



AFOA BC
Executive Director's Activity Report
April 1, 2020 – March 31, 2021

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

1. CAPACITY BUILDING

1.1 Workshop Updates

a) Workshop training materials are up to date

We hired a new Education Coordinator – Wylie Abramyk who started January 6, 2020. His mandate for 2020-21 will be to work with facilitators, FMB and AFOA Canada to ensure we have all our workshops up to date. We have started the update process with Elaine Eccleston who is working on our Essentials workshop prior to delivering it later this month in two communities. We also have Paul Flesher attending the workshop at ?Akisq'nuk next week for training so that he will be available as an additional facilitator for our workshops.

Updates are also being done for our Financial Fitness workshop to coordinate it with the proposal to host multiple workshops in Kelowna for the recipients of the class-action settlement with the Ministry of Children and Families. We provided a proposal for the lawyer to include in the settlement proposal for the Court in late February. We are waiting to hear the outcome, but it may take some time.

May 7, 2020

- let Wylie go at the end of March prior to the end of his probation period. Was not the right fit.
- Currently looking at how we can offer workshops virtually. We are in discussion with Elaine Eccleston as we received an inquiry regarding a Budget Workshop and we thought we might try doing it virtually and seeing how that might work

June 11, 2020

- Elaine has provided an agenda to modify the Budgeting Workshop to an on-line version that would be delivered over 4 days instead of 2 full days
- In discussion with Squamish First Nation Health department to run this workshop but they would prefer it in-person

July 16, 2020

- Booked Financial Capacity workshop with Klahoose for first week of August

Sept 15, 2020

- Updated Budgeting and Essentials workshops for virtual delivery
- Looking at other updates as needed

Jan 25, 2021

- Will be updating and delivering Financial Fitness and Governance for C&C in virtual format and are looking to update the content now
- We have 3 workshops to deliver over the next two months

Mar 29, 2021

- Delivered Essentials of Financial Management workshops – one to Haisla and one to Aquisnuk

b) AFOA BC workshop materials are in alignment with FMB & AFOA Canada

We will review our workshops and determining which ones overlap with ones already provided through FNFMB and AFOA Canada. This is a major initiative on the workplan for the Education Coordinator. This will be started in April.

June 11, 2020

- This is on hold due to COVID-19

c) Build Professional group of facilitators

This is a major issue and a top priority for our staff in 2020-21. We have identified myself and Paul Flesher (see above) as possible facilitators who can be trained early in the new fiscal year to facilitate some of our workshops.

This is also a discussion point with AFOA Canada, to train facilitators to deliver AFOA Canada workshops in BC.

June 11, 2020

- Has been on hold due to COVID-19

Sept. 15, 2020

- Will be putting out an RFP for facilitators, Elaine Eccelston has also advised us that she will be retiring from facilitating workshops

Jan 25, 2021

- Interviewed 14 applicants and have selected 5 to train as facilitators

- Brian Jones (Sunshine Coast), Caledonia Glendale (Island), Vaughn Sunday (Interior), Denise Martineau (Island) and Vickie Whitehead (Lower Mainland)
- Will start them training by attending workshops virtually

Mar 29, 2021

- Caledonia Glendale and Paul Flesher both attended workshops as facilitators in training to get them prepared to be facilitators for us

d) Need stepping-stones for workshops

Once we have reviewed and assessed our current workshop line up we will be in a better position to determine a course of action on workshops that build on each other. Stay tuned as this is on our workplan agenda for the Fall of 2020.

e) Find best products/workshops (i.e., AFOA Canada, FMB etc.)

This will be combined with item b) ensuring that our workshops align with AFOA Canada and the FNFMB. This will begin in April.

June 11, 2020

- No update at this time

July 16, 2020

- Doing virtual workshop for Haisla – 2 hours over 4 evenings July 20th

Jan 25, 2021

- completed the Class action workshops – hosted them in Vancouver, Calgary, Kelowna and Prince George in November
- also did a video version of the workshop

1.2 Youth

a) Capacity building with youth

We are considering hosting a “sub-conference” for youth that will coincide with one of our existing conferences. Taking the idea from Our Gathering where they had youth working to do a video to show at the end of the conference, we thought we might try something that would have them attend session at the same time as our conference.

