

NETOLNEW  
Partnership Grant  
Newsletter



Logo by Philip Kevin Paul

ÍY SŁÁĆEL, Gilakas'la,  
Ha7lh Skwáyel, tânisi (greetings)

Together with nine Partners, Drs. Onowa  
McIvor & Peter Jacobs launch 6-year project

We are excited to announce the beginning of a 6-year journey together with our Partners on a SSHRC Partnership Grant.

This collaborative research endeavor was initially conceived back when Peter and Onowa met as doctoral students at UBC in 2010.

In 2015, we first set out and connected with potential partners for this national Partnership project. The immediate support and interest gave us the encouragement to prepare the Letter of Intent, submitted in February 2016.

In June of that same year, we were among 26 out of 81 applicants invited to submit a full application by November 1<sup>st</sup>.

What followed was a busy, yet productive summer; we connected with our Partners and Collaborators during theme-based video-conference calls, as well as in person at the East and West Partners' meetings at UN Blue Quills and Kahnawà:ke.

The final step in the application process was a SSHRC panel interview. We video-conferenced from Hawaii in



late February 2017, where we and our partner Kathy Michel were attending the International Conference on Language Documentation & Conservation.

The exciting call that we were successful in the final grant process came at the end of March this year.

We feel humbled to go on this journey with you.

HÍ,SWĶE HÁLE,  
Chen kw'enmantumi, hiy hiy,  
*Onowa & Peter*

## NETOLNEW Project overview

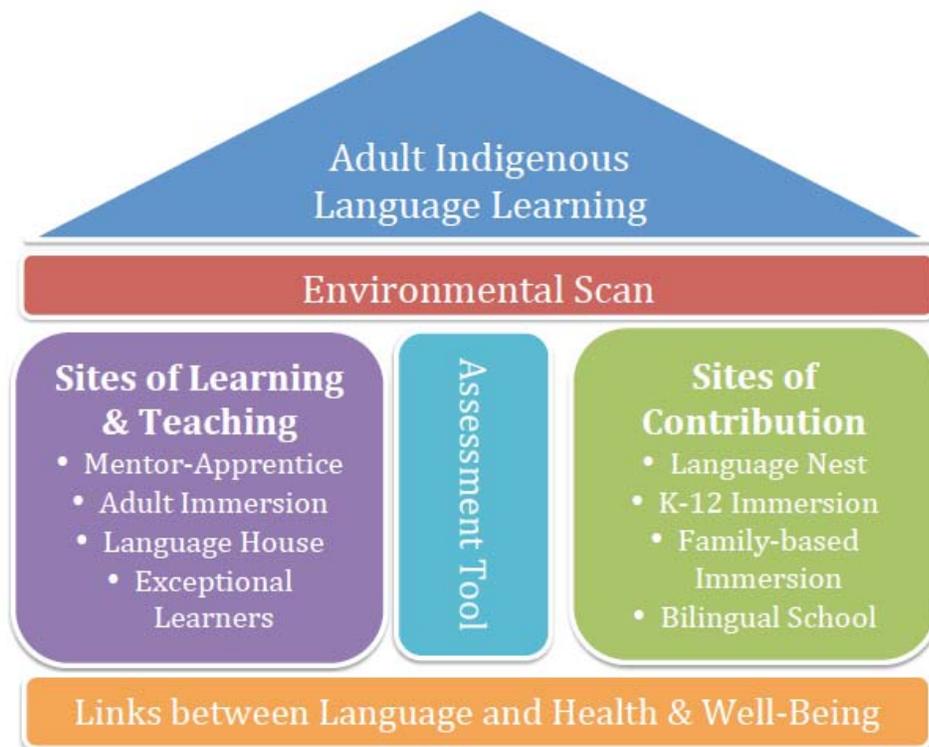
Increasingly, adults are identified as the “missing generation” of learners who hold great potential to contribute to the revival of Indigenous languages in Canada by acting as the middle ground between Elders, children and youth within their communities.

