

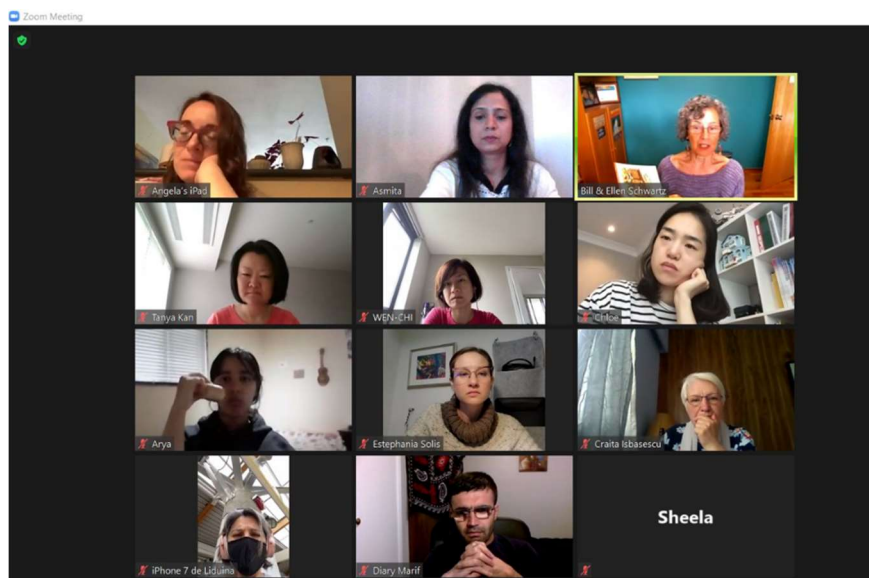
2021 Annual General Report

Mission: Our mission is to create a platform for local community members to strengthen intercultural connections through innovative programming promoting literary and other arts.

- To build awareness, interest and participation of people from all cultures in literary arts and other arts whilst increasing community cohesion
- To offer opportunities for individuals from diverse backgrounds to develop their skills and interest in language and literary arts.
- To play a prominent role in offering innovative programs related to language, literacy and literary arts among local communities in BC

Programs and Events in 2021

Writing Program



Culture Chats received funding from IRCC to conduct writing workshops and to organize reading events to share the stories written by participants. About 15 writing workshops were conducted between May 2020 and August 2020. Two sharing events were organized on Oct 24 and Dec 16. Participants are invited to attend a community event on January 16 organized by the Shoe Porject. The workshops were conducted online due to the Covid 19 pandemic but the reading events were organized in person. We were fortunate to receive additional funding to record podcasts and digital files of the stories this year from IRCC along with an extension for four years of the program.

The Program will be completed by end of March 2022. Written stories of the participants will be published, and podcast as well as video files are shared on youtube. These links will also be shared into the wider community by our community partners Literacy Now and New2BC. Burnaby Public Library has actively supported this collaboration. Culture Chats has actively connected with these community organizations with a view to organize suitable community engagement opportunities from these partnerships..

Culture Chats Youtube Channel:

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC9T60Of25ILJIXwvawgLylq>

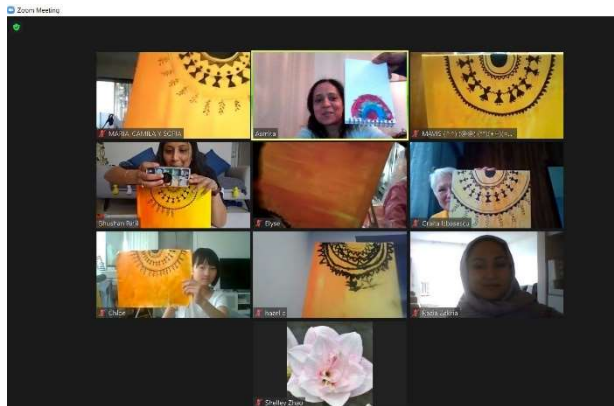
We have also received a BC Multicultural Grant to record stories of those newcomers who may not be permanent residents or other BC citizens. We will be working on this project primarily from Jan to March 2022. Some work was done with these participants also this year to create written content and to publish digital stories.