We have been in talks with CPA BC and JABC who are willing to join forces to support this project. We have also been invited to attend the Youth conference being held directly after the NATOA conference in Banff (where I will be presenting), and this will be an opportunity for us to observe and see what kind of activities and events work well.

June 11, 2020

- No update at this time due

July 16, 2020

- Spoke at an Indigenous Career Fair with Thompson Rivers University in conjunction with CPA BC on financial careers in Indigenous communities

Sept 15, 2020

- Would like to incorporate Youth into the Ec Dev project with WED Canada – may have some inroads with Okanagan College and CPA BC – stay tuned on this

Jan 25, 2021

- Had a strategy meeting with CGA BC and a number of stakeholders who are also looking at how to engage youth to study business and accounting – notes from meeting are attached

Mar 29, 2021

- Talks are ongoing for an Indigenous event with CPA BC
- A project charter has been issued (see attached)

b) Need stepping-stones to certifications in finance

I met with Doretta Thompson and Dan Relihan in February to discuss the certificate program CPA Canada is working on to align with the CAFM certification. Since the ACAF program from CPA Canada has been terminated, they have been working on a shorter (1 year to 18 month) program that could be a stepping-stone to the CAFM certification. If the program is approved, they have confirmed the pilot will be delivered in BC and that we will be able to play a key role in supporting this.

July 16, 2020

- Dan Relihan from CPA Canada has gotten the go ahead with the new Financial Management Certificate that is a stepping stone to the CAFM certification

Sept 15, 2020

- Dan Relihan and Patricia Debassige of AFOA Canada will present on this at Fall conference in Osoyoos.

Jan 25, 2021

- We are working on seeing if we can partner with Langara College to run the CPA courses
- Had a meeting with Pam at AFOA Canada to run the Indigenous courses over 1 -2 long weekends
- Sent out info and request for interest and have gotten about a dozen replies since Christmas

Mar 29, 2021

- Langara College has agreed that they would like to work with us on this cohort
- We are looking to a fall start and are working to put together a budget

- Have proposed this to ISC to fund the cohort – with our financial capacity dollars

1.3 *AFOA Canada*

a) Meet with Terry to establish and define boundaries with AFOA Canada

I scheduled a phone conversation in early January with Terry Goodtrack to build a relationship and discuss issues for AFOA BC. The discussion was positive and we discussed a variety of issues such as membership, workshops, working together and I invited him to attend and speak at our Economic Development conference.

There is also a Chapter Coordination meeting scheduled for March 19 in Ottawa which I will be attending.

June 11, 2020

- Chapter coordination meeting was cancelled due to COVID-19

July 16, 2020

- Chapter coordination meeting convened July 9th – see documents

Sept 15, 2020

- Chapter Coordination meeting scheduled for September 24th.

Jan 25, 2021

- Continue to keep discussions open – have been added to the National committee for DPMP (Default Management Prevention) thanks to Terry

Mar 29, 2021

- continuing to attend DPMP meetings and provide input on the new policy – draft policy should be out next week and will share with the Board

b) Letter of Understanding

This will be part of the ongoing discussion with Terry and I hope the conversation this week at the conference will lay out the plan for moving forward.

c) Invite Terry to March conference – done!!

May 7, 2020

- Terry sent over the Protocol agreement and MOU – needs to be reviewed
- MOU and Protocol agreement distributed to the Board

1.4 *Community Capacity Building*

a) Build the pathway to community success

In fiscal 2020, we did a total of three Capacity Development workshops with the funds received from ISC. We had scheduled a 4th FN for February at Halalt, but they had a flooding disaster hit the week prior to our attendance, so we had to postpone. We are working on rescheduling this. The other 2 that we were supposed to attend, one did not want the training and the other we could not contact. Therefore, we put forward 3 First Nations that were recommended by FMB who were new 10-year Grant participants but were identified as still needing support. We proposed these to ISC who were hesitant at first, but we have subsequently gotten the go ahead to use this year's funds for those nations next fiscal. We have requested to do 8 more Capacity Development Workshops for this fiscal year and have received a list of 10 more First Nations from the FNFMB.

