



12 interns



11 projects



\$120,000

in research stipends

The Indigenous Internship Program

The Indigenous Internship Program (IIP) is an initiative to facilitate inclusive Indigenous-led knowledge sharing that prioritizes Indigenous community concerns, incorporates Traditional Knowledge, and builds internal research capacity. Designed to break down barriers and create meaningful change.

Key Funding Partners



November 2025 Intern Celebration Event



From Left to Right: Nakoda Hunter, Charlene Linnell, Eartha Linnell, Stephany Cloutre–Groleau, Gavin Woodburn

Highlights & Achievements

- **Community Connections** : This cohort had more interns than ever travelling to their host community to connect with elders and knowledge keepers
- **Land-based Learning**: Thank you to the Snuneymuxw First Nation Marine Division team for hosting the interns for a reciprocal learning session
- **Skill Building**: Five interns were trained in Geographic Information Systems (GIS) to support their projects with map creation and gain hands-on skills to build their careers
- **Network Development**: This cohort engaged with many maritime experts, from captains to environmental analysts to learn from and build their professional networks
- **Professional Recognition**: Congratulations to Avery Lane and Stephany Cloutre–Groleau who had their work published in the Ocean Technology Journal
- **Sharing their Voices**: In November, we had an Intern Celebration Event in Nanaimo, BC where the interns shared their projects and the importance of Indigenous-led research
- **New Partnership**: We signed a strategic partnership with MEOPAR to support even more interns





Their Stories

From the May 2025 cohort

1 Stephany

Whale protection in the Salish Seas

Stephany's project illustrates the importance and power that comes from combining Indigenous Knowledge and Western science to help prevent whale strikes along the coast of BC. Her work has involved extensive cross-partner collaboration working with First Nations, academics, and various industry partners in the marine sector. She has one more internship ahead of her and we cannot wait to see what she produces next! Check out her article in the Journal of Ocean Technology on our website.

2 Mekwalya (Zoe)

Tsleil-Waututh Women's Voices

Mekwalya (Zoe) created a successful exhibit telling the story and importance of canoe paddling in her last internship. This time, she created an exhibit that upholds the stories of Tsleil-Waututh women. Indigenous women are the heart of community, their perspectives and experiences provide deep insight into the cultural, ecological, and industrial values within their community. Her exhibit will explore these perspectives in the Burrard Inlet and how the shipping industry has shaped and impacted them. Her exhibit will be on display at the VanDusen Botanical Gardens soon.

3 Charlene & Eartha

Reconnecting on displaced lands

Indigenous teachings involve stories passed through generations. Charlene and Eartha are a mother-daughter duo who collaborated with a mother-son duo from the Cowichan Tribes. As displaced Indigenous people living on lands affected by displacement, Charlene and Eartha are helping bring these practices back. The family groups mapped the lands and conducted traditional harvesting along shorelines. They are developing an exhibit and workshop that will take place in September 2026.



6 Dominique

Inclusive hiring in the marine sector

Dominique developed a process for more inclusive recruitment practices in the marine sector. Through collaboration with other Deaf individuals and Indigenous peoples in Quebec and Ontario, she created a list of recommendations to be shared with ports and related marine industry partners.

4 Suzanne

Stream guardianship in Qualicum, BC

Suzanne's internship involved studying Coast Salish people and their traditional uses of the Salish Sea. She enjoyed learning from the Elders in her community. Suzanne says, "This internship inspired me to encourage my nation to have a land and sea guardian program."

Keep an eye on our website for the brochure and calls to action she created from her work.

5 Hannah

The cultural importance of food fish

Hannah created a mini-documentary to demonstrate the impacts that marine activity has had on food fish (Salmon) on the Capilano River. Her documentary tells the stories of Elders and fishermen and their connection to these waters. She dives into the cultural importance of fish canneries to her community and how their closure had long-lasting impacts. Our waters are sacred and these stories illustrate the importance of their continued conservation. Her documentary will be made publicly available soon.

7 Deena

Building community capacity

Many of our projects involve self-led and developed projects, but we also support those brought forth by the community. Deena worked alongside the WSÁNEĆ Marine Department on their marine use plan. She conducted the species research, gathering Indigenous knowledge to bolster their plan. Our Internship abides by OCAP®, so in some cases, we do not see the physical product created; instead, we build capacity within the community.

8 Avery

Cummulative effects and waterways

Avery focused on assessing and understanding the condition of waterways in the Dawson Creek and Peace regions of northeastern BC. She combined Indigenous knowledge, environmental data, and policy to promote long-term sustainability. Cumulative effects have been a hot topic in conservation, this project illustrates the importance of youth voices in research and environmental strategy planning. Check out her article in the Journal of Ocean Technology on our website.



A version of Avery's cummulative effects research

9 Nakoda

Skill building for Indigenous youth

The Internship program works to build skills for our interns' futures. This project utilizes the proposed concept of the House of Indigenous Ocean Resources (HIOR), a place that would help address the disconnect between Nations and the federal government regarding marine shipping considerations. Nakoda developed an architectural concept for this proposed building. He explored past Indigenous architecture, as well as art, to design a space that reflected Indigenous teachings and emphasized interconnectedness.

The Internship Program would not be as successful without the support, mentorship, and expertise of the numerous Indigenous communities, organizations, and industry partners who collaborate with our interns.

We are extremely thankful for the contributions from our funders, as this program would not be possible without your help.

To learn more about our program or to become a partner, check out our [website](#) or email us at iip@clearseas.org

10 Shayenna

Indigenous youth and traditional harvesting practices

Shayenna worked alongside her community partner to document harvesting practices. Many of our youth do not have the opportunity to be on the land and practice traditional harvesting. The documentation conducted by Shayenna will allow Indigenous youth to learn and engage with their environment during the camps and workshops.

11 Kaylee

Mindfulness on the lands you play on

Do you know whose lands and waters you work and play on? Do you know how the plants and animals were cared for and harvested? As a newcomer to BC for her studies, Kaylee wanted to learn and share about the cultural importance of Elk Lake on Vancouver Island, where she and the University of Victoria rowing team practiced. She hopes that her introduction to Elk Lake video inspires other rowing teams across Canada to consider where they practice and how they can support the community.



Total internships to date



Total interns to date



Total awarded to date

55 projects

32 interns

\$810,000

Partners

18

Indigenous Communities

- Tseil-Waututh Nation
- Squamish Nation
- Snuneymuxw First Nation
- Doig River First Nation

- W̱SÁNEĆ First Nation
- Kwiakah First Nation
- Heiltsuk Nation
- Kanien'kehá:ka

26

Supporting Organizations

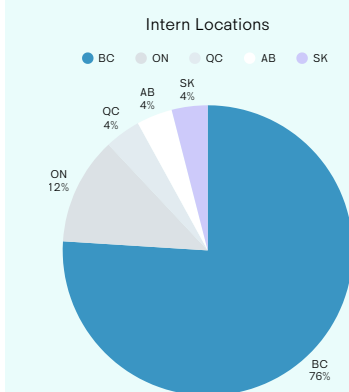
- Sharing Our Stories
- Invasive Species Council BC
- Coastal Nations Coast Guard Authority
- DFO
- Port of Montreal
- Port of Vancouver
- University of British Columbia

- Salt Spring Friendship Centre
- Vancouver Maritime Museum
- British Columbia Institute of Technology
- Vancouver Island University

Targets for the future

- Arctic-focused cohort
- Intern integration into Clear Seas projects
- Increased partner contribution

Geographic Distribution



Industry Donors

- Teekay
- Zim Integrated Shipping
- BHP
- CSL



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