explicit about defining terms when discussing leadership (Fredricks, 1999).

**Figure 1: Leadership Development Literature**



## ***Beyond Management***

Leadership development practices over the last several decades have mainly focused on training leaders to be efficacious managers. As such, it has long been a fixture of human resources learning and/or general management – i.e. framed as the effective management of people, teams, business units and organizations (whether for-profit or non-profit).

Leadership development today, however, is characterized by an embrace of a diverse melange of competencies, context and roles, and training is informed by many different domains (Azzam & Riggio, 2003). Leadership development draws on many diverse disciplines – psychology, military studies, theology and moral philosophy, crisis management, political science, the arts, physical education, just to name a few. This is true in Executive Leadership development programs, but it has also meant that virtually every realm of human learning has embraced some notion of ‘leadership’, and one can find leadership programs tied to many domains of commercial activity, public policy and community life.

### ***Leader or Changemaker?***

Use of the term “leadership” and “leader” is itself limiting, language that can have an elite tinge or be seen as unique to the political or business contexts (Stauch and Cornelisse, 2016). When we think of the primary role of leadership to be in the service of innovation, disruption, or more broadly, of change, then it may be as appropriate to use the term “changemaker” interchangeably. This encapsulates not only entrepreneurship and social advocacy or activism, but also intrapreneurship within corporate or public sector settings.

It is also less binary. Consider Mark Zuckerberg and Jimmy Wales, two renowned internet innovators and as such, two of the world’s most influential changemakers: The former chose a commercial path for Facebook, vowing later to become the planet’s most influential philanthropist, the latter chose a non-commercial, non-profit, open access path for Wikipedia and has never wavered from the conviction that it remain so. The notion of “changemaker” may help build an audience and cohort of people with the optimal combination of talents and potential who do not self-identify as “leaders” or as “entrepreneurs”.

*A Challenge to Canada: A remarkable study nearly a decade ago – entitled Made in Canada Leadership - featured insights and best practice descriptions from those involved in 66 leadership development programs across Canada, as well as 295 individual leaders who reflected on what leadership means and how they developed their own leadership capabilities (Henein & Morrissette, 2007).*

*These interviewees were in business, the arts, community or cooperative organizations, professional sports, academia and government. The interviewees also share their ideas for expanding leadership capacity in Canada. Arguing that Canadians have certain common leadership qualities that distinguish them globally, the authors issue a challenge for our national leadership development strategy to takes its cues from our Marshall Plan-esque success in developing Olympian athletic prowess (manifest in the “Own the Podium” program).*

## LEADERSHIP, TRANSFORMATION AND SYSTEMS CHANGE

*"The predictable trajectory that guided the lives of the current generation's parents is gone. Canada's youth are growing up in an era of complexity and uncertainty that has delayed, or even destroyed, the landmarks that once signaled a transition from one phase of life to another."* (O'Rourke, 2012)

*"In this historic moment, we live caught between a worldview that no longer works and a new one that seems too bizarre to contemplate."* (Wheatley, 2007).

Increasingly, leadership has been defined not only by the individual competencies of leaders, but by the interactions and results that stem from relationships and collaboration (Hernez-Broome & Hughes, 2004). Today, along with this shift away from hierarchical models of leadership toward leadership of self-organizing networks (Westley, Zimmerman and Patton, 2007; Wheatley, 2007), we are witnessing a paradigm-shift from *transactional leadership* development toward *transformational leadership* development. We can distinguish between *transactional leadership*, the type of leadership associated with managing or supervising groups of people in a business setting, and *transformational leadership* whose focus is ultimately on influencing systems change for common good-oriented purposes. *Transformational leadership* development programs in Canada are typified by individualized consideration, intellectual stimulation, inspirational motivation, and idealized influence – elevating the leadership of those whose vision is based on values central to humanity (Pigg, 1999; Day, Fleenor, Atwater, Sturm, & McKee, 2014). Such leadership is not only sector-agnostic (equally applicable in the public,

private and non-profit spheres), but permeates and transcends sector-specific constraints.

Approaches in *transformational leadership* can be synthesized into three components; collective empowerment, connective leadership, and leading change through dialogue (Kirk & Shutte, 2004). *Transformational leadership* is Transformational leadership is elemental to programs that foster individual leadership skill sets within a context of civic engagement, entrepreneurship, community development, public policy, corporate social responsibility and/or sustainability.

Leadership is required when we encounter an uncertain future– something that demands adaptive, heuristic, and innovative responses – where past practices need to be reformed, new threats emerge, social conditions change, an opportunity arises, or a new technology changes how our society works. A leader creates the conditions that empower others to achieve a shared victory toward goals like systems change, and takes responsibility not only as an individual, but for the collective whole. A transformational leader attempts not only to win the game, but to change the rules (Ganz, 2010).

While it is true that leadership development has historically been associated with business education, the recasting of leadership as transformational is evident in the rapidly growing number of community-focused leadership development programs in Canada. Many of these programs afford opportunities for people to transform their perspectives and engage the world with new eyes - reframing attitudes, beliefs and cultural values – toward systems change (Chapman, 2002). Which leads us to our final narrowing of the leadership 'lens': Systems leadership.

Systems leadership is the frame within which we are focusing the bulk of this review, as a systems focus seems necessary, albeit not sufficient, to address the major challenges of our time. In brief, systems leadership entails at least three components: The Ability to see the broader system, the nurturing of reflection and generative conversations and a shift of focus away from reactive problem-solving to co-creating the future (Senge, Hamilton and Kania, 2015). Whereas transformational leadership, in and of itself, can take place within the context of a single organization, systems leadership by definition transcends the boundaries of organizations. When we encounter ecological, economic, or governance issues we are observing 'surface symptoms' of systemic structural disconnects and limitations (Scharmer & Kaufer, 2013). Systems leadership entails deep co-sensing – the blending of careful listening, honing our empathic responses to others, uncovering and discovering the real issues, interests and causal dynamics that lie beneath these surface symptoms. It requires the marshalling of adaptive and creative resilience, as well as moral courage, such that we can design or embrace systems that hold promise and avoid or transform systems that portend collapse.

As Scharmer & Kaufer (2013) have explained, addressing the root causes of systemic disconnects and limitations is the key to social transformation. Beneath these 'surface symptoms', are structural disconnects between decision-makers and those who are affected by decisions. Traditional models of leadership, as a system of governance, has reached its effective limit, so leadership development programs today are changing the definition of leadership. Do we just need better leaders? Or is the normative framework upon which we seek "better leadership" so thoroughly broken that we need new way entirely

of thinking about 'leadership' (and perhaps a new word to accompany it)? The abandonment of heroic notions of leadership is cleaving to lateral, decentralized, shared and open forms of decision-making (manifest today in crowdsourcing, swarm intelligence, extended enterprise, etc.) that scarcely – if at all - resemble our classical ideas of leadership. On the one hand, we may be wise to dust off and rediscover the literature on progressive education theory, adult popular education, community development and group psychology. On the other, we need to reimagine and reshape these learnings with a systems lens. As one resource on reimagining activism puts it "Traditional approaches to activism and social change mimic the culture they are trying to transform: the impulse to control and fix, us vs. them frames, reductionist interventions, win-loss mentality (Narberhaus and Sheppard, 2015).

The way we collectively think about leadership is changing, and a new perspective on leading change is being founded in the traits of empathy, creativity and courage, each of these traits explored in detail later in this review.

Creating solutions to complex challenges requires an innovative mind, a humanistic urge that places value on the individual, and a resiliency in the face of challenges. Innovative approaches to leadership, and leadership for the purpose of innovation, are two components of an emergent trend in leadership development. *Transformational leadership* compels us to view leadership as a collaborative process, while developing the creative mindset within individuals to meet long standing challenges through innovative practices, products, and services.

# NURTURING THE NEXT GENERATION OF CHANGEMAKERS: LEADERSHIP PROGRAM ARCHETYPES

*“The most important contribution that any of us can make now is not to solve any particular problem, no matter how urgent energy or environment or financial regulation is. What we must do now is increase the proportion of humans who know that they can cause change.”*

Bill Drayton, Ashoka (2006)

Leadership programming in Canada employs many approaches, theories of change, and assumptions about what is essential to build human character in the service of leading others. The stereotypical ‘charismatic public persona’ we often associate with leadership roles is no longer the goal of leadership development campaigns (Ganz, 2010). Instead, leadership development programs in Canada focus on developing leadership at all levels, mobilizing communities and their resources toward systems change.

Leadership development programming in Canada can be crudely sorted into a series of archetypes, which are by no means mutually exclusive. Such archetypes, most of which were developed in the context of research on leadership for social change (Stauch & Cornelisse, 2016) are included below, focusing in particular on youth-focused programs and those that employ transformational and/or systems approaches. A small number of organizations, such as the Banff Centre through the *Lougheed Leadership* suite of programs, or the *Coady International Institute* at St. Francis Xavier University, straddle many of these archetypes.

Table 1: Summary of Leadership and Innovation Development Archetypes

Archetype	In Scope?
Personal Leadership Development	Not directly
Outdoor Leadership	Not directly
Business and Professional Leadership	Not directly
Voluntary and Service Leadership	YES
Entrepreneurship and Innovation Development	YES
Social Entrepreneurship	YES
Social Innovation Development	YES
Public Policy Influence, Civic Innovation and Social Activism Leadership	YES
Community Development Leadership	YES
Global Citizenship	YES
Indigenous Leadership	YES

## Personal Leadership Development

Some leadership programs focus expressly on building the personal character and capacities of the individual. Some of these programs, such as the *Duke of Edinburgh Award*, an achievement prize for high school-aged youth, focus on personal discovery, self-reliance, perseverance, and other individual competencies, with reference to the responsibilities of citizenship. For the purposes of this research, and while we certainly look at personal leadership traits and competencies, we look at leadership development specifically connected to the broader system, community or polity – i.e. beyond the individual, small group, organization or business.

## Outdoor Leadership

Wilderness, recreation or adventure-based leadership programs are often manifest as a subcategory of the previous archetype, which can be a solitary focus on the character of the individual. Others, however, do address group dynamics, service, citizenship and other broader realms. The YMCA's *Springfield College*, a school

that had strong ties to Canada – particularly Atlantic Canada, was an early pioneer in outdoor/recreation leadership, perhaps best known for alumnus Canadian James Naismith, who invented basketball while there (Markham, 2004). Leaving an indelible link on recreation leadership programming throughout North America, this international training school's approach is based on the notion of "humanics", the education of the whole person—in spirit, mind, and body—for leadership in service to others.

Present day examples include *Enviros*, *Wanapitei*, the *Leadership Ecology Adventure Program (LEAP)* or *Strathcona Park Lodge*. Some are specific to Indigenous youth, such as *Ghost River Rediscovery and the Rediscovery Camps of Haida Gwaii*. *Northern Youth Leadership*, part of the Tides Canada platform, aims to inspire the next generation of courageous young northern leaders by providing on-the-land personal growth, leadership opportunities and connections to create positive change.

Although outdoor leadership is not a discrete focus of this research, there is often a strong outdoor leadership element with programs focused on planetary ecological consciousness, under the 'global citizenship' archetype discussed later, or under the rubric of conversation leadership.

### ***Business and Professional Leadership***

There are many Executive-level leadership experiences available to C-suite business managers, or less commonly to senior public servants. Many of these are offered through university business schools such as Ivey, Rotman, Sauder, Schulich and Queen's. Royal Roads University offers a *Masters of Arts in Leadership*. Some executive-level leadership programs are offered through non-profit organizations such as

the Banff Centre, the Justice Institute of BC or the Conference Board of Canada's Niagara Institute. Many Canadians elect to seek such leadership experiences beyond our borders, most often at Harvard, Stanford or the Centre for Creative Leadership.

It is far more common for such opportunities to be supported in the commercial and government sectors than in the non-profit sector, the latter of which is included as a separate, though overlapping, archetype below. There are also leadership experiences offered to specific professions, often via professional associations. One such example is Ontario's Teacher Learning and Leadership Program.

Again, this is a realm of activity is not a focus of this paper for two reasons: Such programs are the least likely to involve or focus on youth, and they are typically focused on in-organization change management, not on communities, systems or broader change.

### ***Voluntary Sector and Service Leadership***

Non-profit leadership programs typically straddle the archetype of a business or professional leadership experience alongside a focus on service. The most common forms of leadership development activities are peer networking, workshops, conferences and seminars, and professional association membership (McIsaac, Park, & Toupin, 2013). Many non-profit management certificate programs, such as those offered through Seneca College, Conestoga College, Nova Scotia Community College or the University of Toronto, include a partial focus on leadership, as do Carleton University's *Philanthropy and Nonprofit Leadership* Master's and Diploma programs. Perhaps the best example of this archetype in the

US is the *Berkeley Centre for Social Sector Leadership*, which introduces a strong systems and network focus to the notion of non-profit leadership.

A rare example of a non-profit-tailored executive leadership program in Canada is Ivey Executive Education's *CommunityShift* program. *Executive Directions* is a coaching and training program for non-profit sector leaders in Calgary. But by far the most well-known example is a program that is no longer running, but which shepherded a cohort of individuals in notable leadership roles today: In 1999, the *McGill-McConnell Program for National Voluntary Sector Leaders* was rolled out as a graduate-level offering for emerging non-profit leaders. Modeled on Henry Mintzberg's acclaimed International Master's Program in Practicing Management, the program was delivered by star faculty from a range of Canadian and US universities, and included overseas learning journeys.