It is within this context that our Partnership addresses Indigenous adult language learning. Because language learning in Indigenous communities cannot be studied in isolation, we will use an approach that engages with, and studies, the spheres to which these adult learners are drawn.

### **Theme 1: Environmental Scan.**

Operating in regional ‘hubs’, we will document significant sites of language revitalization across Canada. The information gathered in this sub-project will then be translated into an interactive, online map and repository to facilitate learning from and combining efforts across various types of immersion and bilingual Indigenous language revitalization projects in Canada.

**Theme 2: Language-learning Assessment Tool.** As more adult Indigenous people begin learning their languages, there is an expressed need for context-relevant assessment tools to document and evaluate their language learning progress specific to their learning situation (i.e. MAP, immersion, etc.). In our Partnership, we will continue developing tools for assessment and testing these with interested partner communities.

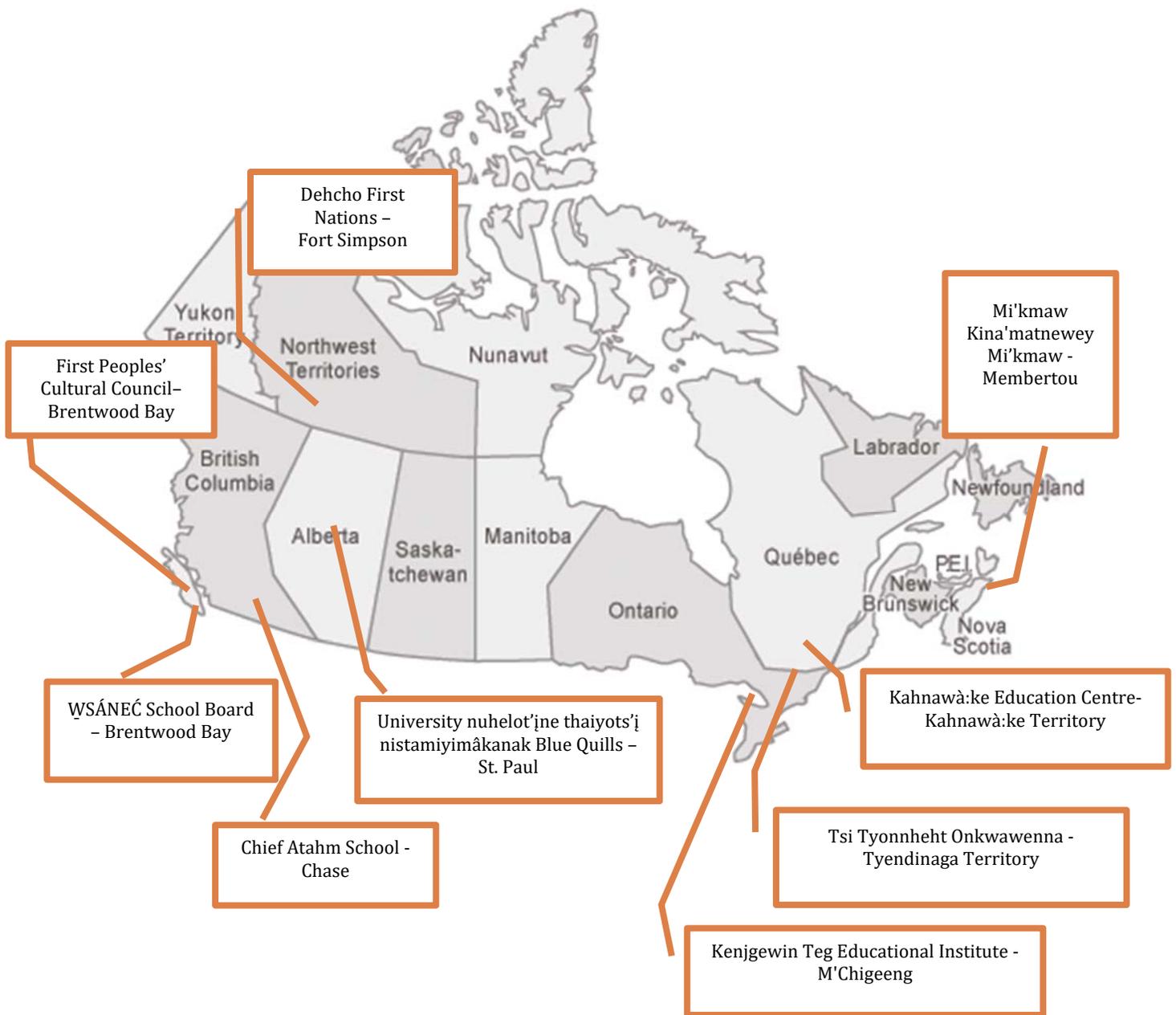


Our study captures the overlapping sites where Indigenous adults learn their language, as well as sites where they are able to pass it on to others. The foundational connection between language and wellbeing and the overarching goal to support language revitalization efforts across Canada unite the five themes of our project.

**Theme 3: Sites of Adult Indigenous Language Learning and Teaching.** The primary goal for communities is to advance proficiency amongst adult language learners and speakers, which will then further their efforts in building new speakers across generations. Research related to this theme aims to gain insights on the effectiveness and challenges of adult Indigenous language learning through various models, including Mentor-Apprentice, other adult immersion programs, including “language houses”, and language-focused teacher training (both certified and professional-development) programs.

**Theme 4: Sites of Contribution.** Adult Indigenous language learners are consistently called upon to pass on the language to others, while continuing to learn their language themselves. They inherit this responsibility (relatively) early in their own learning process. We will therefore consider the language learning and teaching effects of Indigenous adult language learners as teachers, through their role as parents and grandparents (and other important kinship and community roles).

**Theme 5: Health and well-being.