

Audience: Funders

What is a Neighbourhood House?

A neighbourhood house (NH) is a welcoming and inclusive place where everyone of any age, nationality and ability can attend, lead and learn through our programs and services. A NH connects people, and invites them to be engaged in their community and work together to build stronger neighbourhoods.

Research point (what are we trying to say)	Key Messages (how we will say it – for presentations, applications, etc)	Sub-messages & Support (stories/research/facts to support the key messages)	Call to Action (the actions we want the audience to take)
<p>NHs offer benefits to individuals and communities that are unique/not matched by other service models or government programs.</p> <p>People who use NHs find them invaluable to their well-being and for developing deeper roots in their community.</p>	<p>Neighbourhood houses make it easier for you to achieve your goals We offer accessible programs and services for everyone, at every stage.</p> <p>Or/also:</p> <p>You want to build stronger communities. We do, too. Your support enables us to continue to offer open and enriching places where a diversity of residents feel welcome and engaged</p>	<p>Neighbourhood houses cater to the whole individual across their lifespan as well as impact multiple generations by offering a range of services to a wide variety of groups</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - In 2013, more than 200,000 people took part in almost 450 programs and activities provided by neighbourhood houses in Metro Vancouver - Participants talked about finding lifelong friendships and second families at their neighbourhood house. Many referred to their neighbourhood house as a second home, and these connections spanned from their children, siblings, partners, parents and even grandchildren. - A participant’s experience at a neighbourhood house often leads them to share information of the programs and services with family, friends and neighbours. Our research found that 65% of respondents learned about their neighbourhood house by word of mouth, and more than half of those people (59%) also recruited new members. - NHs in Metro Vancouver offer a wide variety of programs and services, as well as cultural and expressive activities. Residents can typically find childcare groups, community kitchens, ESL courses, tutorial groups, employment counselling, art classes, support groups for women and seniors, and festival celebrations. <p>Neighbourhood houses are accessible.</p>	<p><i>Learn how you or your organization can support neighbourhood houses</i></p> <p><i>Neighbourhood houses make it easier for you achieve your goals. Learn how we can help you build stronger communities.</i></p> <p><i>We can partner with your organization to help you build effective social programs for our communities. Contact us to find out how.</i></p>

	<p>Neighbourhood houses empower people to create the change they want to see in their communities Our volunteers and members help us identify unmet needs and mobilize unused assets. You can help us meet those needs.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Neighbourhood houses, with their informal social atmospheres, provide people with an easy entry to services or local activities. A resident may come to learn about parenting, but will in also discover other services or activities of interest to them. - Our research found that throughout Metro Vancouver NHs, there were more than 20 languages spoken by three or more staff members - An easy point of entry to access services is critical: “It’s really important to always have a space for people who are considered too vulnerable or marginalised to engage; that’s where new ideas come from and often, innovation.” – A community partner of Kitsilano NH (<i>From The Eyes of Community Partners</i>) <p>A neighbourhood house encourages members to contribute and create new projects and initiatives in their communities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Vancouver Foundation’s Neighbourhood Small Grants, which was initiated through a partnership with neighbourhood houses throughout Metro Vancouver, offers residents small grants to organize and run neighbourhood-based projects that build community connections, develop leadership skills and enhance the community (<i>examples for press releases</i>) - More than 3,600 people registered as neighbourhood house volunteers in Metro Vancouver in 2012/13 - Volunteer programs are a helpful way for newcomers to familiarize themselves with Canadian society - Our research found that the longer people are involved in a neighbourhood house, the more likely they will become civically involved, such as by voting, attending political meetings, and participating in community events. - Neighbourhood houses, as the “eyes and ears in the community,” can be valuable sources of information for those who want to develop effective local policy initiatives. <p>A neighbourhood house can respond quickly and collaboratively to a community’s emerging needs and changing demographics</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Neighbourhood houses worked with settlement agencies to respond to the large number of Syrian refugees who arrived in Canada in 2016 (<i>how/specifics for stories</i>) 	
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	<p>We can help you help your neighbourhood Neighbourhood houses provide healthy places to live, work and play throughout Metro Vancouver</p> <p>Or: With your support, neighbourhood houses prevent social problems, contribute to individuals' well-being, and allow people to pursue their passions</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Neighbourhood houses are attentive to the needs of typically more vulnerable groups (low income, seniors, immigrants and minorities) that are at risk for being alienated in urban communities <p>Our research shows that neighbourhood houses effectively connect people in their communities, ensure access to needed resources and supports, and create a sense of belonging</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Neighbourhood houses prevent social isolation and help people stay well – investing in your community is a preventative measure that saves governments money in the long run - Participants develop meaningful friendships and establish roots in the community. We found that 60% of the almost 700 research respondents made at least one close friend through their neighbourhood house. - The sense of belonging is enduring: in 2013, more than 60% of current staff, volunteers and board members were former or active NH service users - A Frog Hollow service user noted that as seniors age they often lose their support network which contributes to feelings of isolation: “You’ve lost your old network. [At a NH] You can make a new one.” <i>(example of a NH program for seniors)</i> <p>NHiMV research shows that increases in knowledge and skills are particularly prevalent among residents born outside of Canada</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - About 75% of respondents born outside of Canada said NH participation increased their ability to speak in front of others - Among all respondents, more than 80% saw some increase in their knowledge about neighbourhood issues. About 75% of respondents said they were better able to work with people from different backgrounds after their involvement with their neighbourhood house <i>(from Social Capacity Development through NH Involvement)</i> 	
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