Helping to fill the gap in social sector leadership development programming in Canada, The HR Council for the Nonprofit Sector provided a host of Canada-wide guides and research-based information on non-profit sector leadership. The Council's output is now hosted at Community Foundations Canada. Some of this work has since been supplemented by research from umbrella organizations such as the Ontario Nonprofit Network. Volunteer Alberta hosts *KnowledgeConnector*, which provides learning resources, such as a Developing Emerging Leaders Organizational Assessment Tool, for non-profit sector practitioners dealing with succession and leadership development challenges.

Some programs are specific to a particular subset of the voluntary sector. Environmental leadership development is a particularly active realm. The *Young Conservation Professionals Leadership Program*

helps the next generation of environmental NGO leaders to "step-up" in managing their organization. The Natural Step Canada, in partnership with the Co-operators, deliver a program called *IMPACT! Youth Program for Sustainability Leadership*, which empowers university and college students who are passionate about sustainability to be leaders and effective agents of change. The Natural Step has also run an *MBA Sustainability Leadership Bootcamp*. *Katimavik*, in partnership with the Secrétariat à la Jeunesse du Québec, operates an *Eco-Internship* program, that pairs youth with environmental organizations in Quebec. In the US, the *Sustainability Leaders Network* has adapted and deepened the work pioneered by the *Donella Meadows Fellowship*, which links sustainability and systems leadership.

*Katimavik* has for many years operated other volunteer service programs for young Canadians looking for a unique experience focused on making positive change in their lives and in communities. *Sustainable Opportunities for Youth Leadership (SOYL)*, a partnership between Fresh Roots and UBC's Faculty of Education, also employs a community service model. A similar, albeit larger scale, initiative in the US -*Youth Service America* -has spawned many offshoot leadership programs. In 1994, the US federal government created *AmeriCorps*, modeled on the international-focused *Peace Corps*, employing a youth-focused community service model. In Canada, a similar federal government-supported initiative was created in 1966: The *Company for Young Canadians* was formed to link youth to community service opportunities. Over time, it morphed into a crucible of activism, and many contemporary Canadian writers and political leaders participated in the program. The radicalizing of certain chapters, in particular in Quebec, made the program too toxic for the government to continue

supporting and the program was disbanded in 1977 (Dickenson & Campbell, 2008).

Other programs focus on nurturing a philanthropic ethic and practice among a younger generation. Community Foundations Canada offers the *Community Philanthropy Fellowship* in partnership with the Carold Institute and the *ALT/Now: Economic Inequality Residency* at The Banff Centre. Other examples of philanthropy leadership programming include the Association for Fundraising Professionals' *Inclusive Giving Fellowship Program*, the United Way of Calgary and Area's *GenNext*, and the Toskan Casale Foundation's *Youth in Philanthropy* program, which aims to strengthen the Toronto social sector by engaging high school youth in social issues, local charities, and grant-making. Also based in Toronto, the *Cause School* comprises leaders and innovators across sectors mentoring start-up 'causes'. The *Loran Scholars* program (formerly the Canadian Merit Scholarship Foundation), supports post-secondary students across Canada who show promise of leadership and a strong commitment to service in the community. Unlike the majority of scholarship programs, support in this program goes beyond financial to include mentoring, orientation and fomenting of a community of service-oriented scholars.

## ***Entrepreneurship and Innovation Leadership***

There are many programs within the post-secondary environment that support the emergence of entrepreneurial skills and innovation mindsets. However, the emergence of programs that focus explicitly on the entrepreneurial leadership of students – i.e. “creating entrepreneurial vision and inspiring a team to enact the vision in a high velocity and

uncertain environment” (Bagheri and Pihie, 2009) – is a more recent phenomenon. Initiatives such as the *Dobson-Lagassé Entrepreneurship Centre* at Bishop's, Brock University's *BioLinc* and the *Laurier Launchpad* at Wilfred Laurier University are just three of a growing number of on-campus venture support systems. Many of these programs work in tandem with on-campus *Enactus* student clubs (formerly *Students in Free Enterprise*). Under its new moniker and mandate, *Enactus* is increasingly focusing on *social entrepreneurship*, described in the next section. The *Pond Deshpande Centre* acts as a catalyst to advance innovation and entrepreneurship in New Brunswick. Well-connected to the network of innovation incubators and accelerators on the US eastern seaboard, the Centre runs a *Student Ambassadors Program* and the *B4Change Social Venture Accelerator*. *ENP™* is another entrepreneurship development program based out of the University of New Brunswick.

There are also a small but growing number of programs outside post-secondary: The decades long trail blazed by *Junior Achievement* in entrepreneurship education is now joined by programs such as *NSpire*, a student-run organization that connects emerging youth leaders with industry professionals and entrepreneurs, and *21 Leaders for the 21st Century*, (a.k.a. *21inc.*), which nurtures young entrepreneurial leaders across Atlantic Canada. MaRS runs a *Future Leaders* entrepreneurship day camp and summer institute in Toronto for high-school students. *The Next 36* is another Toronto-based program that accelerates the growth of talented young Canadian entrepreneurs by providing mentorship, capital and founder development. Montreal-based *Fusion Jeunesse* (Youth Fusion) operates an entrepreneurship program designed to connect elementary and high school students with the day-to-day reality of running a business

in a field they are passionate about. *Venture for Canada's* Fellowship program supports top graduates from Canadian universities and colleges who have demonstrated a passion for entrepreneurship and leadership. The *WaterTAP Leadership Development Program* at the Ivey School of Business helps entrepreneurs accelerate water technology-focused ventures. The Hamburg-based *DO School* is a well-known international example of entrepreneurship-focused leadership development, open to young Canadians.

## **Social Entrepreneurship**

“Social entrepreneurship” is a concept first advanced by Bill Drayton, the founder of *Ashoka*, which is one of the most recognized leadership development programs both globally and within Canada. “Social entrepreneurship” is the frame used by many leadership programs today, particularly those interested in the nexus of community and innovation. *Ashoka* itself began with a *MacArthur Fellowship* to Drayton in 1984. *Ashoka Canada* operates a Fellowship program, changemaker challenges and supports a variety of learning networks, including *AshokaU*, a global conference on social entrepreneurship education. The pioneer of post-secondary social entrepreneurship education was Greg Dees, who taught the first course on social entrepreneurship at Harvard Business School and helped the launch the field-leading Centre for the Study of Social Innovation at Stanford University. David Bornstein (2004), another pioneer thinker in this realm, noted that “social entrepreneurs identify resources where people only see problems. They view the villagers as the solution, not the passive beneficiary. They begin with the assumption of competence and unleash resources in the communities they’re serving.” The *School for Social Entrepreneurs* (a UK program with an Ontario franchise) and SFU

*Radius' Fellowships in Radical Doing* are examples of leadership programs in Canada that function within the social entrepreneurship frame.

Other social venture hubs and incubators beyond Radius are also incorporating leadership learning models, such as *St. Paul's Greenhouse* at the University of Waterloo and Ryerson's *Social Ventures Zone*. The Michaëlle Jean Foundation's *Young Arts Entrepreneur* program provides start-up funds and two years of mentorship to promising emerging artists from disadvantaged backgrounds. Outside of Canada, and – interestingly – both outside the confines of a business school, two notable examples are Brown University's *Social Entrepreneur Fellowship* and the College of the Atlantic's *Sustainable Enterprise Hatchery* (Scaled Purpose, 2016). *Acumen*, *Echoing Green* and the *Skoll Awards for Social Entrepreneurship* are among the many US-based organizations that provide social entrepreneurship leadership experiences, some of which have a global reach.

Also in the US, the Stanford Design Program fellowship (*d.school*) and IDEO.org's *Global Fellowship Program* supports social entrepreneurs through a human-centered design approach. The Berlin-based *Grameen Creative Lab* and the *Yunus Social Business Design Lab* in Bangladesh also utilize a human-centered design approach. The closest proxy in Canada may be OCAD University's *Imagination Catalyst* which supports emerging entrepreneurs through a maker-space, mentorship, seed funding and other program supports. The maker movement, while distinct from social entrepreneurship per se, is an important new trend in the ecosystem of innovation – supporting not just the emergence of new entrepreneurs, but of guilds and other creative collective enterprises (Stauch, Cornelisse, Andres and Letizia, 2015).

## Social Innovation Development

Social innovation is a broad archetype that is rapidly moving from the margins to the mainstream of discourse on societal change and the future of our communities, evidenced, for example, in the White House's *Office of Social Innovation and Civic Participation*. In Canada, social innovation is most often spoken of in terms of transformation of systems, and typically draws heavily from complexity science and resilience theory. Important Canadian contributions to our understanding of social innovation include *Impact: Six Patterns to Spread Your Social Innovation* (Etmanski, 2015) and *Getting to Maybe* (Westley, Zimmerman and Patton, 2007), on which a namesake summer residency for changemakers at the Banff Centre is offered. Leading for social innovation is premised on discovering or creating the 'ecological' conditions where innovation can occur as opposed to managing innovation as a linear evolution of product and systems design. Advanced in Canada by such organizations as the Waterloo Institute for Social Innovation and Resilience (WISIR) and the J.W. McConnell Family Foundation, under the moniker of Social Innovation Generation (SiG), and more recently through its *RECODE* initiative, social innovation has found traction within many post-secondary institutions as well as in certain public-private-non-profit collaborative initiatives, including MaRS. In addition to hosting SiG, MaRS also hosts an annual pan-Canadian gathering on social finance.

There are a small number of leadership programs in Canada in this vein, aside from the *Getting to Maybe: Social Innovation Residency*. The Montreal-based Girls Action Foundation runs the *Young Women's Leadership Program* (formerly called ELLE Project), which is a national initiative for young women focused on skill building, peer learning

and reflection, to foster personal and community leadership for social innovation. The Alberta Social Innovation Connect (or *ABSI Connect*) Fellowship, run by SiG, is a regional leadership experience tied explicitly to the notion of social innovation. *MaRS Studio [Y]*, within these archetypes, is also probably best matched with the social innovation frame, as it is focused on learners, leaders, and innovators ready to navigate 21st-century challenges toward a vision of bold economic and social impact, while fostering equity and innovation in Canada. The Metcalf Foundation, also based in Toronto, provides *Innovation Fellowships* for individuals with vision, creativity and talent to pursue powerful ideas, models, or novel practices with respect to creating healthy and resilient communities in Ontario. The Vancouver-based Plan Institute convenes a *Salon Series* bringing leaders in thought and change into a conversation about social innovation.

As of early 2016, seventeen universities provide courses related to social innovation or social entrepreneurship. Waterloo's Master's Diploma in Social Innovation is probably the best known program. Eleven of these campuses also provide mentorship support and four – University of New Brunswick, Ryerson, Simon Fraser and Waterloo – offer fellowships (Scaled Purpose, 2016). Queen's University's Centre for Social Impact provides an annual *Social Innovation Bootcamp*. McGill's *Social Economy Initiative* integrates social entrepreneurship and social innovation into all of its management teaching, research and outreach activities. In the US, the best known example of this archetype is the *Stanford Social Innovation Fellowship*.

## **Public Policy Influence, Civic Innovation or Social Activism**

Another class of programs attempt to connect emerging leaders with political power. Knowledge of the public policy process, community organizing and activism skills and having a focus on municipal or regional influence are variants of this broader archetype. Some leadership programs place strong and sometimes singular emphasis on understanding and impacting public policy. Maytree's *Public Policy Training Institute*, later adapted for the Alberta non-profit sector by the Max Bell Foundation, helped connect emerging leaders in more marginalized communities with a much deeper understanding of the tools, levers and entry points into public policy influence and political power in Canada. The United Way of Lower Mainland runs a similar program through its *United Way Public Policy Institute* for leaders from the BC non-profit sector wanting to better understand how to influence the public policy process. The *Hollyhock Leadership Institute* on Cortez Island, BC, hosts the *Canadian Environmental Leadership Program*, which trains emerging environmental leaders each year in developing campaigns and working with the latest tools in communications and government relations. A number of public policy think tanks also run leadership programs, such as the *Broadbent Institute Leadership Fellows* and the *Institute for Liberal Studies Fellowships*. *Manning Centre New Leaders* program, for example, aims to support young emerging leaders in the conservative movement.

Other programs, such as *Civix* and *Samara*, focus on building the civic literacy of Canadian youth. *Apathy is Boring* uses art and technology to educate youth about democracy. *4-H Canada* brings 4-H club delegates from rural regions across the

country together via a *Leadership Summit* as well as a *Citizenship Congress* to explore and develop skills related to civic engagement, governance, parliamentary procedures, citizenship and politics.