** Studies suggest language use directly correlates with particular health outcomes for Indigenous people. Together we will explore the ways adult learners’ health is affected by their involvement in language learning and teaching, as well as the ways their efforts contribute to the health and well-being of the communities with which we work. In addition, interest has been expressed in exploring the links between trauma and those in our communities who have the language locked inside them, often referred to as latent speakers.



Our Partnership includes nine Indigenous partners from across Canada, spanning BC, Alberta, Ontario, Quebec, Nova Scotia and NWT: Seven organizations representing local communities, one provincial organization, and one post-secondary institution.



## Research partners together at the Project launch Gathering

Sept 21/22, 2017

First Peoples' House, Ceremonial Hall, University of Victoria

Over the course of two days, partner representatives, collaborators, and witnesses gathered to celebrate the launch of the NETOLNEW 'one mind, one people' Partnership Grant project.

It was a vibrant start, with almost forty people attending the launch of this groundbreaking research Partnership.

Representatives from nine community partners from across Canada gathered, and were supported by witnesses from the Faculties of Education and Humanities, students, and collaborators to celebrate this beginning.



### Opening Ceremony

Gathering on the lands of the WSÁNEĆ and Lekwungen people, the Gathering began with an opening ceremony. Elder STOLĆEŁ and adult language learner PENÁC opened the day with a SENĆOƧEN prayer and song. Beginning from our farthest visitor in the east and travelling back to the local territory in the west, each partner then contributed to the ceremony with prayers and songs in their language.

### Partners' Gathering

Following the opening, partners convened in the afternoon to begin sharing about the language maintenance and revival work being done in their respective communities.

On the second day of the Gathering, the research planning work began: time was spent developing research ideas and draft plans, with the afternoon set aside for developing good Governance structures for the years ahead.

### Next steps

The two-day Gathering concluded with a strong sense of partnership and enthusiasm to collectively get started; *assessment, advanced proficiency building, and Mentor-Apprentice* emerged as immediate topics for cross-partner collaborations. Partners committed to preparing research plans, while the Project Manager will set-up communication systems to help us stay connected and keep the momentum going. Stay tuned!