June 11, 2020

- 2020-21 ISC funding includes 4 more capacity development projects
- We will review Nations that were given by FMB and determine who we will reach out to for those 4 sessions

July 16, 2020

- Received contribution agreement but it is only for \$125,000. Scheduling meeting with Jody Kaden for next week to discuss.

Sept 15, 2020

- Completed Klahoose
- Barbara has finished her contract and we will need to reevaluate how we do these workshops going forward to consider issues such as safety, usefulness and increased cooperation with staff and Council

Jan 25, 2021

- Had a discussion with ISC regarding financial capacity structure and they are very open to restructuring the program – I floated the idea of using the funds to support putting finance staff through our 1 year certificate program and initial reaction was very positive – was told to put together recommendations for them

Mar 29, 2021

- Sent in proposal to Jody Kaden at ISC

b) Clear costing model for capacity building in the long term

This is on our 2020-21 workplan and we are discussing ways to build this model based on the Capacity Development model we have currently. We are also discussing how we can expand our network with other organizations to support this initiative.

c) Attend quarterly protocol meetings

Barbara and I attended the first Protocol at the end of January, and I have also attended 2 teleconference calls with the “working group”. I think there is

still some work to do on understanding how this is going to work, and the next meeting is at the end of March in Kelowna. At the last working group teleconference, only half the participants were on the call. More discussion will be at the Board table.

June 11, 2020

- Last protocol meeting was March 31, 2020
- Working Group meeting was April 23, 2020
- Looking to add the First Nation Infrastructure Institute, First Nations Technology Council and First Nations Major Projects Coalition to the group

Jan 25, 2021

- Have not heard anything on protocol for months – will follow up

d) Position AFOA delivery services

We will be working on how to best position AFOA BC in the context of all the different organizations out there. This will be part of the marketing strategy that we will be putting together this fiscal year.

One of the strategies that we are looking at is to host regional workshops rather than wait for “in community” workshops to be requested. This is in preliminary stages as we will have to create a costing model to ensure these are fiscally viable.

June 11, 2020

- Delivered 2 forums with David Russell from ISC for Economic Development Corps and Indigenous Businesses on COVID-19 relief and recovery
- ISC would like to do another one at the end of June that will be more discussion focused, with breakout rooms for different industries and by invite only perhaps
- From this project we received interest from Western Economic Diversification Canada and have applied for \$200,000 of funding to support Ec Dev Corps and Indigenous Businesses with COVID-19 relief and recovery – application submitted, waiting for confirmation
- Will open a capacity development market with Ec Dev focus

July 16, 2020

- Delivered another forum with ISC on July 7th
- Will do a debrief and discussion of next steps

Sept 15, 2020

- We received confirmation of approval for funding through Western Economic Diversification Canada for \$150,000.
- After conference we will put together a work plan for this project

Jan 25, 2021

- Webinar series leading up to our Ec Dev Conference is in the works – series of 6 workshops (virtual) designed for business and ec dev corps on a variety of topics each week for February/march
- Also hosted a virtual all staff meeting for the Lands & Ec Dev directorate of ISC in December for Angela McCarthy and David Russell – very good

Mar 29, 2021

- Completed the webinar series – we had over 80 people registered and 50 unique organizations attended over the 6 weeks. There were about a dozen or so who attended most or all sessions.
- Final 2 day workshop is being delivered tomorrow which will end our WD project

1.5 *Capacity Partnership Building (marketing/branding)*

One of Krysta's mandates for this fiscal year is to build a marketing plan around the strategies identified in our plan. One of the first pushes identified is the building up of our social media presence. Currently, we do not have many connections on social media, and we think that hiring an Indigenous individual/company to build our social media presence would be useful. Then we can remain top-of-mind on LinkedIn and Facebook to promote our conferences and workshops.

