

BC Métis Federation Releases new Community Research Portal

Digital Research Hub supports a thriving Metis knowledge community in the Pacific Northwest

May 19, 2021, (Xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish) and səliwətał (Tsleil-Waututh)/ Vancouver, B.C.) - [The BC Métis Federation](http://TheBCMetisFederation.com) has launched the Community-based Research Portal on their website as part of the Metis Terrestrial Investigations Project (“MTIP”). The Community-based Research Portal supports a thriving knowledge community in the Pacific Northwest by Metis, for Metis, and others. The Portal will serve as a public record of stories and findings gathered by BCMF’s Community Researchers and is made possible through the support of Natural Resources Canada.

BCMF Director of Research Joe Desjarlais stated, “Typical research projects are about the product, the outcome, or the Final Report. Experts are hired to extract knowledge from the community, usually to benefit others. Our idea is different. We have implemented a grassroots, community-based educational platform that is a fundamental part of BCMF’s organizational Action Plan for resurgence. Our current work focuses on a better understanding of diverse and dynamic Metis kinship networks and mixed-ancestry communities in the Pacific Northwest, which were not “regionally limited”, nor were their economies (necessarily) fixed to a particular resource, like the fur trade, or singular geography, such as the Red River in Manitoba.”

A digital portal that educates Metis people and local communities about past, current and future research conducted within a properly instituted indigenous research methodology can facilitate meaningful, transparent, authentic knowledge partnerships. BCMF’s objective in launching this initiative is to strengthen the capacity of our membership, to use knowledge to enhance self-determination, and to leverage our own history and memory to shape policy and practice so as to benefit Metis people in their communities. Director of Research, Joe Desjarlais concluded, “The Research Portal and the projects that it will support represents a completely new way of thinking about knowledge! The outcome *is* relationships. The knowledge is generated, interpreted, and explained within the context of kinship networks. Research is a relationship that reveals the interconnectivity that people have with one another, and with the land and place. Therefore, any “outcome” happens at the speed of relationship building and the Research Portal is one part of that relationality. I am honored to work with our community researchers as they build trust in their communities, develop these relational networks, and begin to tell their stories.”

The Research Portal features an archive that will be populated over time as the Community Researchers go out into communities throughout the PNW and repatriate Metis history and memory. To learn more about the important work being done at the BCMF, visit the Community-based Research Portal: <https://bcmetis.com/programs-services/community-based-research-portal/> or visit the new Research Blog here: <https://bcmetis.com/research-blog/>.

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Li taan paasii. Li taan ki vyayn.

From our past. For our future.