Some programs focus more broadly on social justice. Ryerson University's *Jack Layton School for Youth Leadership* seeks to prepare the next generation of progressive leaders. Hollyhock also hosts a *Social Change Institute* gathering, which links environmental, labour, social change and arts advocates together to learn skills and build relationships. Tides Canada runs an occasional program called *The Inner Activist*, offers a unique leadership program for change makers. The *Community Leadership in Justice Fellowship* program, offered through The Law Foundation of Ontario, allows senior practitioners working in public or community advocacy to spend all or part of an academic year at an Ontario law school or university or college in a legal or justice studies-related department. Operating at a far larger scale, *Next Up* is a program for young, emerging environmental and social justice leaders that started in BC and Alberta and has extended to Saskatchewan, Manitoba and Ontario.

Starting in 1999, the J.W. McConnell Family Foundation supported the creation of an entire network of community-based leadership programs throughout the country. For a time, a national network - *Leadership Canada* - was created to support information sharing and the emergence of new programs (Henein & Morrissette, 2007). Some of these programs remain, including *Leadership Niagara*, *Leadership Thunder Bay*, *Leadership Winnipeg*, *Leadership Brandon*, *Leadership Saskatoon* and *Leadership Victoria*, funded variously by local United Ways, community foundations, corporate donors or philanthropists.

Some programs connect participants to a deeper understanding of their local community and expose them to opportunities, experiences and tools that can build or enhance the community. *CivicAction's Emerging Leaders Network* supports young changemakers who want to make the Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area (GTHA) the best and most prosperous place it can be. *Maytree's DiverseCity* fellows (now operated by CivicAction) and *School4Civics* programs have trained newcomers to Canada, specifically within the Greater Toronto Region, and people of diverse backgrounds to better influence local government and politics, and take on leadership roles on boards and committees. *CityStudio*, a collaboration between the City of Vancouver and six post-secondary institutions in the Greater Vancouver region, engages young college and university students as both leaders and decision makers, co-creating, designing and launching projects on the ground with city staff and other community members.

Certain region-wide or Canada-wide initiatives are focused more broadly on leadership in the service of nation-building. *Action Canada* aims to enhance Fellows' understanding of the country and public policy choices for the future. The *Governor General's Leadership Conference*, which has been a biennial event since 1983, brings together emerging leaders from all sectors and geographies for an intensive experience aimed at broadening their perspectives on work, leadership, their communities and the country as a whole. The *Canadian Queen Elizabeth II Diamond Jubilee Scholarships* aim to activate a community of young global leaders across Canada and the Commonwealth through cross-cultural exchanges encompassing international education, discovery and inquiry, and professional experiences. The *Jane Glassco Northern Fellowship*, operated by

the Walter and Duncan Gordon Foundation, works with young emerging leaders in Yukon, Nunavut, Northern Quebec and Labrador, and the Northwest Territories (which means, by virtue of geography, mostly Indigenous fellows) to deepen understanding of public policy as a central part of a broader suite of leadership development experiences. The *Whistler Forum for Leadership and Dialogue* promotes the power of dialogue and collaborative leadership in government, business and civil society. The *Banff Forum* is a gathering of diverse community leaders that aims to reinvigorate public debate and find ways to strengthen Canada.

### **Community Development Leadership**

Many leadership development programs train or support those working to build strong local economies, some with a domestic focus, others with respect to overseas community development. Often a defining feature of such programs is the orientation toward a newer, more just, equitable and ecologically responsible economic system (Gaventa, 2015), variously aligned to such concepts as the local movement, natural capital, the conservation economy or the Buddhist-inspired notion of 'right livelihood'. Leadership in this tradition is highly participatory, requiring considerable group facilitation prowess.

The *Coady International Institute* at St. Francis Xavier University is a world-renowned centre of excellence in community-based development and leadership education. The Institute offers a wide range of transformative leadership education programs, mainly within a community development frame. In addition to a diploma program, they offer leadership programs focused on asset-based development, citizen-led planning and social change. The *OceanPath Fellowship* provides community-focused experiential learning

opportunities for graduating students (from McGill, uOttawa, Queen's or StFX) to become effective change-makers. The *Canadian Women's Foundation Leadership Institute* is a pilot project with the Coady Institute, aimed at building the leadership capacity of emerging and mid-career women leaders working on community economic development issues in the women's charitable and non-profit sectors across the country. In a similar vein, Tamarack operates a program called the *Communities Collaborating Institute*, a learning community of practitioners who share a common interest in collaborative leadership, citizen engagement and change.

The *Emerging Leaders Committee* is a group of young people established within the Canadian CED Network, working to increase the number and quality of young practitioners entering the field of community economic development. The *BALLE Local Economy Fellows* is a North-America wide program that supports emerging young leaders working in community economic development. In the US, the Democracy at Work Institute operates a *Cooperative Developer Fellowship Program* for those looking to develop new, or collaborate among existing, cooperative enterprises.

## **Global Citizenship**

Many young Canadians develop pro-social habits and a passion for transformative change through their experience travelling, volunteering or working abroad. With the emergence of such initiatives as *Me-To-We*, and with diaspora communities maintaining strong ties with, and continuing to support, their home communities, we are seeing the emergence of global citizenship as a defining feature of many leadership experiences.

Such approaches marry service with courage – civic voluntarism with immersion in an often

profoundly unfamiliar setting. Examples include Rotary International's *Peace Fellowships* and the internships offered by the student-led organization *AIESEC*. Engineers Without Borders' *Junior Fellowships* are a more recent example of international service leadership, building on their *Professional Fellowship Program* for change agents that contribute to social ventures in Africa (and which also help Canadians better understand the challenges facing people in the developing world). Canada World Youth provides a range of programming in this realm, including the *Youth Leaders in Action* program, where youth volunteers contribute to community-driven health, environment or gender equity projects, and the *Global Learner Program*, which aims to promote global citizenship through the direct participation of youth in community-driven development projects. Programs beyond Canada's borders that Canadians are involved in that promote international service leadership include the *United Nations Development Program (UNDP) LEAD* and the US-based *Synergos Senior Fellows*.

Here again, the Coady International Institute has relevant offerings, through their *Global Change Leaders Program* and *Global Youth Leaders Certificate Program*. Royal Roads offers a *Master of Arts in Global Leadership*. *Pearson College* on Vancouver Island, one of twelve *United World Colleges* globally, provides pre-university education to a select group of emerging youth leaders with the purpose of united people, nations and cultures for peace and a sustainable future. Building on the *Sauvé Scholars Program*, the *Jeanne Sauvé Public Leadership Program* invests in the next generation of public leadership to help solve global challenges. The *Gordon Global Fellows* program, delivered in the mid-2000s by the Walter and Duncan Gordon Foundation, provided young Canadians with experience working or volunteering overseas with

leadership development support to work on a public-policy challenge relating to Canadian aid, trade, diplomacy or military intervention. The final reflections on this program, encapsulated in the report *Field Diplomats* (Kopecky and Sawh, 2012), provides extraordinary insight into the leadership needs for effective international engagement of young Canadians.

Some leadership programs are focused on intercultural awareness and cooperation, having emerged out of the realm of diversity education or anti-oppression pedagogy. Inspired by the work of Jean Vanier, *Intercordia Canada* fosters human solidarity by encouraging young Canadians to be morally responsive and develop a respect and appreciation for religious, cultural and socio-economic diversity by living and working alongside others who are different. The *Inclusive Leadership Co-operative*, created by the Cowichan Intercultural Society on Vancouver Island, seeks to build empathy and inclusion through cultivating a set of skills for embracing diversity in all living beings. *The Inner Activist*, a Tides Canada Initiative, provides a series of courses that integrate a critical consciousness and social justice analysis to intercultural leadership development. Beyond Canada, the UK-based *Ariane de Rothschild Fellowship*, available to all Commonwealth residents, and the *United Nations Alliance of Civilizations (UNAOC) Fellowships* both aim to develop intercultural leadership.

Still other programs are based on human ecology, an interdisciplinary field of inquiry first championed by Urie Bronfenbrenner (1981) premised on leadership as rooted in a profound understanding of human identity as shaped by factors like culture, family, economic structure, and so on, akin to a series of Russian nesting dolls. Leadership relies on the identification and –

where necessary - transcendence of these factors, toward a deeper discovery of shared planetary species-kinship as necessary to global empathy and citizenship. The *Redfish School of Change* and the *Human Venture Leadership Program*, established initially as *Leadership Calgary* and *Leadership Edmonton*, are Canadian examples of this stream. In the US, the *Generative Council* at the *Center for Nature and Leadership* and the *Global Human Ecology* programs at Cornell University employ this approach.

Certain outdoor leadership programs, such as *Students on Ice*, which operates immersive leadership experiences for high school students on an ocean-going vessel in the Arctic and Antarctic, are also focused on raising planetary ecological consciousness among youth.

## **Indigenous Leadership**

Indigenous peoples are the youngest and fastest growing demographic in Canada. For Canada to truly thrive in the twenty first century, investments in the leadership and innovation of First Nations, Inuit and Métis youth will be critical. November, 2015 marked the first ever Canada-wide gathering on the topic of Indigenous innovation, hosted by the National Association of Friendship Centres in Winnipeg. The use of ‘innovation’ in an Indigenous youth context may be new in a linguistic sense, but Canada has witnessed a growing number of Indigenous-focused leadership programs, an increasing proportion of which are Indigenous-led and endogenously designed and delivered (i.e. by newly-formed Indigenous organizations rather than existing NGOs or training centres).

There are a variety of Canada-wide youth leadership programs. The *National Aboriginal Role Model Program*, an initiative of the National Aboriginal Health Organization (NAHO), celebrates

the accomplishments of First Nations, Inuit, and Métis youth, selected for their achievements, leadership and innovation. The Rupertsland Institute – a research and training centre developed by the Métis Nation of Alberta – operates the *Canadian Youth Leadership Program*, in collaboration with Katimavik.

A number of training institutions offer Indigenous programming. Examples include the Banff Centre's *Indigenous Leadership* programs, the Justice Institute of BC's *Aboriginal Leadership Certificate*, and the *First Nations, Inuit and Métis Summer Youth Program* at Norquest College. *Indigenous Women in Community Leadership*, offered by the Coady Institute's International Centre for Women's Leadership, supports First Nation, Métis and Inuit women in building their capacities to be empowered leaders and agents of change. Indigenous-governed training institutes have also emerged in recent years, perhaps the best known being the Winnipeg-based *Indigenous Leadership Development Institute*. The Centre for First Nations Governance also operates a program called *First Nation Leadership Essentials*. Beyond Canada, the *Australian Indigenous Leadership Centre* is an interesting Aboriginal-run initiative.

Other programs operate at a regional level. Inuit-specific programs include the *Kangidluasuk Student Program* in Nunatsiavut and Nunavik and the *Nunavut Master of Education in Leadership and Learning* program at the University of PEI. The Ottawa-based award-winning program *Nunavut Sivuniksavut* provides Inuit students with a pre-college or university experience to develop the knowledge and aptitudes – including elements of public policy literacy, community development and global citizenship - needed to contribute to the building of Nunavut. Elsewhere in the north, *Dene Nahjo*, based in Yellowknife, aims to advance

social and environmental justice for northern peoples while promoting and supporting emerging Indigenous leadership. The program is rooted in a celebration of cultures, languages and Indigenous values on the land, guided by elders. *Our Voices* is an annual gathering for Yukon First Nation youth to develop leadership skills and focus on healthy living and community building. Yukon College also provides *First Nations Leadership Training*. Employing a similar model to Canada World Youth, which itself runs an Aboriginal program, *Northern Youth Abroad* cultivates youth leadership, career goals, cross-cultural awareness, and international citizenship amongst youth from Nunavut and the Northwest Territories.

The *Future Leaders Program*, a partnership between Alberta Sport Connection and the Alberta Foundation for the Arts, provides art, sports, recreation and leadership opportunities to help strengthen and empower youth who live in First Nation and Métis communities in Alberta. *IndigenEYEZ*, in interior BC, offers a series of programs that build the confidence of Indigenous youth through a transformational land-based program of experiential learning and self-exploration through creativity and the arts. *Next Up* has also run programs for First Nations and Métis Youth in Saskatchewan. The *Atoske Saskatoon Urban Aboriginal Leadership Program* is an unusual example of a city-specific Indigenous leadership program.

## THEORIES OF LEADERSHIP

From what we know about leadership development collectively – an incredibly complex topic - it is not advisable to preference one particular leadership theory to the exclusion of others (Day, et al., 2014). However, we are able to generalize about broad patterns in better understanding the link between theory and practice in Canada. As we examine the range and scale of leadership programs in Canada, it is clear that innovation and leadership development are most present in the area of *transformative leadership*, defined under *Full Range Leadership Theory*. This, and other streams of leadership theory – including servant leadership theory, implicit leadership theory and commons-based ideas of leadership - are described following. Together, these theories appear to underpin the vast majority of leadership programming in Canada profiled under the terms of this review.

