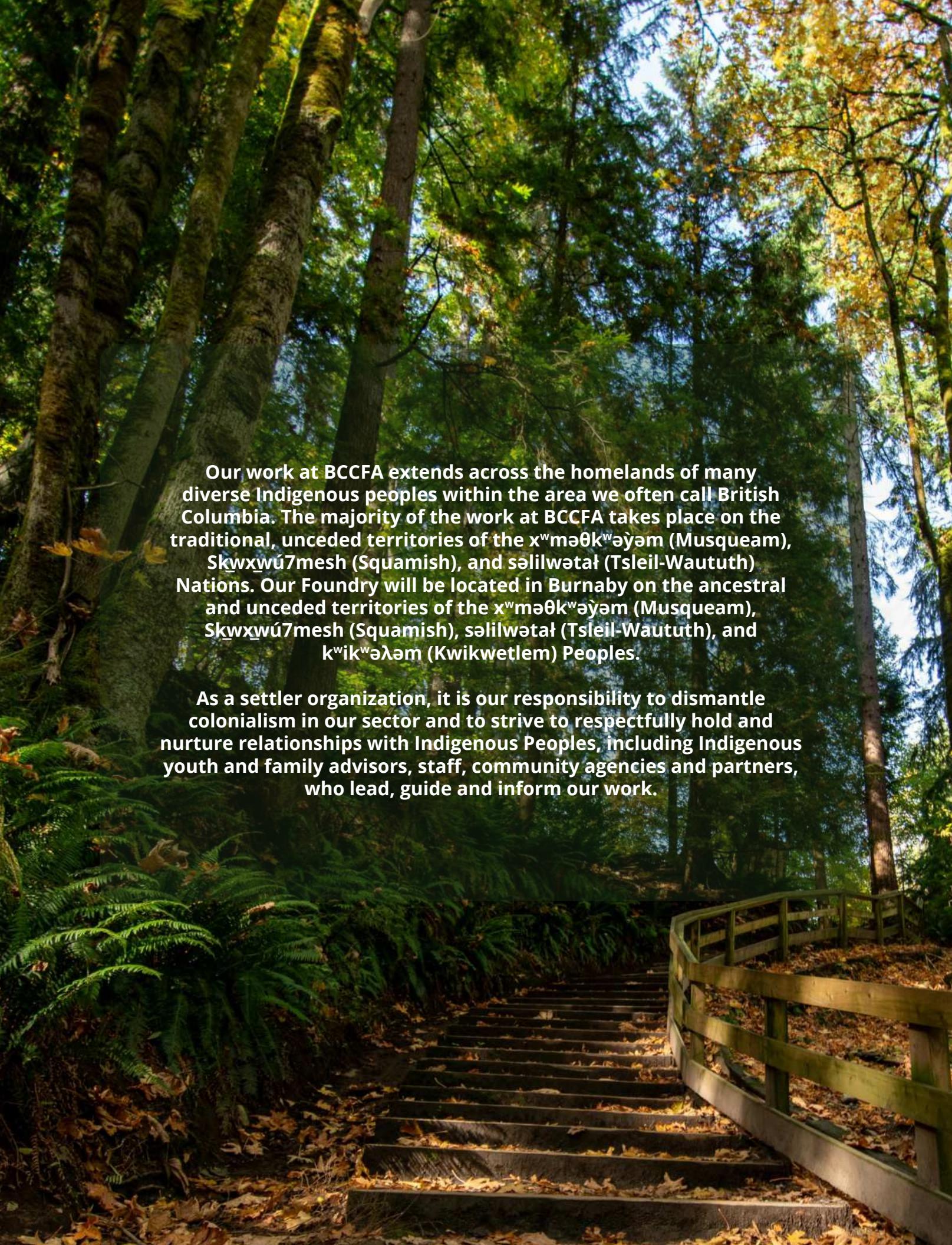


•FOUNDRY•
BURNABY



Foundations for the Future: Foundry Burnaby

BC Centre for Ability is bringing a Foundry youth
mental health and wellness centre to Burnaby.



Our work at BCCFA extends across the homelands of many diverse Indigenous peoples within the area we often call British Columbia. The majority of the work at BCCFA takes place on the traditional, unceded territories of the xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish), and səlilwətaɬ (Tsleil-Waututh) Nations. Our Foundry will be located in Burnaby on the ancestral and unceded territories of the xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish), səlilwətaɬ (Tsleil-Waututh), and kʷikʷəƛəm (Kwikwetlem) Peoples.

As a settler organization, it is our responsibility to dismantle colonialism in our sector and to strive to respectfully hold and nurture relationships with Indigenous Peoples, including Indigenous youth and family advisors, staff, community agencies and partners, who lead, guide and inform our work.