We will aim to conduct workshops for digital content creation in January and February 2022 and also organize another sharing event in Q1 2022

Art and Craft Workshops

Culture Chats received a grant of \$3000 from Canada Post to conduct art and craft workshops for children. Our focus was to encourage family time by inviting parents or caregivers to join in with the children. Due to the Pandemic, the workshops were conducted online on zoom in December 2020 and March 2021. We also conducted sharing events on October 24 and Dec 16 for the same. The events combined elements of craft sharing and story reading to engage community and encourage intercultural connections. Multicultural traditional arts were introduced to the participants such as Warli Painting from India and Money Pouches from South Korea.



Culture Chats received a grant of \$2000 from the City of New Westminster for organizing arts and crafts workshops facilitated by local artists. The workshops invited instructors to introduce multicultural arts. Recycled or upcycled materials were used where possible in creating the crafts. Workshops were conducted over eight weeks in summer and Fall 2021. The images of their works shared by participants were shared on the [Culture Chats Facebook Page](#). The support of other local community partners such as the Arts Council of New Westminster is gratefully acknowledged in promoting the program as well as support provided in designing some of the workshops. The grant money is also allocated to create a web art gallery to showcase the works from this project and future Culture Chats art projects. <https://arts.culturechats.ca/>





Our community artists were selected to display their work by the Many Nations Mobile Gallery as Culture Chats has developed partnerships with local art networks. Also we will likely be invited in the New West Community Artists group for further collaborations based on initial ongoing discussions. <http://themanynationsgalleries.ca/the-culture-chats-arts-and-craft-workshops/>



Multicultural Dance Workshops

Culture Chats offered South Asian Dance workshops over the months of May to August 2021. The participants learnt dance from few professional instructors who introduced folk dance styles from India and from other parts of the world including Mexico and East Europe. The instructor Dale Adamson was invited from SIFD a folk dancing society. South Asian instructors also introduced some classical Indian dance movements. One community performance was shared online when Culture Chats participated in an online event called Navrang organized by the Indian Consulate in Vancouver. Accessories were provided to the participants and four workshops were conducted in person at the Newton Cultural Center. Another six to eight workshops were conducted on zoom due to the pandemic. This project was funded by a grant of \$1,250 from the City of Surrey. A further \$500 was obtained from the Neighbourhood Small Grants. The support from Arts Council of Surrey is also acknowledged.



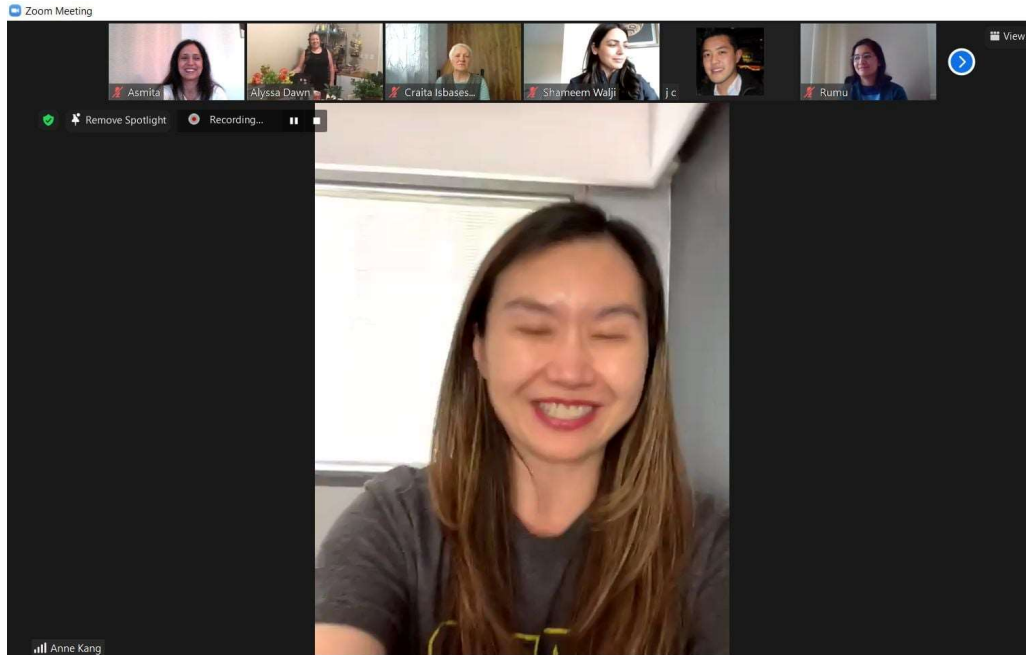
BC AntiRacism Grant

Culture Chats has been granted \$1000 by the BC Government to conduct 2 to 4 community engagement sessions and gather feedback regarding how data about Race should be collected, stored and used by the Government and by public institutions. This project was begun in December 2021 and will be completed in February 2022. One engagement session was organized in partnership with Manasvini, a ladies group promoting East Indian language and culture. The audience was primarily South Asian and the event was conducted in English and Hindi.