**Full Range Leadership Theory:** Organizes leadership into three component categories; transactional, transformational, and laissez-faire. A transactional leadership style is one that is typically associated with managerial or supervisory positions within employment. The focus is on group performance, where compliance is gained through rewards and punishments. The transformational leadership style is an inclusive form of leadership where a leader works with other actors (i.e. employees, or volunteers) to identify needed changes, collaboratively frames a vision for that change, and works toward achieving that goal along with the group. Finally, the laissez faire leadership style is one where the prescribed head of the group leaves the decision making and power solely to the people involved; the leader takes a moderating approach to management. *Transactional* leadership programs use an instructional approach, with a focus on teaching

participant's leadership skills through structured lessons and courses (Azzam & Riggio, 2003). *Transformation* leadership programs on the other hand use an orientation approach, which includes instructional courses, but focuses also on orienting participants to the functions and issues within (or that impact) a community or social system while also introducing them to leaders in the community (Azzam & Riggio, 2003). Topics prescribed to *transformational* leadership development program participants can cover areas of interest relative to social systems, such as culture, education, economy, history, and a host of other topics important for collective awareness and systems change to emerge.

**Implicit Leadership Theory:** Leaders are thought of as leaders because of the public's preconceived expectations and assumptions about personality traits and other qualities that are inherent to a leader (Verlage, Rowold, & Schilling, 2012). Implicit Leadership Theory also posits that leadership is 'teachable', which is a sharp departure from trait theory, which suggested that certain individuals were born with innate capacities for leadership. The rise of leadership development programs indicates that people are today more amenable to the notion that leadership, or, for that matter, entrepreneurship, can be developed or enhanced through formal or informal training (Bennis, 2009; Mills, 2005; Kirk & Shutte, 2004; Bolton, 1991;).

**Servant Leadership Theory:** Originally described by Robert Greenleaf (1977), servant leaders are typified by their ethical behaviour, demonstrating the characteristics of empathy, awareness, conceptualization, foresight, stewardship and commitment. They empower their followers to meet their potential, through leadership servitude. This understanding of leadership can be considered a component of *transformational*

leadership where the role model capacity of a leader can form part of their idealized vision-in-action and collaborative influence.

**Commons-Based Leadership:** Not an established theory per se, but rather an emerging collection of writing linking community development with leadership, commons-based leadership theories emphasize awareness of broader social systems, notions of collective impact, and democratic (and typically decentralized) decision-making. An important and budding trend in Canadian leadership development programs is a sense that centralized leadership, or the 'heroic leader' model (rooted in 'great man' theories of leadership), is not appropriate nor is it successful in affecting wide-spread or enduring systems-level change (Ganz, 2010). Moreover, the conception of leadership within an organization context is also being challenged by systems leadership and collective norms and practices. Whether it is in the service of community-building, active citizenship, international development, peace-building, human rights, social justice, ecological sustainability or other common good oriented purposes, the movement toward connective leadership is paramount in leadership development.

The notion of leadership in the context of community-oriented development is popularly understood in a way that emphasises relationships and interactions rather than specific leadership behaviours. Leadership is an emergent property that arises from certain types of relationships among differing community actors (Pigg, 1999). Looking specifically at New Brunswick, McLaughlin and Hrabluk (2014) maintain that models of business and political leadership "must yield [their] natural inclination to control the agenda, in exchange for gaining access to the collaborative power of the Commons". This contrasts

leadership principles derived from studies in formal organizations, where a hierarchical view of leadership is widely held. This is not to say there is no room for more the more classical leadership imperative of influencing people and processes – only to say that such influence is bound by the rise of the commons and informed by the wisdom of the 'crowd'. Because community leaders exercise their actions within a context of social institutions or communities it is important that leadership development programs be based in what we know about community and social dynamics, and not only (or mainly) about formal organizations (Pigg, 1999). This is an important starting point to understanding leadership development in Canada, because it helps to contextualize many of the types of programs we see; programs that focus on networking environments that are immersive or transformational, innovative leadership education activities such as nature-based learning or platform based training programs, and a variety of other activities based around community experiences.

Crucially, the conception of a 'leader', in the context of systems and transformation especially, is different from the notion of an 'authority'. The former concept is legitimized by reciprocity and mutuality, which is not a requirement per se for "authority" (Pigg, 1999). One can certainly be *both* a leader and an authority figure, but these can exist independently (unsustainable though authority without leadership is, in the long run). The implication, of course, is that leadership can, does and should occur at any level of authority and in virtually any vocation or realm of citizenship.

Putting plans into effective action often means diffusing leadership in ways that are necessarily democratic, collaborative and equity or relationship-based. Such leadership environments appear necessary to create systemic

change. This is often the case when large-scale change is attempted with few resources, where interdependence, diversity, collaboration, communications, and context – local, regional, and global – all are necessary to reach visionary goals. The influence of leadership in this context is not coercive, it is multidirectional and all participants are active in the process (Pigg, 1999). Influence and suasion are present, but power is distributed. However, the level of influence in relationships is inherently unequal, because power resources – such as personal networks, interpersonal and group skills, motivation, and other characteristics – are distributed differently, and can be applied to persuade in different ways (Pigg, 1999). Relationships in these contexts are founded on trust, where the interactions between leaders and followers demonstrate that each see one another as allies – people with value, capacities, and resources – that are valuable toward meeting goals.

Within the context of either private or public sector innovation, we can look at leadership in much the same way. Entrepreneurs and creative proponents of public policy scale-up their innovations by drawing on the collective capacity of their networks (Born & Cabaj. n.d.). For participants in entrepreneurship education programs in particular, business success has been explicitly related to social capital – i.e. networking abilities, including the ability to raise financial capital and to recruit (Jones, 2011). To catalyze community engagement in a new practice, product, or process, network leadership strategies increase exposure and encourage new thinking and behaviours (Meehan & Reinelt, 2012). The diffusion of a successful innovative idea, process, or product – again, regardless of whether it is in the commercial or the public realms – relies on the willingness of people to adopt the innovation, and the rejection

or adoption of an innovation is dependent on the degree to which the innovation meets the community's existing values and belief systems (Stachowiak, 2013). In formal organizations, it is often the case that innovations emerge from the bottom-up, or from middle-management and frontline staff (Knater, 1988, 2001; Borins, 2002).

The decentralization of leadership practices in an entrepreneurial or innovative context, spurs creativity. Like community leadership, insight occurs as a result of collaborative inquiry, where equitable dialogue between diverse stakeholders can produce solutions to challenges considered insurmountable by traditional business-thinking (Horth & Buchner, 2009). A variation of this emerges in Al Etmanski's reflections on the topic of scaling social innovation in Canada. Etmanski distills 6 patterns that could almost serve as a handbook for systems leadership, noting as part of this that changemakers need to think and act like a movement (Etmanski, 2015).

## **LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT: Can Leadership Be Taught?**

Leadership development is a term that incorporates almost all forms of growth in a person's life that promotes one's leadership potential (Fredricks, 1999). It is a process that requires formal training in association with social and contextual interactions (Day, 2001). Leadership development programs incorporate innovative ways to do this that can range from creating networks of people where ideas can flourish to providing applied experiences for participants in their interest areas. A structured leadership activity that is designed to enhance leadership skill is termed *leadership education* – training programs, for example, are leadership education activities,

and form part of the pedagogical approach of many leadership development programs (Fredricks, 1999). The first leadership development program was created in 1959 with the intention of generating better communities. It was understood that fundamental changes were necessary for this to occur, and this would need to be accomplished through creating networks, establishing awareness of issues, and providing leadership education for community members. Another important principle established by this program was the importance placed on targeting a wide diversification of membership in order to enhance participants' community leadership abilities (Moore, 1988). These precepts inform leadership development programs across generations, and are as important today as they were in 1959.

*Case Examination: The first program explicitly referred to as "leadership development" was in Philadelphia in 1959. The Creation of Leadership Atlanta in 1969 was the first major step toward the modern evolution of leadership. (Fredricks, 1999, pg. 135)*

## **AN EMERGENT, UNIVERSAL COMPETENCY FRAMEWORK: Empathy, Creativity and Courage**

Given the ocean of writing and panoply of perspectives on leadership, attempting to distill the essential competencies of innovation-focused leadership is perhaps a fools game. As others have noted, establishing and identifying *the* set of particular leadership competencies for common good-oriented enterprises and activities remains an elusive task (McIsaac, Park, & Toupin, 2013).

We can go at least as far back as the philosopher Immanuel Kant, in his work *Metaphysics of Morals*,

where he proposed a *Doctrine of Virtue* which describe a set of unenforceable, yet universally beneficial, human qualities. These include the duty not to waste one's creative talents, or the duty to help others. Such qualities require "inner legislation" – they must be self-imposed. This tandem of will and self-mastery is what Kant called "courage" (Kant, 1991). Contained in this *Doctrine of Virtue* are three important clues – the duty to help others, the duty to utilize one's talents and the overarching requirement to act with courage. In a Canada-wide survey conducted by the Institute for Community Prosperity, these same three common threads observed within pedagogical approaches of leadership development programs nationally recure - empathy, creativity, and courage (Stauch and Cornelisse, 2016). These qualities underpin innovation of all kinds, and are among the marks of transformational leaders who are thoroughly self-actualizing (Alpaslan and Mitroff, 2010), and to those who display strong self-efficacy (Smith and Woodworth, 2012) . The first two are essential to design thinking – to defining, ideating prototyping and testing (IDEO, 2015) – while the third is essential to – for example - entrepreneurship, intrapreneurship, social activism and more generally removing fear of failure. Interestingly, the ability of conventional education systems to deliver on nurturing these qualities is often challenged.

## Empathy

*“Try to feel in your heart’s core the reality of others”*

- Margaret Laurence

*“Over a lifetime, I have learned that the human capacities for empathy and respect must be fostered from earliest childhood to reduce violence in the world and build a truly civil society.”*

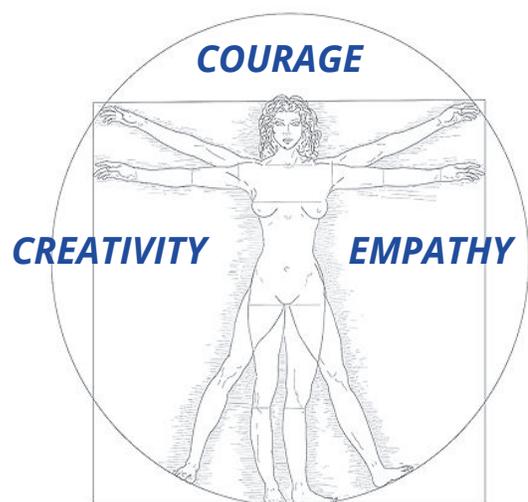
- The Honourable Landon Pearson, remarking on the work of Mary Gordon, founder of Roots of Empathy

The term “empathy” did not even enter the English language until 1909, introduced by psychologist Edward Titchener as a translation of the German term “Einfühlung” (or “feeling into”) (Titchener, 1909). It is a concept closely related to authenticity, vulnerability, emotional intelligence and self-awareness. It also relates to the concept of respect, and more broadly to ‘living well’ or ‘living right’, emphasized in Indigenous scholarship and practice (Jones and Maracle, 2015). In turn, these qualities enable greater capacity to appreciate diversity, to build trust, to display pro-social behaviour and to strive for inclusiveness and collaboration. As such, empathy is a crucial component of decentralized, transformational, systems leadership.

It is also crucial to effective entrepreneurship, innovation and design processes of all kinds. The ability to not just consult, but to listen deeply and form an emotionally resonant bond, is how empathy is manifest in a formalized group setting, such as within a public policy consultation or product design process. Greg Dees, the pioneer of social entrepreneurship education, in one of his last interviews, lamented how many programs fell into the trap of teaching social entrepreneurship as an heroic pursuit of a solitary “solutionary”, often

lacking the empathic skillset of listening to, and understanding, the perspectives of people closest to the phenomenon (Wolsham, 2012).

Empathy encompasses a broad range of leadership development goals. Often, common-good oriented projects are taken on through voluntary associations of people. Here, authority is uncertain and leadership can be precarious because the chief officer is not granted the right to coerce an organization’s members. Unlike employment, where a manager or supervisor has the effective power to demote, promote, hire or fire an employee, voluntary organizations of people are built around interpersonal relationships based around the exchange of interest and resources (Pigg, 1999; Ganz, 2002). Empathy forms part of the relational capacity in leadership needed for facilitating collaborative action across a variety of settings. Developing and maintaining interest in relationships themselves - linking organizations, networks and individuals - creates that critical component of systems change, “social capital” (Putnam, Leonardi, & Nanetti, 1994). Empathy is increasingly a hot topic, and itself a locus of innovation. Look, for example, at the work of MIT’s



*Figure 2: Competency Framework for Leadership in the Service of Innovation (appropriating Leonardo Da Vinci’s Vitruvian Man)*

*AgeLab*, of cultural thinker Roman Krznaric and his *Empathy Museums*, Chris Milk and his work around empathy machines and virtual reality, and, of course, Canada's own Mary Gordon, founder of the award-winning primary education innovation *Roots of Empathy*.

Tackling issues that are as divergent as climate change, social inequality, and food sustainability requires an understanding of these issues in context. To do so, leadership development programs across Canada have generated approaches to promote empathic ways of thinking pedagogically to include diversity in perspectives. As the Truth and Reconciliation report has called us to act, we need to fundamentally deepen and reconfigure the relationship between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people in Canada.