When Aslam left his small town for a big city immediately following high school graduation, he felt full of hope and excited to enjoy new opportunities. But as COVID-19 cases began to rise soon after he arrived, and isolation became the norm, Aslam's mental health began to decline.

"Moving came with so many pros that I forgot it also came with the cons," says Aslam. "I thought everything was normal —drinking every night with my new friends and being hungover during class, wasting what little money I had left on the next disposable vape."

"At first, I wasn't even aware that I was at my worst," he shares. "It was intense denial, and numbing. I was struggling my whole life and thought that self-medicating with drugs and alcohol was easier than speaking about what I had gone through".

But during the summer of 2021, Aslam gained the courage to reach out to Foundry and receive the substance use and mental health support he needed. He met with physicians, learned about harm reduction strategies, and connected with peer support workers who shared similar lived experiences.

"When I went to Foundry, I was accepted," says Aslam. "I didn't need to explain why I made the choices I did. They just wanted me to feel supported and loved."

Foundry was able to meet Aslam in his journey to wellness and support him in living a good life.

"Our generation is strong, willing to grow and change for the better," says Aslam, with renewed hope. "And with the services that Foundry is offering, no problem is too big or small."

Meet Aslam



What is Foundry?

Foundry is a province-wide network of integrated health and wellness services for young people ages 12 to 24. Foundry offers free and confidential supports for young people — mental health care, substance use services, physical & sexual healthcare, youth and family peer supports, and social services — both online and in-person in communities across BC. Whether a young person has depression, problematic substance use, or is struggling to find work, Foundry is there to help.

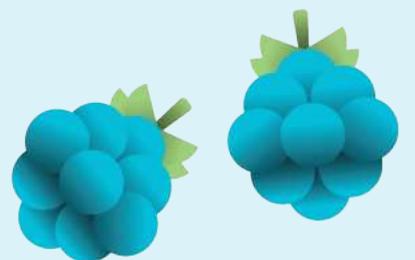
With the first Foundry having opened in downtown Vancouver in 2015, 17 centres have since opened, with more on the way, including Foundry Burnaby.



Our Role

BC Centre for Ability (BCCFA) has been delivering quality services for children, youth, and adults with disabilities and their families since 1969. We were founded with the goal of creating inclusive communities and a sense of belonging. Our programs provide support around the province to children, youth and adults through a variety of services, and we are thrilled to be expanding our services as the lead agency responsible for implementing Foundry Burnaby. Many of the young people we serve in our current disability-focused services experience mental health and wellness challenges and we know there is a need for more supports in the community. Being the lead agency for Foundry Burnaby has given us the wonderful opportunity to expand our services to support more young people and we greatly look forward to when we can start direct services in 2027.

As lead agency, we manage the development of Foundry Burnaby at all levels, as well as the implementation of direct services once the centre opens. While building a Foundry centre is a collaboration between many different partners including government, social and health services, businesses, and community members, a significant part of Foundry development is driven by generous donors, just like you. To open Foundry Burnaby, our fundraising goal is \$2 million to support the acquisition of space for the centre.



A Community Need

With 1 in 4 young people in Canada aged 15 to 24 experiencing challenges with mental health or substance misuse in any given year, 50% of youth coming to Foundry reporting that they have thought about suicide in the past 90 days, and less than 25% of youth report receiving the mental health services they need, it is crucial to have centres like Foundry. Despite 70% of mental illness happening before the age of 24, and despite overdoses being the number one killer of young people in BC aged 10-19, our health system is crisis driven, unresponsive, and uncoordinated. Mental illness and problematic substance use strike early. Our communities are not armed with coordinated, accessible or low-barrier services. For a strong future, we need vibrant and healthy young people living full, productive lives.

The impact Foundry has had on the communities it works within is incredibly telling through reports from youth served. After accessing Foundry services, 96% of young people said they were satisfied with Foundry and its services, with 95% agreeing that having services in one place at Foundry made it easier for them to get help. Foundry is already building a strong foundation for the future; to help it continue to flourish, Foundry must grow to reach communities just like Burnaby.



Statistics source: Foundry Case for Support, 2023



With you, we can invest in a better future for Burnaby's youth.

With your generous support, you can help us acquire space to support youth in Burnaby just like Aslam. Now more than ever, we need to offer every young person and caregiver across BC a place to go where they can feel safe and find the help they need, when they need it – online and in their communities. As Burnaby is the third-largest community in the Lower Mainland, this service is crucial for Burnaby's youth.

For more information, visit bc-cfa.org/foundry or contact:

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