

For: Canadian Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC): Solutions Lab Consulting Services
Date: June 2021

About RADIUS

RADIUS is a social innovation hub based out of Simon Fraser University's (SFU) Beedie School of Business. We believe an economy that works for everyone is one that is dynamic, just, sustainable, and resilient, and to support our vision, we deliver programs to collaboratively develop, test, and accelerate innovative responses to tough social problems. Drawing on this leading-edge work, we also offer training, events, and educational opportunities to build collective capacity to respond to the challenges of our time.

RADIUS holds expertise in a variety of innovation methods, tools and processes, including innovation process and program design, equity-centered design, prototyping and lean experimentation, evaluation, and impact measurement. As a social innovation hub with a vision to make systems change from the lenses of deep equity, reciprocity, collaboration, and community engagement, a tenant to our work is recognizing the unique position in which we are to share our experiences and learnings from working alongside diverse communities all while embedding and centering the following Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion [principles](#) into all of our work:

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We centre equity in our design, strategy, and daily work.

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We value the knowledge, experiences, and histories in the margins of any given system.

—
We engage in reciprocal relationship building.

—
We are an open, learning organization.

—
We know future systems will draw on the new and the old.

—
We balance this ambitious work with honouring our limits.

RADIUS Team

It is important that we work together to identify the right team for your needs and required level of support. With a team of over twenty staff and in-house contractors, and a wider circle of subject matter experts and support facilitators, we will draw upon the necessary team to work alongside you. Lead facilitators and team we draw upon can be found [here](#).

Key Areas of Expertise and Lab Experience

Social Innovation Labs

RADIUS brings extensive experience in designing and delivering social innovation labs. Current Labs include:

[The Refugee Livelihood Lab \(RLI\)](#), which works to increase society's capacity to generate innovative responses to socio-economic inclusion by, for, and with refugee and immigrant communities while co-creating new ways of being that reflect a vision of justice, dignity, and economic empowerment for all.

[The RADIUS Health Promotion Lab](#), which aims to help prevent the widespread issue of lifestyle-based chronic diseases through the creation and incubation of innovative new models, ventures, partnerships, and health system interventions. The Health Promotion Lab uses an equity-based framework to support dialogue and action on addressing risk factors including unhealthy eating and physical inactivity, as well as root causes such as the social determinants of health.

[The First Peoples Enterprise Accelerator Program](#), which aims to create a decolonized economy created for and by Indigenous people alongside deep and meaningful partnerships contributes to this vision by cultivating deep, values-aligned relationships with Indigenous led partners to co-create entrepreneurship programming that recognizes the whole individual, centering Indigenous wisdom and worldview.

[The Local Economic Development Lab](#) (past lab) partnered with community organizations to explore innovative ways to build a more vibrant and inclusive local economy in Vancouver's Downtown Eastside.

National Housing Solution Labs Experience

Indigenous Housing Lab: Ecotrust Lab

Partnered with Ecotrust Canada, we are currently offering a CMHC-funded Housing Solutions Lab which is driven by the following broad question: How might systems-based approach remove barriers and create pathways towards integrated sustainable healthy housing development in Indigenous communities? Our goal is to create the space and establish the conditions for long-term support for Indigenous communities to re-imagine themselves as autonomous and creative bodies of knowledge and expertise. The Lab structure embeds equity centered design processes and provides a structured approach to testing ideas, evaluating potential ideas, and sharing possibilities of innovation in community partnership that will enable the building of culturally and climatically appropriate housing.

Skookum Lab

In collaboration with Surrey Urban Indigenous Leadership Committee's (SUILC), RADIUS supports and plays a consulting role on Skookum Lab - a CMHC-funded Housing Solutions Lab that launched in 2020 to support Indigenous led urban housing solutions in Metro Vancouver. The Lab uses innovative methodologies, including campfire gatherings and artistic partnerships, to ensure Indigenous wisdom is at the foundation of how the Lab undertakes research. The Skookum Lab is also one of the first Indigenous led, designed, and implemented social innovation labs in Canada.