Transformative change emerges as a result of individuals, communities, and organizations who mobilize political, economic and cultural power asserting new public values and translating them into action (Rochon, 2000). A constraint that needs to be recognized by the leadership development community is the structuralization of privilege, and the entry points for change at the individual, community, and systems level (Meehan, Reinelt & Leiderman, 2015). A good example of this, demonstrated by a recent publication by the Mowat Centre at the University of Toronto, is the 87.2% racially white non-profit sector leadership demographic. Although women were highly represented in their survey, comprising up to 72% of the non-profit sector leadership, the sector is ripe for a demographic shift; 40% of respondents, comprised of executive directors, directors and senior managers in non-profit organizations, were above the age of 55. 60% of all respondents planned to leave their position within 5 years (McIsaac, Park & Toupin, 2013).

The impending exodus of non-profit leadership is an opportunity for new leaders to emerge, and leadership development programs are poised to play an important role in establishing a new set of practices and norms for a sector that seems still too singularly tied to its original Anglo-American cultural context and that is in dire need of strategic innovation and transformation.

*Case Examination: "Snowflake Model" – Decentralized leadership is a new model and a new reality regarding how we engage in political discourse as civic participants. Popularized by Marshall Ganz and the voter contact programs in Barack Obama's 2008 and 2012 campaigns, the Snowflake Model gives power to local activists to take charge in organizing small teams toward organizing rallies, community outreach, and electoral campaigning duties previously organized from central leadership (i.e. telephone and door-knocking operations). This model was imported by Canadian campaigners at Unifor (Canada's largest private sector union) to mobilize members during the 2015 elections. (Stuart, 2014; Ball, 2015). A similar concept – dubbed "constellation leadership" – has been used to describe contemporary citizen-organized successes in Canada (Gaventa, 2015).*

Additionally, one of the key demographic trends in Canada is immigration, which is widely held to be a positive response to forecasted, near-future labour shortages. Not only is it important to leverage existing talent from new immigrant populations, but integrating new citizens into communities by building resilience, supporting innovation, and engendering creative competence is important for the Canadian national economy (McIsaac, Park, & Toupin, 2013).

Authenticity, self-awareness and self-accountability appear to be critical components of empathic and effective leadership (Solobutina, 2014; Snyder, 2009). Erhard, Jensen, and Granger

(2013) advocate for an ontological approach to leadership development, rooted in deep self-awareness and accountability. This is echoed in some of the popular literature that ties personal responsibility and authorship to the complex challenges of our time (Alpaslan and Mitroff, 2010; Tavis and Aronson, 2007). Indigenous leadership approaches tie empathy, accountability and self-awareness to the land (The Jane Glassco Fellows, 2012), an idea echoed in different ways through many outdoor leadership initiatives. Personal self-care, mentoring and life coaching also plays into this, as many changemakers carry the “weight of the world” on their shoulders and must have the psychological supports a proactive approach to developing human potential (Solobutina, 2014).

*Case Examination: The implications of an aging population and immigration for the Canadian workforce- In 1971 the Canadian population had 6.6 working age citizens per senior citizen. In 2012 this number dropped to 4.2 working age citizens per senior citizen. Statistics Canada predicts that by 2036 there will be a ratio of 2.3 working age citizens per senior citizen. Some have argued that, in order to bolster the working age population, accelerating immigration to Canada is necessary for the security of national economic future (Holmgren, 2013). Whether or not this is the case, immigration has increased over the last several decades, changing the demographic and cultural makeup of Canadian cities and provinces. It is now more important than ever for leadership development programs to integrate diversity in perspective and cultural practices in order to reflect the current and future transformation of communities.*

Through these modules participants gain the self-awareness, authenticity, and open-mindedness that are valued in leadership development today. The taking on of different perspectives, and cross-

cultural inclusive dialogue, is central to innovation, where, in turn, creativity and imagination are fueled by empathy.

## **Creativity**

*“It is assumed that most people are dull, not creative, that people need to be bossed around, that new skills develop only with training... These beliefs have created a world filled with disengaged workers who behave like robots, struggling in organizations that become more chaotic and ungovernable over time. And most importantly, as we cling ever more desperately to these false beliefs, we destroy our ability to [address] the major challenges of these times.” (Wheatley, 2007)*

Almost all leadership programs introduce some aspect of creativity into their approach. Some initiatives, such as the programs delivered by the Banff Centre or the US-based *Partners for Youth Empowerment*, place central emphasis on creativity and arts-based learning.

There are many ways we can think about creativity, or imagination, with respect to leadership: Successful social movements ignite our imaginations, and often hinge on bold, vivid and exciting visions of what is possible (Etmanski, 2015). Joseph Schumpeter, likely the first scholar to theorize about entrepreneurship, observed that lying at the core of societal and sociotechnical change – in addition to inclusive dialogue - is the phenomenon of “creative destruction” (Schumpeter, 1942). Marcy (2015) further ties this notion of creative destruction to leader cognition and radical innovation. But perhaps the most compelling reason why creativity is a central competency to innovation-focused leadership

is its relationship to complexity and systems thinking (Goldstein, Hazy and Lichtenstein, 2011). Margaret Wheatley (2007) notes that the growing norm of self-organizing networks, whether of the nefarious variety (Al Qaeda or Columbian cocaine cartels as examples) or of a benevolent stripe, are fueled above all else by the qualities of passion and creativity. Hierarchical command and control leadership have little place in such networks – they are resilient “webs without a true spider”. There are parallels here with Victor Hwang’s allegory of a rainforest to explain innovation ecosystems, although he notes that there are keystone species – often individuals – that still “facilitate connections, command respect, and influence the push and pull of an ecosystem toward greater strength”. (Hwang, 2012).

Others have noted that when youth demand “youth-friendly” institutions and communities, they are demanding things that adults with a strong sense of justice and humanity demand as well: more humane, democratic, supportive, and – importantly - creative spaces. John Eger, Director of the Creative Economy Initiative at San Diego State University and former President of Smart Communities, notes that “young people need a place to work, and they need a community that nurtures their creative instincts; they need to live and work and play in a community that itself is creative” (Eger, 2012)

Creativity, or the innovative mind, is fostered best in a context of human diversity, and where relationships are generative. The most innovative and successful programs create conditions for creative failure and experimentation, which allows for the development of creative confidence (Kelley and Kelley, 2013). Leadership development programs today place equal importance on both logical and linear ways of thinking as well as the

inventive and playful imagination of its participants (Holmgren, 2013). Not only do effective leadership development programs serve as platforms to learn skills; They are also designed to generate new ways of thinking, allowing participants to explore modes of group thinking, constructive disruption, and positive deviance, for example (Holmgren, 2013).

Diversity, especially in the Canadian context, is integral to success in leadership development where leading change through dialogue is not simply about debating options, but creating conversations where ideas converge on a common ground where desires and aspirations meet. Leadership development programs that capitalize on diversity embolden the highest aspirations of participants by being authentically inclusive – recognizing the complexity of the world, our multiple truths, and utilizing our shared wisdom (Holmgren, 2013). Collaborative inquiry is integral to producing innovative ideas, and requires embracing diverse viewpoints (Horth & Buchner, 2009). Leveraging diversity with the concept of ‘serious play’ – generating knowledge and insight through free exploration, experimentation and rapid prototyping – has been identified as one of several competencies for innovative thinking skills (Horth & Buchner, 2009). Creating conditions where ‘serious play’ can occur is necessary for innovation, and is a construct utilized by many leadership development programs. Part of the creative thinking process is what Scharmer (2009) calls ‘pre-sensing’ or being present in a situation and being capable of sensing what comes next. This means not just focusing on current shortcomings or issue areas within a community, but seeing and creating solutions for the next generation of issues. When working with innovation, leaders must also be creative in the ways in which they communicate their vision, which can affect the rejection or adoption of an innovative idea (Stachowiak, 2013).

## Courage

*"It is difficult to imagine how *Outward Bound* would ever have come into being if it had not been for [Kurt] Hahn's recognition of the weakness of democratic cultures before well-organized forms of authoritarian education that were appallingly efficient at stirring up the passions of the young for collective violence." (James, 2000)*

Much of the literature addresses the fostering of courage as a core trait of leadership development. One stream of writing on leadership came out of a military tradition, particularly West Point Academy. Gus Lee, who served as West Point's first Chair of Character Development, believes leadership is rooted most fundamentally in courage (Lee, 2006), which he defined as "principled conduct under pressure" (Lee, 2006). Courage is necessary to bridge and build authentic relationships, communicate directly, put oneself in unfamiliar settings, give up absolute control over outcomes, speak truth to power and be resilient in the face of certain and frequent failures. It is just as critical to entrepreneurial leadership (Bagheri and Pihie, 2009), as it is to leadership centered on addressing injustice or inequity. Heifetz and Linsky (2009) of the Harvard Center for Public Leadership, write about leadership as intrinsically connected to taking risks; that skirting and flirting with peril are necessary to effective leadership, adaptive change and innovation amidst complexity.

The progressive education advocate Kurt Hahn, a force behind such initiatives as the *Duke of Edinburgh Award*, *Outward Bound* and *United World Colleges*, was an early advocate of the "journey-quest", confronting challenges and marrying service with courage, all in the service of youth leadership (James, 2000). We can see echoes of

this tradition in Canada in myriad wilderness- or adventure-based leadership programs. Hahn, who subscribed to an ascetic existence, believed that an intensive program of training, expedition, reflection, and service premised on an immersive encounter with the natural world was crucial (James, 2000). This, in turn, would foster "a deeper intensity of commitment in the rite of passage from youth to adult life", which meant introducing challenges that went well beyond those available through conventional schooling (James, 2000). A variation on this theme, premised on an immersion into another culture or setting, is at the heart of many cross-regional or overseas exchange programs like Katimavik and Canada World Youth. Such programs also accomplish another task vital to systems leadership – bridge-building.

Bridge-building is vital to systems change because it allows leaders to transcend silos and the 'groupthink' of homogenous networks, allowing new ideas and solutions to emerge against persistent challenges (Lanfer, 2012). Bridging relationships between people that have different values often requires disruption (Lanfer, 2012). Authentic relationships, or networks that are focused on connectivity, are frequently the source of acceleration or amplification of change efforts (Lanfer, 2012). To build authentic relationships, some leadership development programs have created 'learning journeys', an immersive experience meant to open minds and hearts (Lanfer, 2012). These can come in the form of week-long or longer retreats that focus on building trust and openness between gifted leaders. A more distributed, relational, and interdependent form of leadership requires trust, openness, and transparency. Letting go of the total control of project outcomes allows the leadership potential of everyone to evolve and flourish, and this requires courage (Meehan & Reinelt, 2012).

Innovation invariably comes with uncertainty, and leading change in the face of uncertainty also requires courage. An important focus for leadership development programs is adaptability, resiliency and a high tolerance for ambiguity, which are essential skills in a nation where multiculturalism and complex social issues collide. One's ability to handle and recover from setbacks, both personal and professional, is a critical test of their capacity for innovation (Holmgren, 2013). A leader who communicates and models new ways of thinking is not only adept at handling adversity, but learns and grows during the process. Generating alternative approaches when other previous approaches have proven unsuccessful, and having the faith and perseverance to see the challenges through, is a personally challenging quest that requires deep wells of courage.

## **THE IMPACT OF LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT**

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At the core of leadership development is the imperative for individuals to not just learn, but to have real impact. We need to go beyond measuring participation levels, training delivered and skills obtained, and be curious about the impact young people will have on the broader society (Ho, Clarke and Dougherty, 2015). This might take the form of commercial impact, political influence, behaviour shifts, new products, processes, programs, policies or society-wide conversations, or many other forms of change.

Between 10% and 20% of organizations who invest in leadership development actually evaluate the effectiveness of programming on performance outcomes, a finding mirrored in Canada (Avolio, 2003; Stauch & Cornelisse, 2016). Part of the reason for this is that metrics assessing performance and behavioural change are dynamic

and can be influenced by a range of internal and external factors, making formal evaluations difficult (Cascio & Boudreau, 2010). Another reason for this is that many of the people who are in a position to enact evaluations simply are not aware of the tools and processes available (Stauch & Cornelisse, 2016).

There is substantial recent discourse on the challenge of demonstrating impact in addressing complex, or 'wicked', social problems (Paton, 2003; Freireich & Fulton, 2009; Brest & Harvey, 2010; Crutchfield & Grant, 2010). However popular the term *impact* has become in non-profit and philanthropic organizations, it has yet to be consistently defined (Ebrahim & Rangan, 2010). A key challenge for the quantification and attribution of results remains the issue of causality. This is especially true when attempting to measure the impact of programs using non-specific interventions in areas such as human or civil rights. Causality becomes less problematic when interventions such as providing shelter or food are used and attribution is more linearly understood (Ebrahim & Rangan, 2010). The growing emphasis on quantifiable metrics in the social sector has raised concerns; does this emphasis bias funding toward work that can be easily measured or quantified at the expense of the delivery of services that are not (Ebrahim & Rangan, 2010)?

The question of how to assess the contributions of leadership development to large-scale change is a challenge that leadership development evaluators have been attempting to solve for many years (Meehan, Reinelt & Leiderman, 2015). The issues for these evaluators stem from a variety of compounding factors, making it a difficult prospect for a universally applicable metric to be developed. Part of the problem centres around a lack of clarity about desired outcomes from

within the communities, systems, and issue-areas that leadership development programs focus on (Meehan, Reinelt & Leiderman, 2015). The issues that leadership development programs seek to address are frequently integrated and are influenced by a vast and complex set of social and economic factors that are difficult to quantify.

