



CIER
Centre for Indigenous
Environmental Resources

One Drop, CIER, Indigenous-led organizations and private sector partners unite to celebrate the successful first phase of the Indigenous Water Allyship

The program aims at improving living and health conditions in Indigenous communities through water and art.

Montreal (Quebec) – November 29th, 2024. On November 27th, the One Drop Foundation and the Centre for Indigenous Environmental Resources (CIER) held a public event in Montreal to celebrate the meaningful work carried out by Indigenous-led organizations from across Canada as part of the Indigenous Youth, Art and Water Initiative (IYAWI). With a wide attendance of Indigenous and non-Indigenous leaders from Montreal, Puvirnituk (Quebec), Caldwell First Nation, Serpent River First Nation (Ontario), Winnipeg (Manitoba), Six Nations of the Grand River, Calgary (Alberta), Vancouver, Powell River and Tofino (British Columbia), the event helped raise awareness of the many ongoing water-related challenges in First Nations, Métis and Inuit communities while fostering collaborations with local organizations and private sector entities.



Despite living in one of the world's most water-rich countries, Indigenous communities in Canada continue to be disproportionately affected by issues related to safe water access. Led by CIER and One Drop, IYAWI empowered Indigenous youth to express their voice and vision around water-related challenges through art and community-based approaches. This initiative marks the initial phase of a long-term water access program, the [Indigenous Water Allyship](#), running from 2023 to 2030.



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As part of this first phase, the One Drop Foundation and CIER had the honour of supporting nine Indigenous-led and youth-focused organizations in 2024, each embracing distinctive cultural elements and art forms to deliver impactful messages. From Indigenous Elders and Youth Council's virtual reality project to Water Movement's mural artwork exhibited on Parliament Hill, these social art projects all emphasize the importance of water and tackled the pressing challenges surrounding it in many Indigenous communities in Canada.

"Water sustains life, and social art sparks action by channeling creativity for positive social impact. It has truly been an honour to collaborate with Indigenous youth and witness how they channelled art and emotion to amplify cultural wisdom and inspire collective action on water and climate issues in Canada." -Ernenek Duran, One Drop Foundation Co-CEO

"Water is life. Without a healthy water system, plants, the ground, and humans suffer", says JD Steuer, Young Indigenous Ambassador from Caldwell First Nation. "Our project achieved the first youth-led water walk in over 150 years, and we hope to see more water ceremonies worldwide, bringing healing to the waters."

"Empowering youth is key to creating lasting change. This initiative not only amplified their voices but also strengthened our commitment to Indigenous communities across Canada, fostering awareness and opening pathways to improve access to safe drinking water." - Shianne McKay, Senior Project Manager at CIER.

Based on the learnings from this initiative, and with the vital support of Keurig Dr Pepper Canada, Ovivo and Power Corporation of Canada as founding Water Impact Partners, the One Drop Foundation will pursue its mission in Canada through the Indigenous Water Allyship. This long-term program aims to increase access to safe, reliable, and culturally appropriate water and sanitation services in Indigenous communities, including water governance, water conservation, climate resilience and gender-responsive practices.

The upcoming phase, aiming to improve living conditions for more than 20,000 community members, will begin in selected Alberta and Ontario First Nations in 2025. To achieve this, One Drop and its partners will directly collaborate with more than 7,000 community members to co-design water security and/or water resource management plans for execution, establishing a path for future additional communities to join the Indigenous Water Allyship program.

The One Drop Foundation invites Canadian organizations committed to addressing systemic issues in clean water and climate challenges to contact Lauren Alcorn, Senior Director of Strategic Partnerships and Government Relations (lauren.alcorn@onedrop.org), to explore collaboration opportunities.

For more information on the Indigenous Water Allyship Program, visit [One Drop's website](#).



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About the Center for Indigenous Environmental Resources (CIER)

The Centre for Indigenous Environmental Resources (CIER) is Canada’s first Indigenous-directed environmental non-profit charitable organization, founded in 1995 by eight First Nation Chiefs from across Canada. CIER works in partnership with Indigenous nations to support and build sustainable Indigenous communities and protect lands and waters to help create a world that is in balance and supports the well-being of all living things. To date, CIER has worked on 450 projects with over 300 Indigenous nations across Canada, supporting Indigenous people and communities to become leaders of positive environmental change by combining traditional, local, and Western scientific methods.

For more information about CIER: <http://www.yourcier.org>

About the One Drop Foundation

At One Drop, we unite people and empower communities to solve the water and climate crisis through innovative, sustainable actions. Channeling the creative spirit of Cirque du Soleil, we rally local and international changemakers to raise funds and co-create solutions that drive lifechanging projects worldwide. Together, since 2007, we have transformed the lives of nearly 3 million people in Latin America, India, Africa, and among Indigenous communities in Canada. Join us in turning water into action and creating a sustainable future with safe water for all. Learn more at www.onedrop.org and follow One Drop’s impact via our newsletter, Facebook, LinkedIn, X, Instagram, and TikTok.

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Source : One Drop Foundation

For further information : For media requests : Eric Aach, each@national.ca, 514-569-3594. For more information about the One Drop Foundation : Marie-Claude Savard, marie-claude.savard@onedrop.org. For more information about the Center for Indigenous Environmental Resources : Ken McIntyre, kmcintyre@yourcier.org