June 11, 2020

- RFP has been created and is ready to be sent out for a redesign of our website
- We will use funding dollars from ISC for Virtual Forum and funding dollars from WED to support this effort

July 16, 2020

- Received 4 proposals for website redesign and presented our preference to the Board at this board meeting

Sept 15, 2020

- Signed contract with Agency Media
- Also hired an indigenous artist to do some artwork to work with our logo – Darlene Gait (Esquimalt)

Jan 25, 2021

- Website almost done
- Working on next year plan to assign monthly topics to focus our marketing and workshops on – a more strategic approach

Mar 29, 2021

- Website is live
- I have asked Krysta to put together a marketing plan to engage more First Nations

2. RELATIONSHIPS

1.1. Corporations

We have signed up 14 corporate members already this year. We had 11 last year so are already ahead and have had some keen interest in organizations that want to work with us. Some of the groups that have reached out:

NATOA (National Aboriginal Trust Officers' Association) – we signed a partnership agreement with them so that our members will get member pricing on their conference coming up in May and their members will get member pricing on our June conference. We will also have a booth at their conference (and vice versa) as well as a speaking presentation at each other's conferences. Michele is also very good at encouraging corporate sponsorship and has agreed to help us out in structuring our corporate sponsorship.

Indigenous Business & Investment Council – Greg Booth who is from the Ministry of Jobs, Economic Development and Competitiveness and a Secretariat to the Indigenous Business & Investment Council contacted us to discuss ways we may collaborate. Scheduled a meeting for the last week of March

BC Guardian and Public Trustee/Jason Gratl – Mr Gratl is the lawyer representing 112 Indigenous youth who are part of a class action lawsuit against the Ministry of Child and Family Development. They asked us to provide a proposal to provide a number of Financial Literacy workshops to these individuals when the settlement comes through. They want it to be a mandatory workshop they must take before getting the funds. We provided a proposal for \$113,000 as the workshops would potentially take place in the fall in Kelowna.

CPA BC and CPA Canada – We are working with CPA Canada on perhaps being the pilot for a certificate program that would work as a stepping-stone to the CAFM Certification. Dan Relihan has been developing it and I believe it did go to the AFOA Canada board in February. I am still awaiting further updates. PA BC has been excited about working with us on a Youth “conference” in the fall or winter. We are exploring ideas.

AON Reed Stenhouse/Life Inc. – AON reached out to ask if we would be interested in coordinating a pre-conference workshop through Life Inc. for our June conference. We are currently reviewing this request.

Junior Achievement BC – JA now has a Manager of Indigenous Programs and we have met with CPA BC and JA to help coordinate a Youth event.

AFOA Saskatchewan/FMB – we coordinated another FMB info-session in Saskatoon, SK last week by engaging Eugene from AFOA Saskatchewan to do the “on-the-ground” recruitment and coordination of the workshop in conjunction with another workshop he was hosting there. FMB was very happy with the outcome and the event went well and Eugene was thrilled with opportunity as well. It was a great collaborative effort.

Western Economic Diversification Canada – A senior business officer with WED reached out to me and we are now waiting on a response for a \$200,000 project for COVID-19 relief for Indigenous businesses and Ec Dev Corps.

Kinetic GPO – this is a public service group purchasing organization that services public service organizations. They procure contracts in a variety of industries and passes along the discounts to their members. We are looking at options of how we can work together for FN Bands, Ec Dev Corporations and Indigenous businesses to help pass the savings on to them.

BC First Nations Business Development Assn. – Mike Bonshor spoke at our Ec Dev Forum and reached out to discuss how AFOA BC might work with his new Association that he is starting up. News release was issued on June 4, 2020.

Credit Services Society of BC – they reached out to me last month and we will most likely use them to be part of our “class action” workshops in December

BC Financial Services Authority – I had a Zoom meeting with an analyst from BCFSA and a professor from the University of Winnipeg that did a research project on the availability of Financial institutions within a 20 km radius of First Nations communities in BC and they have gotten the green light to present their findings to the broader BC Public Service groups. They have asked if we would attend the presentation to provide information and support to carry this research forward.

