

Vision2030 ENGO Impact Profiles

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Together Rising as an Environmental Community (TREC)



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TREC (Together Rising as an Environmental Community) is a capacity building organization supporting environmental organizations in the Western Canada and United States. Juliette Lee is a Senior Consultant who directs TREC's diversity, equity, and inclusion consulting strategy. She participated in the Sustainability Network's Vision2030 program Decolonizing ENGO-First Nation Partnerships in the Spring of 2024.

Juliette was interested in Decolonizing ENGO-First Nation Partnerships to inform TREC's engagement with Indigenous organizations and to explore resources and approaches to support the unique challenges of Indigenous-led organizations, such as access to funding and high demands on leadership. TREC's model emphasizes building capacity within organizations rather than embedding consultants as staff. This approach requires active partnership and engagement from client organizations, which can be challenging for groups that are under-resourced or overextended.

The Decolonizing ENGO-First Nation Partnerships series happened while Juliette was supporting two organizations with some complex challenges on internal structure. The program helped her to evolve her understanding of the nature of conflict in this context, and how to approach these dynamics with greater understanding and sensitivity.

Juliette appreciated how the workshop series explored difficult topics, such as identity fraud, and provided some guidance on how to navigate these. The program emphasized the importance of self-transformation over simple checklists or prescriptive solutions, urging participants to engage deeply with the values and principles underlying their work. The

workshop was led by Damien Lee, and his facilitation style modeled relational and values-based leadership, demonstrating the importance of personal story and context in building trust and understanding with Indigenous clients. Juliette found this approach particularly valuable for relationship-building, and it has influenced her approach to consulting.

TREC has been developing more intensive conflict navigation resources. They are exploring how to draw deepened cultural understandings into relevant, supportive guidance for conflict resilience with their clients. They are committed to customizing their services to better meet the needs of Indigenous-led groups, without losing TREC's core identity or approach. Decolonizing ENGO-First Nation Partnerships was a vital part of TREC understanding the need for going in this direction, and in preparing the organization to advance this work.

Juliette observes that progress in this work does not always lead to simplification or stability; instead, it often unearths new challenges and complexities. She emphasizes that advancing in anti-oppression and DEI work means confronting deeper, more difficult issues, and that discomfort can be a sign of meaningful progress. She cautions against seeking simple solutions or blueprints, advocating instead for a focus on values, principles, and ongoing self-transformation. Her experience in Decolonizing ENGO- First Nation Partnerships highlights the importance of bravery, openness, and detailed conversation about challenges, and in doing so, moves towards healthier, more resilient organizations, even if the path is disruptive or difficult.