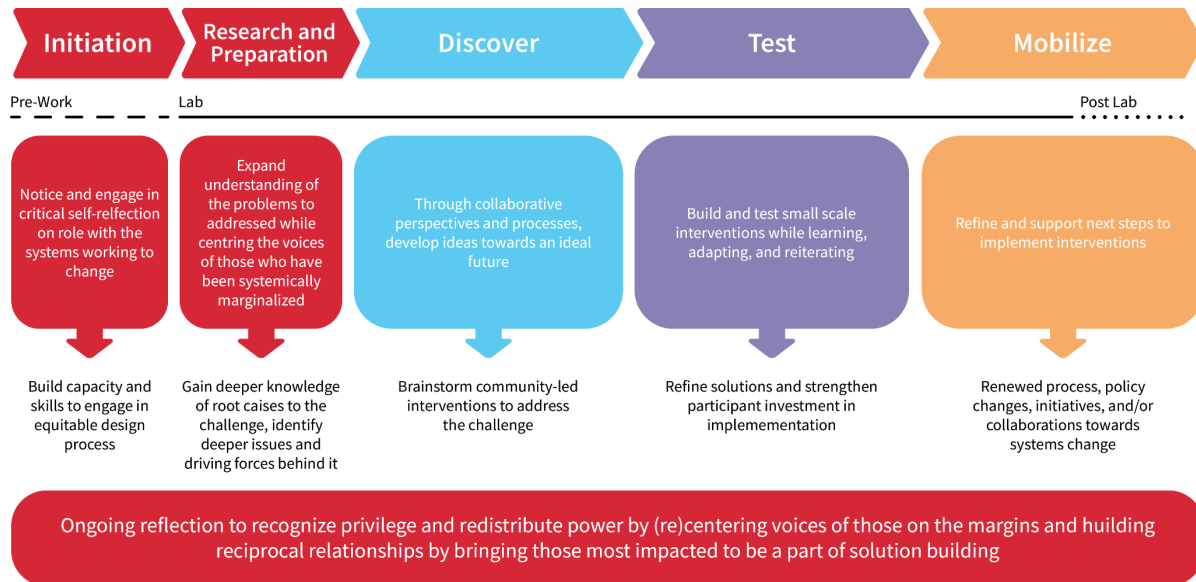
Seniors' Housing Stability Solutions Lab - [RADIUS SFU Senior Housing Lab Video](#)

RADIUS was contracted by the Seniors Services Society on behalf of seven partners to lead design, facilitation, and group coaching. Approximately 40 lab participants joined four one-day workshops over the course of twelve months, advancing their thinking and projects between each workshop touchpoint. Participants explored the situation from new perspectives, described a desired future state, found common areas of interest, formed sub-groups around shared opportunities, learned from users/stakeholders, ideated possible solutions, gained feedback, built prototypes of increasing fidelity while testing with users, and finally built a roadmap to embed and/or sustain each project. Six sub-groups are currently prototyping their interventions with relevant stakeholders.

RADIUS Solution Labs: Methodology & Approach

At their core, RADIUS Solution Labs (Labs) provide an approach to tackling complex societal challenges that require systems change. All Labs think and act across scales with diverse stakeholders in sustained, iterative experiments to solve highly complex and intergenerational problems.

In a unique approach that blends methods of Equity-Centered Design Thinking (ECD) and participatory practices, Labs seek to identify systems-level barriers and catalyze new solutions. Labs are guided by convening diverse perspectives on an issue, gaining insight from people with lived experience of a challenge, facilitating ideation, building prototypes of solutions (interventions, policy ideas, ventures, program pilots), and testing them to see how they work on the ground with community.



Solution Lab Phases

Phase 0: Initiation

A complex problem in need of diverse stakeholders to contribute to new solutions has been identified, now the initiation phase sets the foundation for hosts of the Lab and ensures capacity developed in equity-centered design prior to initiating community engagement.

Phase 1: Research and Preparation

The research and preparation phase probes deeper into the issue area to identify driving forces behind the Lab theme(s) and explores the different perspectives on the identified themes. The result is a challenge brief that captures the complexity of the Lab problem statement utilized for Phase 2: Discover. By investing in the necessary research and preparation and engaging a broader audience in the problem refinement, Phase 1 enables increased probability of solutions generated during next phases, which will meet the needs of the community and have greater opportunity for positive impact.

Phase 2: Discover

In the discover phase, we officially kick off the Lab process with participants and begin the process to shift from theory, research, and competency building to ideating possible interventions, initiatives, and other approaches to address the Lab problem statement. The larger the range of perspectives, the higher the feasibility and viability of potential solutions formed during this phase.

Phase 3: Test

The test phase then moves to build and test small scale pilots while learning, adapting, and reiterating while strengthening the Lab participants' investment in implementation. To do so, training and coaching is provided to Lab Participants to build their capacity and skills to lead the pilots.

Phase 4: Mobilize

Based on the outcomes of Phase 3, the mobilize phase supports tested pilots to implement through responsive supports which can cater to the forms of solutions generated. This could include connection to key stakeholders, investment, policy changes, and other methods to initiate solutions generated.

Lab Outcomes

Some outcomes of Labs include:

- Workable models and solutions that directly impact the identified themes and problems
- Insights into shifting the systems at play, including the identification of barriers and opportunities that affect the broader systems' dynamics
- More collaborative relationships, trust, and networks to continue to collaborate for positive systems change
- Increased capacity for those working in the Lab to be better social innovators and systems change leaders