Burnaby Festival of Learning

Culture Chats participated in the Burnaby Festival of Learning. This year the festival was conducted almost entirely online in May 2021. We conducted two container gardening workshops on zoom as part of this festival and we received very positive feedback. The local MLA attended our event to show her support



We received funding from City of New West worth \$710 and a neighbourhood small grant worth \$500 also to conduct online container gardening workshops. We also organized two visits to the local farmers market in New Westminster as part of these projects. It was a unique experience for our group of newcomers to learn about local produce and local ingredients.



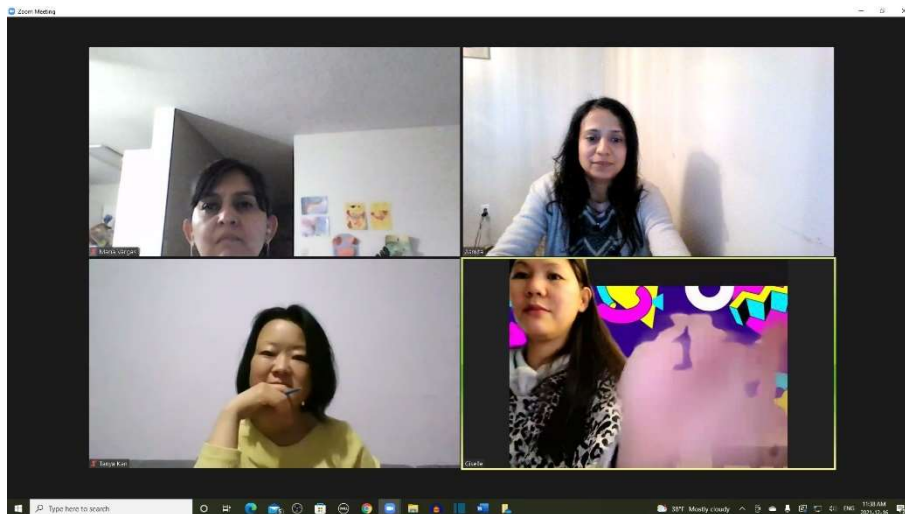


Operations

Culture Chats benefits from counsel and support of Directors Craita Isbasescu, Lawrence Francois, Mavis Gevido and Asmita Lawrence serves as the Executive Director. We served over 50 clients through our arts and craft events and workshops and our writing workshops and dance workshops. The online publishing of participants' works reached a much wider audience online. Our annual revenue amounted to \$56,733 and our annual expenditure amounted to \$39,248.12 with the bulk of the remaining funds restricted for the IRCC project to be completed by March 2022 or other projects such as the BC Anti Racism Project and the BC Multicultural Project. Our annual AGM was held on Dec 26, 2021.

Culture Chats Team

Our work is supported by many volunteering hours. Our Directors have dedicated time to further the strategic vision and work of Culture Chats. One of the Directors Asmita Lawrence also serves the role of ED, managing the programs and operations of Culture Chats. She is responsible for making funding applications, program design and development for Culture Chats through the year. She is employed as an independent contractor to work in Planning, Admin work & Organization support, Marketing, PR and Communications, Coordination & Facilitation for events and workshops, Outreach work to experts, professionals, speakers, partners, stakeholders. Another five or six community members have worked with us this year in various activities such as event organization, artwork development, workshop coordination and advisory support. We would gratefully like to acknowledge the work of Advisory committee members Maria Vargas, Giselle Hao-Palanca and Tanya Kan. We had an advisory committee meeting and they provided inputs for various projects on an ongoing basis. We would like to thank all our partners and supporters including New West Arts Council, Burnaby Neighbourhood House, Branka Vlastic, Yunuen Perezvertti, Rachel Ridley, Tara Flynn, Zahida Rahemtulla Gabrielle Wells, Ellen Schwartz, Sheela Amudhanar, Julie George, Dale Adamson and Kimberly Barwich for ongoing support.



Thank You