Innovate BC – they were introduced to us from Greg Booth of IBIC (provincial government) and subsequently they sponsored 5 virtual workshops for Indigenous business for the 2021-22 year. I am trying to determine the best strategy for these going forward.

1.2 Community

I spoke to Terry Goodtrack about the possibility of providing membership at the Band level and he told me that we would need to put together a proposal and for Carol to bring it forward to the AFOA Canada Board. We are developing thoughts on this and how we could position it to be beneficial to bands rather than individual membership. We have done some preliminary statistical analysis on how many associate members we might lose going to this model and will continue to put together a plan for presentation to the Board.

July 16, 2020 – Terry mentioned he was hiring a consultant to look at this angle for membership – will continue to discuss with him regarding this strategy

Sept 15, 2020 – No new info to report – next Chapter coordination meeting is September 24th.

AN EXAMPLE OF A HEALTHY, WELL RUN, PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATION

1. Policies

a. *Updated policies*

Policies that have been updated in the period

- Travel
- Purchasing

- Christmas Closure

b. Policies to be updated – priorities

We are planning to update the Governance policy in the first half of fiscal 2021

2. Finance

a. Audit

We have met with Crowe MacKay, new auditor, and have arranged to have them review KPMG audit records to prepare for upcoming audit – all is on schedule

b. Budget

We are looking at ways we can reduce our reliance on ISC for funding. We are expecting only \$85,000 in core funding for this fiscal year but have requested higher project funding instead. We met with Angela and Anthony in February and presented our workplan and budget and are waiting a reply on the project-based funding we have proposed.

c. Finance/Accounting

We need to come up with a better procedure for processing Accounts Payable as the delays in processing are causing issues. We will make proposals to the Board by the next meeting

- d.* We are implementing new procedures based on recommendations by the auditors and have hired a Program Coordinator which will allow us to bring greater segregation of duties to the organization

3. Contracts

We have reviewed our current contracts for workshops and facilitators and have come up with new templates that reflect a more professional look. I have also advised staff that all contracts must be signed by the Executive Director or a Board member.

4. Strategic Plan

I created a new document – the Strategic Plan Framework that encapsulates the work we did in December. I now need guidance on our next steps – we need to make into a professional document for posting on our website.

5. Meetings/conferences attended:

- a. Sept 2019 – AFOA AB “Returning to the Circle” conference
 - Gathering information and meeting with Athabasca University
- b. Oct 2019 – AFOA Canada conference
- c. Nov 2019 – CPA Canada Mastering Money Conference – Ottawa ON
 - Invitation from CPA BC – also met with some AFOA Canada staff
- d. Jan 2020 – LABRC Conference – Richmond, BC
 - Spoke about AFOA BC as part of the Protocol signatories
- e. Jan 2020 – Our Gathering – Vancouver, BC
 - Booth at the conference and met with Gail Mitchell, Assistant Deputy Minister, Strategic Policy & Partnership Sector, Lynne Newman, Director General, Fiscal Arrangements
- f. Jan 2020 – Protocol signatories meeting – first meeting
- g. March 2020 – Chapter Coordination Committee meeting – Ottawa ON (cancelled)
- h. March 2020 – Protocol signatories meeting - virtual

- i. April 2020 – Protocol working group meeting – virtual
- j. May 2020 – BC Collaboration Network – virtual
- k. August 2020 – Kinetic Group Purchasing – virtual
- l. September 2020 – BCFSA and University of Winnipeg meeting – virtual
- m. October 2020 – presented with Barbara Joe and BC Financial Services Authority on challenges to banking for First Nations to the BC Policy Community of Change (virtual)
- n. November 2020 – co-presented with Doug Bourque and his Alberta counterpart, Cloyd Bathan, at CANDO conference (virtual)
- o. December 2020 – BC Collaboration Network meeting (virtual)
- p. March 2021 – Our Gathering (virtual)