Many leadership development programs focus on individual capacity building without prescribing the purpose or cause for which participants ultimately use their leadership abilities to address. Programs thus often do not feel that they should be held accountable for outcomes that are much larger than they are, and that are beyond their direct control (Meehan, Reinelt & Leiderman, 2015). This confounds greater efforts being conducted to understand the effectiveness of leadership development across several domains.

The unique nature of each individual program can also hinder efforts to establish universal metrics of impact (Azzam & Riggio, 2003, Meehan, Reinelt, Chau, & Holley, 2012).

As transformational-systems leadership dwells in the realm of the complex, wicked and messy, it follows that the methods we employ to understand impact will be similarly complex, wicked and messy. Robust evaluation requires a high tolerance for ambiguity, an appreciation of not just quantitative but qualitative and especially narrative-based approaches, and thinking across broad variable landscapes and time horizons, upon which certainty is elusive. Linear thinkers are best advised to think of a quantum metaphor – that causality will be frustratingly imprecise and that the ether of knowable information is perhaps best thought of as a fog of probability.

Nonetheless, neither complexity nor imprecision are reasons to forego a rigorous attempt to

evaluate the impact of leadership learning. A deeper understanding is always possible. In Canada, in practice, we have barely scratched the surface. In order for youth leadership and innovation development programs to grow and adapt to a dynamic and evolving world, it is important for program providers, investors and evaluators to embrace new ways of thinking about leadership as they emerge and to be open to accepting, revising, and reforming current models of measuring impact (Scharmer, 2009). We are not starting from zero. The field of leadership development already has tools it can use to promote efficacy, and there are tools and concepts available for programs themselves to discover and communicate where, why and how and they can effect change and show results.

But where do we begin? This review will offer some hopefully useful starting points and framings. But a follow-up primer or toolkit would be necessary, at minimum, to help programs – and more ideally, multi-program collectives - build their own tools for understanding impact. A useful starting point is to think about benchmarks, principles, touchstones and standards against which success can be judged. These are called criteria. From the literature, we have identified three broad classes of criteria: *General leadership criteria*, *innovation criteria* and *Indigenous leadership criteria*.

### **General Leadership Criteria**

As our communities become more diverse, complex, and global it is important for leaders to understand the interactions between people and the systems within which people operate (organizations, communities, environments, commercial, political and diplomatic systems, etc.) (Western, 2013). The ultimate goal of leadership development programs is to build a strong culture that encourages leadership at all levels of a society

in order to meet an array of current and future challenges.

Although the ways programs reach their goal of creating leaders are different, the teaching of leadership is comprised of at least four components that involve thinking within multiple levels or contexts simultaneously. These are as follows (Wilber, 2001):

**Individual** - Reflecting internally on your leadership practice or developing 'self awareness' with regards to strengths, weaknesses, passions or motivations.

**Interpersonal** - Examining your leadership interactions with others, seeking out the personal motives of others for collaborating, and understanding group processes. (Archer & Cameron, 2009)

**Community** - Understanding where, geographically and demographically, you operate and enact your leadership in understanding the community and its needs.

**Global** - Recognizing the global environment within which your leadership occurs, and the contextual factors that are likely to affect or impede success in your realm of focus.

In order to take on complex issues we need to connect organizations, networks, and individuals. The term **collective or collaborative leadership training** connects these four major spheres of leadership in practice (Meehan, Reinelt, & Leiderman, 2015). It emphasizes processes such as creating a vision, establishing ownership of processes, expanding participation and involvement, facilitating gatherings, energizing, as well as building confidence and psychological satisfaction in the group, and authentic attachment in relationships (Pigg, 1999). The core competencies in collaborative leadership

training, according to this framing, are alignment, commitment, accountability, diversity, equity, and adaptation (Meehan, Reinelt, & Leiderman, 2015), the latter three echoed in the literature as shown:

**Alignment** - This involves teaching participants to build a shared vision, and unifying their stakeholders under a common goal through dialogue.

**Commitment** - With a shared purpose, collaborative efforts require the ability to produce sustained commitment from multiple stakeholders with a long term perspective.

**Diversity** - An authentically inclusive environment breeds not only innovation and creativity, but also empowers often under-represented community members.

**Accountability** - Holding all actors accountable to clear and quantifiable goals moves commitments to tangible results. Shared responsibility for outcomes shows that the issue area matters (Ganz, 2010).

**Equity** - When people are seen as clients, they are robbed of their potential and agency as envoys of change (Pastor, Ito, & Perez, 2014). As shown previous, some leadership development programs have explicitly focused on giving stronger platforms and greater access for people to have a voice in areas such as policy change (Meehan, Reinelt, & Leiderman, 2015).

**Adaptation** - Research data can be used to help leadership development groups and leaders continually adapt and align their resources toward what works (Jolin, Schmitz & Seldon, 2012).

Although leadership competencies within the context of entrepreneurship are impossible to concisely capture in terms of archetypes, several learning outcomes can be identified (Jones, 2011).

Managing and learning from relationships has been recognized as one of the most important components of success for participants within entrepreneurship education programming (Jones, 2011). Entrepreneurial focused leadership development programs also attempt to create holistic and strategic ways of thinking about social capital; establishing an entrepreneurial value system that places explicit importance on harvesting ideas as well as grasping and realizing opportunity (Jones, 2011). The specific instrument of entrepreneurship is “innovation”, (Drucker, 1984).

### ***Innovation Criteria***

Innovation can substantially change the ways by which people live their lives, how businesses form and compete, and affect a nation’s prosperity or decline (Carayannis, Stewart, Sipp, & Venieris, 2014). This is more likely to occur through relationship-based paradigms such as innovation ecosystems – collaborative arrangements of firms, government agencies and other public, private or non-profit entities who support individual innovators - or networks of innovators - with real or virtual infrastructures that promote creativity and catalyze problem definition, ideation, prototyping, patenting and commercialization, scaling and dissemination (Carayannis & Alexander, 1999; 2004; Carayannis & Campbell, 2006). As discussed previous, the innovation mindset and skillset is nurtured implicitly through *transformative* or collaborative methods of leadership.

The Centre for Creative Leadership identifies six competencies for innovative thinking and innovative leadership design (Horth & Buchner, 2009). These are discussed contextually at the individual level and programmatic level, for both leadership development programs and in an organizational setting:

***Paying attention*** – From the program design perspective, this means actively looking for different perspectives across all domains of program development and implementation. For the leader, this requires an interpretive outlook that goes beyond first impressions to perceive more deeply contextual scenarios. Otto Scharmer’s idea of sensing and co-sensing are a variant of this.

***Personalizing*** – This means to consider the client’s point of view when designing a program. For a leader, innovation requires that they seek out personal experiences of others in order to gain new perspectives. Put another way, this is the empathy test.

***Imaging*** – Traditional business leadership uses both deductive and inductive reasoning to establish logical courses of action for their tasks, requiring proof of concept or precedent. Imaging requires an abductive reasoning – and thus a tolerance for uncertainty - accomplished by redefining a problem within an issue area. For the individual leader, this can also take the form of a metaphor, story, or other communication device used to reframe an idea, innovation, or proposal in order to persuade or engage an audience.

***Serious play*** – Innovation requires new and creative ideas, and structures need to be in place that facilitate creativity (Cullen, Palus, & Appaneal, 2014). In a leadership development context, this means creating modules that allow for experiential, experimental, rapid prototyping such as action learning projects or collective design processes. It requires the individual to generate ideas and insight through experimentation and exploration.

***Collaborative inquiry*** – Participants in leadership development programs should be tasked with fostering inclusive dialogues that embrace diversity in order to produce innovation. Such

programs can also contribute to overall leadership development efficacy across regions or even nationally, by sharing insights and ideas and working collaboratively.

**Crafting** – This component of innovative thinking and leadership-for-innovation by design, requires integrative perspectives on problems or issue areas. Whereas traditional modes of thought in business leadership are comprised of binary “either/or” thinking – where solutions are either right or wrong for a given situation – this mode of thinking demands consideration of the whole, synthesising solutions that may be in opposition or contradictory. An important component of leadership development is training for the capacity to transfer leadership to members of the community (Sullivan, Johnson, Kjellberg, Williams, & Beauchamp, 1998). Capacity building is another main theme for leadership development programs, which has been defined as a continual process of helping individuals, organizations and societies improve and to adapt to changes (James, 2002).

### **Indigenous Leadership Criteria**

It should be pointed out at the outset that Indigenous leadership criteria outlined here are suggested as as only a starting point for discussion. With the phrase “nothing about us without us” in mind, such criteria should not be established without a process involving First Nation, Inuit and Metis citizens and organizations. Moreover, while these criteria come from Indigenous scholarship, they are meant to be considered and to apply as well to programs that are not specifically Indigenous.

As outlined previous, Indigenous leadership programs are emerging from coast to coast to coast. At the same time, Indigenous communities in Canada face a range of challenges

either precipitated or tested by the legacy of colonialization and the residential schools system - the challenge of rebuilding nations, of economic marginalization, and the continuation of traditional practices and knowledge amidst the rapid encroachment of technological development and western ideologies (Ritchie, et al, 2010; Voyageur et al, 2015) Whether *transformational leadership* has been, in part, organically replicated by Western scholars or directly influenced by Indigenous communities has yet to be discussed and requires much further inquiry. Many of the foundational precepts, value propositions and thematic foci of leadership programs highlighted in this review bear some resemblance to those of Indigenous leadership concepts. There are commonalities between the emerging connective, collaborative and transformative leadership discourse and discourse on Indigenous leadership. There is strong evidence as well that outdoor, land-based leadership experiences are critical in building resilience, self-actualization and skills that are tied to cultural identity and empowerment (Ritchie, et al, 2010). In a study on leadership traits of northern Canadians conducted by participants in the Jane Glassco Fellowship program, leadership traits were especially strong in those who were “raised on the land, could live off the land, practiced Aboriginal traditions and spoke their Aboriginal languages” (Jane Glassco Fellows, 2012). “Wise practices” and successful leadership manifests the solidarity and strength of Indigenous communities, and has often been marred by the imposition of western paradigms onto traditional understandings of leadership (Voyageur et al, 2015). The western styles of leadership and governance are increasingly being challenged by Indigenous leaders and writers, and we are seeing alternative views and narratives emerge from communities themselves.

The 'wise practices model' was developed by the Banff Centre, which pioneered formalized Indigenous leadership programming, originally under Andrew Bear Robe, and subsequently by Brian Calliou, Cynthia Wesley-Esquimaux and others. It is comprised of the following components reflected in competency map research conducted by Voyageur, Brearley and Calliou (2014), Calliou (2005) and Ottmann, (2005). Each competency, recounted below, is described in relationship to, and as an enhanced insight into, transformative or collective leadership discussed in previous sections:

**Identity and culture** is an important component of authentic leadership in Indigenous communities across Canada. Knowledge and grounding in culture, traditional knowledge as well as an historic connection to traditional territories is integral to representing community interests (King, 2008; Grint & Warner, 2006; Cowan, 2008). An opportunity also exists for Indigenous communities to restore traditional leadership models through Indigenous feminism, and the development of female leaders. A profound colonialist impact on the capability of women to take on leadership roles has been felt in Indigenous communities. It has been generally accepted that pre-colonized aboriginal communities in Canada were comparatively egalitarian (MacDonald et al., 2001; Mackenzie-Stringer, 2012). Patriarchy is understood to have been introduced through colonization and has produced a double-marginalization of women under race and gender social hierarchies.

**Leadership**, understood as the agent **committing ideas into action**, is a role that can be performed by anyone within a community. Leadership development programs, with the intention of community good, hold the same perspective of leadership.

**Strategic vision and planning** is another factor in Indigenous leadership that conforms to the *transformative leadership* dialectic, regarding a leader's ability to inspire and motivate members of the community toward social change.

**Good governance and management** is another competency around community leadership that brings focus on the systems that need to be changed, developed, or emboldened by leaders in order for change to occur.

**Accountability and stewardship**, being open and transparent, are factors that build trust in communities and is an important component of Indigenous leadership.

**Performance evaluation** is similarly regarded as important in Indigenous leadership development learning. However, culturally competent Indigenous evaluation frameworks need to be developed (Chouinard & Cousins, 2007; LaFrance & Nichols, 2010; Kawakami et al., 2008).

**Collaborations, partnerships, and external relationships** are an important consideration for Indigenous leaders, which mirror the imperative for systems leadership.

A 'collective mindfulness', involving empathic, attentive, and generative listening, is an approach to creating consensus to dealing with diverse perspectives (Voyageur et al, 2015). The traditional western model of top-down governance is fundamentally different from that of Indigenous leadership practices where the elements, discussed at length by other authors and in the previous section, of transformative or collaborative leadership are similar to those practiced by Indigenous leaders. Integral to Indigenous leadership is story; both the telling of stories and the art of listening to stories. There are several forms of listening, and the listeners' relationship

to a story bringing a sense of responsibility, relationality and activation to the narrative (Voyageur et al, 2015; Atkinson, 2001).

