

FUTURA20

DecisionElles 2020

Executive Summary

On August 18, 2020, [Futura20](#) gathered 60 women from the provinces of Alberta and Quebec representing diverse sectors and backgrounds to:

- explore the challenges and opportunities facing Canada in the 21st century;
- leverage their networks and influence to design creative approaches and solutions; and
- arrive at a few concrete initiatives for the next decade to ensure women's voices are heard.



Designed to maximize participation and arrive at Canada's next "big idea," this inaugural virtual symposium consisted of a series of small breakout rooms punctuated by brief keynote addresses and artistic presentations. Over the course of four and a half hours, delegates, including a cadre of young leaders, arrived at the following initiatives that they were prepared to explore further:

- Alberta and Quebec sign onto the *Declaration against Systemic Racism*
- Legislation of quotas in politics and publicly traded companies
- Economic Independence Literacy
- Science and Technology Literacy
- Increasing/Supporting Election of Women
- Young Leaders' Initiative: Period Poverty

Following the Symposium, participants were surveyed for their feedback. A more extensive report is within. Highlights included:

- 25% response to the survey
- 100% of respondents indicated they would attend a second symposium
- 4 respondents are interested in taking a leadership role with Futura20

This report will also include relevant information on Futura20

- Genesis and Founders
- Incorporation: Mission and Vision
- Website

and conclude with the path forward.

Note to Reader: *The images interspersed throughout this report formed a compendium of photographs from which participants selected the one that represented their desired future for Canada and explained why. We used every opportunity to engage art, symbols and metaphor to engage participants' intuitive senses.*

Contents

Executive Summary	1
Contents	2
Our Story	3
Mission and Vision.....	4
The Website.....	5
Symposium Agenda	6
The Survey	6
The Future of Futura20	10



Our Story

Futura20 was conceived in October 2019 over a dinner. The Famous 5 had just celebrated the 90th anniversary of the Persons Case, the recent federal election reflected further regionalization and we asked ourselves, as women, what game changer have we initiated since we became “persons” in 1929?

What might happen if we gathered women from Canada’s two most fiercely independent provinces, Alberta and Quebec, to engage in a fresh and courageous conversation as we launch a new decade? And we ensured diversity of sector, ethnicity and generation? To actualize this, we formed a small but mighty team that agreed that many events in the last year, including our experience of the COVID-19 pandemic heightened our need to reflect and consider new approaches on how our country addresses key issues including but not limited to: equality of women; reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples; economic inequality; bilingualism, biculturalism and multiculturalism; regionalism; and a sustainable environment.

We decided to focus on 4 key sectors: Law; Business; Science and Technology; Non-profit, Civil Society and the Arts. And we dedicated 8 spots for young leaders aged 15-21.

We are grateful to the [Futura20 Founders](#): from Quebec: Pauline Couture, Carolina Gallo, Raymonde Lavoie and Françoise Lyon; and from Alberta: Judge Anne Brown, Teresa Haykowsky, Narmin Ismail-Teja, Karmen Masson and Michèle Stanners. Over the next 9 months, they volunteered countless hours to develop a clear mission and vision, incorporate the society, oversee the creation of the website, curate the list of delegates, design and execute the symposium.

The inaugural symposium was named *DecisionElles* and was made possible by generous contributions from our founders Teresa Haykowsky, Judge Anne Brown, Carolina Gallo and Michèle Stanners; and donors Microsoft, Air Whistle Media, McLennan Ross Legal Counsel and Nordic Mechanical Services Ltd, (John Clouthier).

We note that it was imperative to the founders that all efforts would be made for the project to be bilingual, which mandated that the website and all communications be in both official languages and that simultaneous interpretation be available for the Symposium. We acknowledge that this presented challenges from which invaluable lessons were learned.



Mission and Vision

On August 10, 2020, Futura20 was incorporated as a Not-for-Profit Society pursuant to the *Canada Not-for-Profit Corporations Act*. The Society's purposes are:

1. For the Members (Allophone, Francophone and Anglophone women) to gather to collaborate, in either of Canada's official languages, in the exploration of the challenges and opportunities (collectively the "expectations") facing Canada in the 21st century;
2. For the Members to:
 - a) engage their networks and influence to design creative, purposeful methods to better the place and role of women in Canada; and
 - b) establish and put into action concrete initiatives for the next decades to ensure women's voices are heard, take steps to meet the expectations and improve the lives of women.
3. To expand the Society, as decided by the Society membership, within Canada in accordance or for the purpose of the objects set out above at 1 and 2.



