Newsletter | March 2017

Edited & Compiled by
Gurraj Ahluwalia & Pratyush Dhawan

Vancouver **community network**

Youth Intership Program

The Youth Internship Program is completed for the 2016-17 term. Since October, VCN has coordinated and supported 49 youth interns with 38 non-profit organizations in Metro-Vancouver, and interns will finish their placements on March 17. We are happy to report that 100% of the interns felt that the internship helped them acquire technical and practical skills that will make them more employable!

The program coordinators will be hard at work until the end of their term, March 31st, to ensure that final reports and the cross-Canada videography project is completed and sent to Industry Canada.

"Brief Word from the Coordinators"

Working at VCN has been a great experience. Learning about the innovative NPOs and seeing the impact of youth during their placements was eye opening. This program could not have been so diverse and successful without the energy of organizations and interns.

Additionally, collobrating with the employees, volunteers and users of the VCN community, I have been able to learn more about the difficulties faced by non-profit organisations and the community at large. I will always cherish the interactions and relationships that I made within the VCN community.

-Gurraj

This position with VCN has been the perfect follow-up and complement to my studies in Development. I have had a chance to work with a non-profit that serves the community I have grown up with. It has given me the opportunity learn from many organizations in the Downtown Eastside – how they work with residents, lawmakers and a wider public to grow programs that benefit everyone, often with limited resources and accumulating barriers. Having firsthand experiences in developmental roles in rural areas abroad, it was a fascinating jump to an organization that operates in a city with a strong civil society infrastructure.

-Pratyush

Did you Know? VCN provides free drop-in tech-support M-F. Call or Drop by.

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Annual General Meeting

On February 23, 2017 VCN held its annual general meeting. We would like to thank all the members who attended the meeting and contributed to the discussions. The meeting agenda revovled around how VCN can further their mission; free and equal access to information. Other updates included past and future financial projections, VCN's open source software policy, 2016-17 YI program and the SMS.

VCN is grateful for the volunteers who helped make VCN a welcoming place in 2016. We would not be capable of running at our current capacity without you. We would like to acknowledge the following volunteers for their amazing dedication and help:

Ali, Adolpho, Carolina, Cristiano, Devon, Dongyeong, Egor, Fan, Firmin, Geoff, Harriet, Hyukyi, Jatinder, Kent, Negin, Ngan, Oliver, Omi, Patrick, Scott, Stephen, and Vlad.

Open Source Software Policy

The Vancouver Community Network (VCN) will make every effort to use open-source software on removable media, over the Internet or installed on hard-drives with some exceptions:

•It is freeware
•It is an existing license(s) prior to policy date
•It is found to be financially-unsupportable to create/use an open source option

The reasons for this policy is:

Proprietary software goes against our mission to promote digital inclusion.

In support of this policy, the board will require:

1. Yearly audits of software currently being used by VCN in their offices and computer access points. The first audit presented will form the pre-approved software for use by VCN which is to be updated by any and all approved purchases from that point forward.

2. Any purchase of software other than updates for applications identified on the list will require the approval of the Board.

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Community Resources

Need Help With Your Taxes?

VCN is here to help make you aware of services that you can take advantage of to file your 2016 taxes. Keep in mind that most Canadian residents have to file an income tax return for the previous year, to pay the accurate amount of income tax owed, to pay back overpayment of benefits and/or to claim certain benefits (such as GST credit or the the Guaranteed Income Supplement under the Old Age Security Program). If you are an international and non-resident individual, you may also have to file a Canadian income tax return.

See this link for more information: http://www. cra-arc.gc.ca/tx/nnrsdnts/ndvdls/menu-eng.html.

Volunteer Tax Clinics

Canada operates several tax clinics nationwide. These clinics are run by volunteers during tax season who will help you complete your returns and get all your paperwork ready. A list of all the volunteer tax clinics across Canada can be found here (http://www.cra-arc.gc.ca/tx/ndvdls/vlntr/ clncs/menu-eng.html).

Our collaborators at 411 Seniors Centre, the Gordon Neighbourhood House and the West End Seniors' Network are hosting free volunteer tax clinics for the community - so pay them a visit!

Electronic/Online Tax Submission

To upload your taxes electronically and get your receipts handled directly with the CRA's online system. Please refer to this link: http://www.cra-arc.gc.ca/esrvc-srvce/tx/ndvdls/netfile-impotnet/ crtfdsftwr/menu-eng.html. Here you can find both paid and free softwares including a link to Studio Tax, a free open-source software that is certified by the CRA.

VCN|Labs

Introducing WordPress Workshops

VCN is now offering $25 per person for beginner 2 hour WordPress workshops. You pick the theme and content and our experts will guide you throughout the process, so that you become acquainted and comfortable with managing and creating your own WordPress website.

The proceeds will help supports VCN's charitable efforts; providing free access to the Internet, email, and computer access to youth, seniors and vulnerable people in our community. If you are interested, contact us for more information.

If you or anyone you may know may be interested in the many offerings of Web|Team please refer to our new website! http://vcnlabs.com/

Your Support Is Invaluable

Most of our work for the community is possible without people like you. If you have not already, please review your annual membership. If you are not a member, become a member to help our social enterprise's charitable efforts. You can also donate here.

And finally, remember to follow us on Twitter or Facebook for the latest VCN updates and news!