There are many criteria not captured by this schema. There are systems-level criteria, even national or global standards, such as the Canadian Index of Well-Being or the UN Sustainable Development Goals, but the ability to influence and be held accountable for reaching such benchmarks is far more tenuous, on a program-by-program basis, and such criteria are often specific to the subject matter or topic field that may delimit a given program.

## **DESIGNING PROGRAMS FOR IMPACT**

Entrepreneurship educators, community organizers, movement builders, grantmakers and other practitioners have developed a large body of wisdom around how leadership, and leadership development, contribute to large-scale change. The next step for practitioners is to develop this wisdom through formal evaluation (Meehan, Reinelt & Leiderman, 2015). Several things within program design can help with this, including clarifying the programs' purpose, strategic recruitment and building in a collective design process or action learning projects. We have already explored a set of potential criteria.

At this stage, we can begin to think about program design. There are four main considerations when designing youth leadership programs for impact:

1. ***Incorporating formative, developmental and utilization-focused evaluation;***
2. ***Articulating a theory of change;***

3. ***Mapping and modeling the system within which the program is embedded; and***
4. ***Strategically recruiting program participants.***

### ***Formative, Developmental and Utilization-Focused***

It is vital to think about evaluation at the very start of program design, starting with an image of what success looks like – see the section later on developing a *theory of change* – and consider how evaluation can sync and be embedded with *every* stage of design and roll-out, not just at the end of program delivery. Put another way, evaluation should be both formative and summative, as well as emergent.

This ***Mixed methods approach*** is advocated by Orvis & Ratwani (2010). The chosen method and mix of evaluation techniques must also be nimble, responsive and useable, not just by funders, but by those most closely involved with the initiative. It is also important to utilize evaluation techniques that are not dependent on linearity. Innovation and systems leadership typically occur in a context of complexity, where problems are difficult to define and where connections to solutions are dynamic, unpredictable and non-linear (Goldstein, Hazy and Lichtenstein, 2011).

***Utilization-Focused Evaluation (UFE)***, developed by Michael Quinn Patton (2011), who has evaluated a wide array of leadership and innovation initiatives, is based on just such a principle. As with its twin methodology developmental evaluation (DE), the implication is that that evaluation should be planned and undertaken such that the findings will actually improve performance, though acknowledging the context of uncertainty. At one level, this appears to be common sense, but it means that evaluation framework must be built

into the program design, not as an afterthought. It thus enables continuous evaluation and course-correcting on the fly and as needed, rather than waiting until the program is over (the summative stage), at which time shifting priorities and contexts may render the results of an evaluation obsolete anyway (Stauch, 2012). Dozois, Langlois and Blanchet-Cohen (2010) provide a practical guidebook for Canadians, based on Patton's earlier pioneering work on the UFE's twin methodology of **developmental evaluation (DE)**. The US-based Forum for Youth Investment, along with Ready By 21, a national collaborative, published a *Common Outcomes and Indicators* framework for investing in youth (National Collaboration for Youth, 2012). The UK-based Young Foundation has also published a number of incredibly comprehensive tools around the notion of a *Framework of Outcomes for Young People* (Malik, 2012).

### **Clarifying Purpose: Developing a Theory of Change**

From an evaluators' perspective, a leadership development program that can demonstrate a linear and causal logic while implementing clearly understood interventions are more easy to measure (Ebrahim & Rangan, 2010). That said, we have already explored how systems leadership typically works in a non-linear context. Utilization-focused evaluation, discussed previous, can help frame an issue to enhance understanding of the desired nature and trajectory of change. This begins with a 'theory of change'; identifying the long term goals of the program and defining what needs to happen before those goals are met. It is an underutilized component of leadership development program design (Funnell & Rogers, 2011).

Many program providers come with a set of assumptions about how change will happen. This shapes their understanding about the conditions necessary for accomplishing their goals and the steps needed to get there. This view of how the world is positively altered (or one's corner of the world) can be described as a *theory of change*, and although it may not be explicitly stated as such, it can be used to articulate strategies and facilitate better planning as well as evaluation (Stachowiak, 2013; Funnell & Rogers, 2011; Brest, 2010). The theory of change starts with a statement of purpose, which relates the important qualitative and quantitative dimensions of the undertaking, in addition to how the group intends to provide value to stakeholders, which includes the public (Pascarella & Frohman, 1989). This can be useful; in providing a frame of reference for leaders when selecting strategies or priorities. It integrates and aligns the behaviours and actions in a group, provides a means for engendering long term commitment of participants to relationships and purposes, and helps in developing the self-efficacy and self-actualization of cohort participants – raising them above self-interest toward the common goal embedded in the theory of change (Stachowiak, 2013).

The notion of the *theory of change* has been explored in depth by authors from a variety of disciplines including political science, behavioural psychology, and sociology. Some notable authors and ideas are explored here, and are useful to creating a shared language or framework to build on.

**The Grassroots or Community Organizing Theory of Change** is a belief that systemic change occurs through mutual action by community members who are directly impacted by those systems. Espoused by Saul Alinsky in his book *Rules for*

Radial (1971), it assumes that power exists solely on consent of the people, manifest either as cooperation or obedience, and can be shifted through collaborative action (Stachowiak, 2013). The role of the leadership program, from this perspective, is to facilitate this collective effort through training and capacity building, creating awareness of issues, networking impacted community members, and advocating through media channels toward a particular issue or cause. This theory of change, broadly interpreted, has had enormous influence on all manner of lobbyists, as well as on a generation of community organizers.

### ***Diffusion Theory or the Diffusion of Innovations***

***Theory of Change*** is a belief that change occurs when a change agent models or communicates an innovation – which can range from the political to technological – that is adopted by a community. The extent to which adoption rates occur depends on the innovation's alignment with community needs, values, or wants (Rogers, 2010; Stachowiak, 2013). It is the job of the leadership program to design curriculums based around their interest areas regarding technological, political or other change processes that produce lasting impacts on communities through the creation of generative networks, applied experiences, and technical heuristics.

### ***The Self Categorization Theory or Group Formation***

***Theory of Change*** is a notion that assumes change can be achieved when individuals identify with groups, and that these groups act in ways that are consistent with that categorical membership. Underlying this assumption is that cohesion among a social group, or categorical membership, is prerequisite for change. Program providers then cater in ways that empower notions of the group, its norms, expectations and even aesthetics, and produce platforms where coalitions and unlikely

allies can be developed (for an example, refer to the post-Apartheid strategies of Nelson Mandela's leadership in Acemoglu and Matthews, 2015)

Several other defining theories of change have been developed, especially in the realm of policy change, that provide useful insights into the underlying assumptions of many of our shared institutions, cultures, and privileges; *Coalition Theory or Advocacy Coalition Framework* (Sabatier, 1988), *Power Politics or Power Elites Theory* (Domhoff & Dye, 1987; Mills, 1999), *Media Influence or Agenda-Setting Theory* (McCombs et al., 1997), *Messaging and Frameworks or Prospect Theory* (Kahneman & Tversky, 1987), and more.

Theories of change can clarify alignment between organizations, while also allowing participants in particular programs to have a shared language regarding how change happens (Stachowiak, 2013). It can focus the activity programs and participants, helping program managers make strategic choices about limited resources. It can also provide support for evaluation (Stachowiak, 2013).

### ***Mapping***

Explicit theories of change can be utilized with Pathway Mapping and/or Results Mapping strategies to create Investment Frameworks for funders to make strategic choices about investment:

***Pathway Mapping*** is one approach that uses a theory of change to map the connections between the individual, organizational and societal level areas where outcomes are desired. It is a process that clarifies a program's interventions and activities in order to define the organizations' assumptions about change, allowing stakeholders to gain a clearer understanding of leadership development outcomes over time. In considering and developing a program's theory of change,

this approach is limited by its focus on anticipated pathways or outcomes, but benefits from a focused or explicit set of outcomes (Gutierrez & Tasse, 2006; Meehan et al., 2015).

**Results Mapping** is an 'open systems' approach to understanding leadership development impact as part of multiple contributing factors towards systems change. Although some outcomes can be directly attributable to the organizations programming, this approach recognizes that leadership development programs spark change in multiple domains. This open-ended mapping creates a useful framework for gathering stories or insights from upstream implementations of program lessons, to downstream redesigns or adaptations of leadership development programming (Grove et al., 2007; Meehan et al., 2015).

Such mapping exercises may be enhanced by the use of **hierarchical linear modeling**, an evaluation technique that assessing multilevel change over time with regards to leadership development (Gentry & Martineau, 2010).

Together, these theories of change and mapping strategies can provide funders with an **Investment Framework** allowing them to make strategic choices about investment in leadership development. It is now generally understood that an investment in individual leadership capacity does not by itself produce organizational, community, or systems level change. This means that for funders, it is important that leadership development programs have pathway and results mapping in place to demonstrate alignment with an investor's desired outcomes (Hubbard, 2005; McGonagill & Reinelt, 2011).

**Return on Leadership Development Investment (RODI)**, an adaptation of *Social Return on Investment*

(SROI) is an evaluation methodology that attaches a monetized ratio to organizational effectiveness in leadership development (Avioli et al., 2010). As with SROI, the notion that something as complex as systems leadership success can be reduced to a single ratio is fantastical. But like any fantasy, it is alluring and potentially powerful as part of a broader story.

### **Identifying Systems Leverage Points**

As Donella Meadows (1999) outlined in her groundbreaking work on systems change, certain types of interventions are more likely to transform a system. In particular, she outlined how a systems leverage point is usually rooted in information and control. This is a point that devotees of social entrepreneurship often miss. The creation of a new product, new business or incremental policy achievement – examples like a conservation 'win' or a hike in the minimum wage – are not system-flipping. Likewise, an app is usually not a system-flipping product. An understanding of potential leverage points can be an important consideration in smart leadership program design.

### **Collective Design Process and Action Learning Projects**

One of the most effective ways for leadership development programs to show impact is by designing the program to include a collective design process or action learning projects (Smith, 2001; Meehan et al., 2012). The benefits of this are the ability of a program to retain clarity of purpose for its current cohort while also being capable of having a broader vision of affecting change. It also allows people outside of an organization to evaluate the effectiveness of leadership development programming by taking a closer look at individual or collective projects that are relevant to them. By bringing examples of change and

effective leadership within the purview of control of the organization, leadership development programs have the power to show their efficacy within immense social and economic systems.

In one sense, this is proverbial 'low hanging fruit': Program participants are a continuous well of program design, evaluation and re-design insight. Many programs do not poll or interview their participants or alumni, yet this is critical and obvious input to be soliciting. But in order to ensure quality, candid responses, the chosen consultation technique – and the imperative of independent evaluation – must be carefully considered. One technique, called **Q- Methodology**, emerged out of social psychology as a way of soliciting participant perceptions of outcomes. The technique reduces individual viewpoints of participants into a few factors depicting shared ways of thinking about outcomes (Militello & Benham, 2010).

## **Strategic Recruitment**

It is important to link the choice of participant demographic and the chosen recruitment strategy to the desired outcome(s) of the program.

Focusing recruitment on particular sectors can streamline networks and reduce many of the technical barriers preventing formal evaluations to be conducted. Isolating the value of a leadership development initiative is difficult because it is often the case that no comparison group can be drawn to assess impact. A focus on specific kinds of participants – for example, engineering students creating solutions for systemic poverty in developing countries – allows comparison between groups of people who have or have not participated in a program. This makes the generation of metrics of impact more possible, and makes the use of tools such as **Social Network Analysis** and **Collective Impact** more meaningful.

Deciding on the target population that will have the greatest impact on an issue area is an important consideration when considering a program curriculum (Meehan, Reinelt, Chaux & Holley, 2012).

Although many programs across Canada do not explicitly reference a specific approach to recruitment as it relates to systems change, several types are useful to consider; these are the Organizational Change, Community Change, Systems, and Results approaches. These are not exclusive categories; Some organizations draw on a variety of approaches.

**Organizational Change Approach** - These leadership development programs recruit teams from a single organization to make needed institutional level changes.

*Case Examination: Banff Centre's Peter Lougheed Leadership Initiative – Custom designed programming for participants within an organization that includes topics such as 'building your next generation of leaders', 'developing your organization's current leadership talent pool', 'leading complex change', 'enhancing cultures of accountability', and 'building performance measures'.*

**Community Change Approach** – These leadership development programs identify community sectors that need to be represented to foster innovative solutions to local or regional community issues, involving members of the local government, faith groups, arts, and more.

*Case Examination: A number of leadership programs are led by ethno-cultural communities in Canada. The Leadership Engagement, Action and Development (LEAD), is a community capacity building program that combines leadership training, civic engagement, voluntarism and cross-cultural collaboration for members of ethno-cultural communities in Calgary.*

**Systems Approach** – These leadership development programs focus on involving actors within systems to participate.

*Case Examination: Engineers Without Borders Canada – Describing itself as a ‘systemic change incubator’, Engineers Without Borders Canada connects innovative organizations and corporations to engineering students, building leadership through innovation by completing work placements in Africa. It’s Junior Fellowship Program focuses on accelerating Africa’s development and to collectively change the systems that allow poverty to exist there.*

**Results Approach** – These leadership development programs focus on recruiting those who are passionate or experienced in an issue area.