The current directors are Tanya Barnaby, Pauline Couture, Blair Crawford, Teresa Haykowsky, Salima Ebrahim, Raymonde Lavoie, Michèle Stanners, Sandra Sutter and Sheri-D Wilson. The drafting of by-laws is underway.

OUR NAME:

Futura20: We find our inspiration in the Famous 5, recognizing that nearly one hundred years later, in 2020, with hindsight 2020 and the future in view, it will take more than 5 women to incite meaningful change.

OUR LOGO

FUTURA20  

The colours and icons represent the two provincial symbols: the Quebec fleur de lys and the Alberta wild rose.

The Website

The bilingual [Futura20 website](#) was launched shortly before the symposium to serve both a public and private facing function. For the public, it provides background information on the genesis and leadership of Futura20. For Symposium participants, it

- Allowed participants to register, create a profile and share it with others
- Gave access to the [Symposium Agenda](#)
- Provided one-click links to Symposium plenary and break-out sessions
- Hosted a [Reading Room](#)
- Provided information on [simultaneous interpretation](#)
- Recognized our [donors](#)



The platform was designed by Air Whistle Media who have donated one year of content management. It is our hope that participants will keep their profiles up to date and engage with the website to communicate with each other.



Symposium Agenda

Mountain/ Rocheuses	Eastern/ Est	Activity / Activité
8:45 am	10h45	Online doors Open – Simultaneous interpretation instruction Ouverture – consignes pour l'interprétation simultanée
9:00	11h	Welcome/Bienvenue Pauline Couture, Michèle Stanners and/et Carolina Gallo
9:15	11h15	Plenary/plénière
9:25	11h25	Breakout/Atelier 1
9:55	11h55	The Famous 5 / les célèbres cinq – Dr. Frances Wright
10:00	12h	Plenary/Plénière – Report / rapport
10:10	12h10	Plenary Speaker: Pandemic Outcomes/Retombées de la pandémie Eva Friesen
10:20	12h20	Breakout/Atelier 2
10:50	12h50	<i>Mme Thérèse Casgrain</i> – Sarah Gravel
10:55	12h55	Plenary/Plénière – Report / rapport
11:00	13h	Lunch Break/Pause
11:30	13h30	Plenary/Plénière
11:35	13h35	Breakout/Atelier 3
12:10pm	14h10	Famous 5 Poem/ Poème les célèbres cinq – Sheri-D Wilson
12:15	14h15	Movement Break/Pause
12:20	14h20	Plenary/Plénière
12:40	14h40	Towards the future / Vers l'avenir
12:45	14h45	Breakout/Atelier 4
1:15	15h15	Plenary/Plénière Closing / Clôture
1:30	15h30	Adjourn /Ajourner

Highlights of the Symposium design include:

- Speaker presentations were limited to 5 minutes
- Performances included a poem, *The Famous 5*, created for the Symposium and performed by Calgary Poet Laureate Sheri-D Wilson; and a reenactment of *Mme Thérèse Casgrain* by Quebec artist Sarah Gravel
- Breakouts were limited to 8 participants
- Volunteer moderators facilitated the conversations with a view to funneling ideas over four sessions of 8 breakouts
- The process had the desired result of identifying 6 “big ideas” that participants were prepared to embrace and mobilize
- Microsoft Teams donated their platform and expertise to support the design and implementation of the Symposium

The Survey

Following *DecisionElles*, a 10-question survey was sent to the Symposium participants:

1. What “big idea” did you share?
2. Rank the quality and impact of various elements of the Symposium
3. Interest in continued involvement
4. Interest in a leadership role in one of the big ideas
5. Impact on participant’s perspective on issues facing Canada
6. How might participant approach challenges now
7. What worked
8. What didn’t work
9. Additional Feedback
10. Name and email address (optional)



Symposium participants had coalesced around six “big ideas”:

1. Alberta and Quebec sign onto the *Declaration against Systemic Racism*
2. Legislation of Quotas
3. Economic Independence Literacy
4. Science and Technology Literacy
5. Increasing/Supporting Election of Women
6. Young Leaders Initiative: Period Poverty

What was the impact on participants?

I learned a lot more about the current issues Canadian women are facing.

I already knew that Canada needs to make many changes however did not realize how much of an impact I might be able to make.

Scary wake-up call. Need to get involved.