*Case Examination: Next Up’s Climate Leadership Program – Next Up is currently recruiting participant’s who are passionate about climate change issues and sustainable energy development. Participants are required to have demonstrated this passion by having been active in their organization, or the sector, for at least two years and intend on being involved in the issue area for at least the next 3-5 years.*

## **Cultivating Networks**

Networking and leadership are inherently similar, because both deal with people who have no direct control over one another (Grayson & Baldwin, 2007). Formal structures of leadership and networking are easy to observe; they form the basis of organizations. Powerful, informal and invisible structures exist also that can support or undermine leadership (Cullen, Palus & Appaneal, 2014). Cultivating networks implies expanding participants’ views of people beyond formal positions and roles, and develop a network perspective that identifies, develops, and leverages people whose resources, abilities, or

other characteristics are critical to a project, and who may be undervalued by formal systems and structures (Cullen, Palus & Appaneal, 2014).

Kristen L. Cullen et al. (2014) at the Center for Creative Leadership identifies two types of challenges leaders face; technical challenges and adaptive challenges. Technical challenges are comprised of issues that are solvable in ways leaders already know – hiring more people for a work intensive task to meet a deadline, or increasing production on an item in high demand – adaptive challenges are the result of a complex development (e.g. a new technology, or environmental change) that requires changing the systems that people have created. Leaders faced with these types of challenges are required to build ‘social capital’- networks of value, collaboration and reciprocity – in order to change people and, therefore, to change systems. There are at least two thresholds of social capital; *bonding* relationships between people who are similar to each other, and *bridging* relationships across people who have differences (Lanfer, 2012). For bridging relationships, developing networks for the sake of connectivity is as important to building social capital as those meant exclusively for alignment regarding issues, or for actionable projects. Lanfer (2012) explains that networks come in three types; connectivity, alignment, and action – because of the urgency many place on outcomes, we often skip ‘connectivity’ types of networks in favour of highlighting networks focused on ‘alignment’ and ‘action’. By doing so, we miss out on some important benefits of connectivity centred networks. As it turns out, networking for the sake of connectivity is a powerful accelerator and amplifier for all other forms of network activity. Programs that create opportunities for relationships to occur produce benefits in the form of emergent leadership, where

collaborations happen through genuine passions and possibilities. To take advantage of gifted leadership, bridging relationships is necessary, and this often comes as a result of connectivity based networks (Lanfer (2012). Network strategies of leadership can catalyze community engagement on a large scale, encouraging new ways of thinking and action by significantly increasing exposure to innovative ideas (Cullen et al., 2014). The power of social media has transformed how people can mobilize for social change, and by utilizing and training people to leverage these tools, programs can scale projects exponentially (Cullen et al., 2014). Leadership development programs and participants benefit greatly from the networks of people they produce (Earnest et al., 1995), either formally – and ideally - as part of an alumni structure, or informally beyond the life of the program. Programs that are focused on common-good oriented projects have demonstrated that when individuals, organizations, and communities connect across boundaries and align their efforts they are better able to develop large-scale change, achieve results, and create innovative solutions (Meehan, Reinelt, Chaux & Holley, 2012). Structures, platforms and processes need to be in place for these groups to collaborate. Formal alumni organizations can be used to leverage past in determining what future events or classes should look like (Azzam & Riggio, 2003). Supporting collaboration transforms fragmented systems into large-scale collaborative efforts toward systems change (Meehan, Reinelt, & Leiderman, 2015).

## ***Attention Funders: A Note on the 'Contract' Between Investors and Organizations***

One of the most frequently mentioned challenges leadership development programs face is funding longevity and predictability (Azzam & Riggio, 2003). Inefficient application or review process, demanding excessive time and effort in reporting or proposal writing, can be detrimental to programs that could otherwise be using resources to build movements and catalyze networks (Meehan & Reinelt, 2012). To the extent that they are interested in also understanding impact, funders need to properly resource the cost of evaluation *at the same time* as they approve program funding.

Organizations must also allow time for professional development of program staff and for shared reflection and learning to occur, in order for networks to emerge and their potential to be fully realized. In addition, outside consultants as well as developmental collaborators and/or properly resourced backbone organizations, in the case of collective impact efforts, are necessary. At the same time, to the extent that public funding is alluring, programs are wise to link their efforts to provincial, territorial or federal innovation and youth development policies, platforms and agendas.

## RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER ACTION AND RESEARCH

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- A ***national strategy*** on youth leadership and innovation would assert leadership development as a policy priority, building on the priority identified by the Prime Minister Justin Trudeau in identifying a Ministerial portfolio for “Youth”, a role he has personally assumed. This would also build on the Ministerial Mandate Letter for Innovation, Science and Economic development to “improve the quality and impact of programs that support innovation... and entrepreneurship” (Canada, 2015).
- The creation of a ***Made-in-Canada leadership learning network*** would greatly enhance our collective knowledge of leadership development. It could be an adaptation of the *Leadership Learning Community* in the US, the design of which should draw lessons from the creation and demise of the former national network *Leadership Canada*. At minimum, this network should include an online hub to share information, key learnings and emerging practices. One such resource is currently being developed by the Institute for Community Prosperity. It is imperative that such a resource not be branded by any one initiative or organization. And should be Canada-wide in scope and reach (the site is currently being developed in English, but a comprehensive approach would ultimately need to be bi-lingual at minimum). The learning network could naturally emerge out of the national gathering in April, and commit to re-engaging at regular intervals. The trust and mutual awareness built through the network might engender other shared platforms, laddered or tiered leadership learning agreements or other formalized partnerships. In the intervening period, the network could seed other forms of engagement such as webinars, news bulletins, a social media presence and smaller learning circles (regional, issue-based or approach-based).
- The creation of an ***evaluator’s toolbox*** would be, for practitioners, a helpful next step. The tools, criteria and other considerations around understanding impact referred to in the latter portion of this document could be adapted to a practitioner-focused, designed guide path-finding and tool selection assistance.
- Further ***research on understanding impact*** of leadership programs is essential. Many more examples are needed of how programs were able to glean insight into their impact – particularly outside of Canada, where there are far more examples. There is also a role for shared platforms, at minimum for top-level insights, but more ideally for qualitative and quantitative data sharing. In order to demonstrate impact, reliable indicators and tools are needed to measure the impact of collaborative leadership. Platforms that can collect and disseminate lessons learned are necessary for this, because *assessment information* is required to measure growth and change so that researchers learn from, retool and refine formal evaluations. This allows the field to progress, providing practitioners with the tools and knowledge to develop, educate, and learn from future generations of leaders (Brungardt, 1997). There is a documented fear of share learning or models, or cooperating with allies doing similar work, for fear of losing competitive advantages or branding in a competitive

funding environment (Meehan & Reinelt, 2012). Multiple avenues of change can help to change these attitudes, ranging from advocacy regarding new leadership mindsets to grantmaker reform of funding practices. Also, 'post-mortem' studies on why certain programs were discontinued would offer additional insight.

- The **connection between leadership and innovation** could be explored further, and **better language** could be sought to make vivid both notions. Both concepts are contested, nearly boundary-less and easily bent to fit different worldviews, ideologies and agendas.
- The **role of post-secondary institutions**, requires much more analysis, both in terms of the current state of play and the potential of such institutions in nurturing next generation leadership in the service of innovation. Similarly, the role of secondary school programs and the uneven melange of civics, service, social justice and entrepreneurship supports across the country and long-standing extra-curricular recreation-based, art-based or service-based experiences (such as team sports, Elder-Youth camps, *FitSpirit*, Cadets, Venture Scouts, Girl Guide Rangers, model UN or model parliament, faith-based youth programs, choirs or drum corps, robotics or science clubs, student councils, etc.) is excluded from this study. Yet, such programs place strong emphasis on leadership, service and citizenship, and are surely important pieces of the broader ecosystem of next generation leadership development.
- Indigenous Peoples – First Nations, Inuit and Metis - are the youngest and fastest growing demographic in Canada. Building on the writing of such contributors in this study as Cora Voyageur (2015), Holly Mackenzie-Stringer (2012), and Brian Calliou (2005), **additional insights and examples from Indigenous leadership development** are needed.
- More research is needed into **the earliest 'seeds'** of leadership development. This review focuses on youth and adult learners, but there is evidence to suggest that early experiences create a greater likelihood that leadership can flourish at a later age (Murphy & Johnson, 2011). This seems particularly true when one considers the suggested universal competencies of empathy, creativity and courage.
- The role of technology to connect groups of youth across Canada, including **the use of 'virtual worlds' to work on complex challenges** in a gamified 'changemaker sandbox'-type setting, is an underexplored area that shows potential for enhancing civic engagement and collaborative leadership (Turkay and Tirthali, 2010).
- This study focused almost entirely on English Canada, also referencing English language literature exclusively. A comparable body of research is needed on youth leadership development and innovation in **Francophone Canada**.
- There is a need to discover more examples and **promising approaches from outside Canada of youth leadership and innovation**.

## CONCLUSION

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This literature review covered a wide terrain of writing, programs and contemporary thinking about youth leadership and innovation. It also outlined concepts and a basic introduction to tools and techniques for beginning to understand the impact of leadership programming in Canada.

Leadership development is in a state of rapid growth, change and transformation. Where leadership was once thought of as the role of pivotal change agents or heroic leaders, we are now seeing a diffusion of power within and across communities – the Ashoka phrase *everyone a changemaker* is a salient descriptor of the trendline. The need for programming focused on large-scale systems change requires highly networked, open and collaborative processes. These processes are fueled by empathic, creative and courageous design and decision making in the service of innovation.

It is useful at this point to recap the three questions asked at the beginning of this review:

1. ***Why is it important to invest in youth leadership development and innovation in Canada?***

In completing this review, we have described leadership as an evolving concept, including the theoretical underpinnings most relevant to youth leadership development appropriate to the complex and profound challenges of the twenty first century. We have explored and described a broad terrain of leadership programming in Canada across a range of program archetypes and approaches, with emphasis on those reaching beyond the person and the organization to the broader system, sector, market or society.

Based on our knowledge of the potency, currency and appropriateness of transformative, systems-focused leadership programs, we can surmise that Canadian communities stand to gain enormously from investment in such programs. Successful communities have strong leadership (Scheffert, 2007). Communities that have strong local leadership have a tendency toward lower crime rates, more effective government institutions, and better schools (Putnam, 1995; Rossing, 1999). This is particularly true in communities where leadership development is strongly tied to civic engagement and where there is an embrace of a critical lens on public issues (Azzam, & Riggio, 2003).

2. ***What results can we expect from such programs?***

It is very challenging to connect the results that particular leadership programs - each with a distinctive design, approach and theory of change - can reasonably be held accountable for, and the outcomes that are beyond their direct control (Meehan, Reinelt & Leiderman, 2015). This disconnect impedes our ability to understand the effectiveness of leadership development across several domains, and also our efforts to establish universal metrics of impact. It is perhaps not surprising, in this light, that a very small percentage of programs attempt to formally evaluate their impact.

Recognizing the inherent complexity and imprecision of gauging impact, we have provided a skeletal framework upon which further evaluation tools can be designed and customized. We have outlined a framework for beginning to understand the

impact of youth leadership development, and showing greatest promise to deliver on results in the service of innovation, starting with a three-pronged set of evaluative benchmarks:

1. General leadership criteria: Understanding the spheres of change as individual, interpersonal, community, and global, and based largely on Meehan, Reinelt, & Leiderman (2015), these criteria are *alignment, equity, commitment, diversity, accountability and adaptation*.
2. Innovation criteria, drawn from the Centre for Creative Leadership (Horth & Buchner, 2009) are *paying attention, personalizing, imaging, serious play, collaborative inquiry and crafting*.
3. Indigenous leadership criteria, modeled on the Banff Centre's 'wise practices' frame (Voyageur, Brearley and Calliou, 2014), are *identity and culture, committing ideas to action, strategic vision and planning, good governance and management, accountability and stewardship, performance evaluation and collaborations, partnerships and external relationships*.

The review also outlines some key elements of designing and refining an effective program:

- Emphasizing formative, developmental and utilization-focused evaluation;
- Developing a theory of change;
- Considering the use of a map and/or an investment framework;
- Identifying systems leverage points;
- Using collective design and action learning;

- Undertaking strategic program recruitment and selection; Cultivating networks, and mapping and evaluating connections.

### **3. How could a youth leadership and innovation strategy help Canada thrive?**

Leadership development programming too often operates in splendid isolation, with too little regard for understanding impact. While it is certainly messy and complex to come to an understanding of broader societal impacts, especially in a collective sense, and while it requires a nimble appreciation and artful adoption of many approaches and techniques, it is nonetheless vital. Vital to proving the worth and efficacy of leadership development and to determining which kinds of tools and approaches hold the most promise for addressing the challenges of our time.

This review has emphasized the power and potential of collaboration and networked learning, not just across programs, but across geographies and areas of focus. With more focused alignment and an Olympian-level intentional system of supports (information-sharing, financial, evaluative and otherwise), we can ensure the ground is laid now for the next generation of Canadians to thrive and return Canada to a central leadership role in addressing the challenges of this world, in this century.

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