How women collaborating need to be at the heart of most of our solutions

Very positive and inspirational; I think that we can make a difference

It was good to see other leaders interested in the issues

I felt surrounded by like-minded women

Similar challenges in both regions

I am very involved in the challenges that face Canada but I will always focus it from an Indigenous woman's perspective

How might you approach these challenges now?

I will try and connect with other members of FUTURA20 to discover what steps we can take to move forward.

Second symposium

I would approach them with a concrete plan of what to do and a strong team with differing opinions to broaden horizons.

Being an ambassador for Futura20. Working as part of a group. Challenging governments.

Purposefully bring together diverse women

Expand to look out of province to see what other are doing

Interested in taking on one of the big ideas

Not work only in silos.

I know there are many strong women who can be helpful to my fight

The Survey – Cont'd

What worked?

The moderators were lovely, the breakout rooms were great and the whole session was extremely easy to navigate.

Discussion and collaboration

The ability to collaborate with different groups (breakout rooms) and the Famous 5 slideshow.

Intention. Enthusiasm. Quality of all the women involved.

Breakouts

The overall symposium design was excellent

The assembly of women from both Quebec and Alberta in itself is a social innovation.

The weaving of art, science, economics and politics was excellent. I think it would be wise to have more artists.

Changing groups based on topics of interest

Getting to the big ideas

I think it allowed for us to have a safe space to discuss ideas.

What didn't work?

Website, moving in and out of breakout sessions

Teams platform. Simultaneous translation. Duration (length of time).

Long PowerPoints ... suggest videos next time. That way you can be sure of the quality and length. Can just be an iPhone video. Nothing fancy needed....use of PowerPoints is difficult; should be shared in advance as pre-reading

Technology glitches- but bound to happen!

The combination of the new technology platform and the constant breakouts made for a somewhat unwieldy program. Too long and some adjustments need to be made to the length of panels or the structure for more interaction between participants

Website was challenging... Time limits

Breakouts need to be more structured and longer for deeper conversation... too many topics in a short period of time.

Having it done online. Although there was no choice due to the pandemic, it's so important for face to face relationship building.

The Survey – Cont'd

Additional Feedback

Everyone was lovely to work with

Very good first step. Need to follow-up relatively quickly "White Paper" and 2nd symposium: momentum is important.

I'm bilingual with English as my mother tongue, but the sessions were very English-centric. Make sure to carve out some French-centric sessions up front.

I think the survey doesn't allow us to evaluate the activity and the next steps.

This is a great initiative and worthy of support as a function of specific targets and assembling dedicated actions to deliver results on an annual basis. A report card issued/published.

I think this whole idea should be developed and I found the whole process inspirational.

Technology was a challenge - Simultaneous interpretation as well.

The time commitment was not well explained when we were invited and I think moving forward an agenda with more choice and opportunity for smaller discussion groups would be ideal

More Indigenous content

By the end of the Symposium and through the survey, we've **confirmed leadership for each of these initiatives**. As well, four participants indicated an interest in taking a leadership role with Futura20. They are being canvassed for potential board positions.

The Future of Futura20

From the outset, Futura20's *DecisionElles* Symposium was an experiment.

Would leading women from Alberta and Quebec be prepared to spend half a day exploring new “big ideas” for Canada’s future? Could we design a process that would result in even one “big idea”? Would these women commit to continued involvement? Would any be prepared to step up into a leadership role?

The answer to all these questions was **YES**.

The board now faces the following decision points. Four founding members will be transitioning to an advisory role. We are seeking more diverse representation, specifically, women of colour, Indigenous, youth and the arts. We have received interest from four participants who represent these socio-demographics

How do we convert our mandate/objectives into concrete programming and actions? The role of the Futura20 board will be:

1. Act as a convener. The Symposia will to be the signature events/cornerstone of our process.
2. Assist project leaders with strategy and resources
 - a. Provide influence
 - b. Open doors
3. Act as a think tank
 - a. Research
 - b. Build intellectual and human capital -
4. Research funding opportunities
5. Amplify the voice of artists for positive social movement and change
6. Ensure all grassroots projects fall within the Mission/Vision/Mandate of Futura20

Next steps:

1. Build a solid board
2. Conduct an environmental landscape – potential partners/collaborators
3. Feasibility study on start-up funding
4. Create a strategic plan to mobilize the 6 “big ideas” emerging from *DecisionElles*.
5. Build a budget and source the necessary resources

