

Case Study

2021



Connected Canadians



*Connected Canadians thanks
BEING studio for granting them
permission to re-share content
from their [Artist Connect Report](#)
for the purpose of this case study.*



Acknowledgments

Connected Canadians would like to thank the BEING Studio team for allowing us to work with them on Artist Connect. Connected Canadians thanks BEING studio for granting them permission to re-share content from their [Artist Connect Report](#) for the purpose of this case study.

Connected Canadians and BEING Studio operate on the traditional, unceded and unsundered territories of the Algonquin Nation. Connected Canadians and BEING Studio acknowledge past and present injustices and work towards change, Indigenous sovereignty and a more just future. For Artist Connect we gathered virtually across turtle Island to continue to share and learn together.



Context

BEING Studio is an intergenerational community of artists with developmental disabilities. Working alongside the BEING Studio team, Connected Canadians developed specialized digital skills training for their audience as well as the larger audience of other arts-based organizations across Canada.

Connected Canadians provided real-time technical support for the Artist Connect virtual workshop series that was collectively run by five partner organizations from January to March 2021.

Connected Canadians mentors were available to provide support in real-time throughout the workshop series to enable every participant access to the virtual programming and provide friendly, accessible technical support when needed.



How we delivered Digital Skills Training to BEING Studio & the Artist Connect Community

The Challenge

When the COVID-19 pandemic hit, BEING Studio, along with a larger community of artists with disabilities, needed to find a way to continue delivering their arts-based programming remotely.

BEING Studio spearheaded an online gathering space where artists could safely come together online while adhering to the ongoing restrictions. The Disability Justice Network of Ontario, National accessArts Centre, H'Art Center, Propeller Dance, the Nina Haggerty Centre for the Arts, and theSpace worked together to help create this program, which was funded by the Canada Council for the Arts.

Connected Canadians was brought on to facilitate digital skills training and expertise to successfully launch the Artist Connect Symposium virtual programming.



It's about building trust with communities and collaborating with each other so we can build a better, more just world.”

**Sahra Soudi, Virtual Coffee
Keynote On Our Terms:
Care & Disability Justice**

The Solution

Connected Canadians was approached by BEING Studio to provide accessible digital skills training and reliable support for their remote programming. Our expertise and hands-on collaboration played a key role in the successful launch of Artist Connect, which ran from January to March 2021. Each week, two to three Artist Connect events were run virtually using Zoom where participants heard from guest artists, learnt digital tools, and had discussions with fellow artists from across Turtle Island.

The series began with bespoke training sessions led by Connected Canadian Instructors, co-created with the team at BEING Studio Team, that familiarized participants with the different digital tools available to them before beginning the artist specific workshops. Participants learned how to use videoconferencing and screen sharing tools so that they could meaningfully engage with other artists in the program.

Our instructors ensured that participants had the confidence and skills to navigate Zoom, so that they could have the best possible experience with the Artist Connect Series.

Throughout the rest of the series, Connected Canadian Technology Mentors were readily available via telephone and the Zoom chat to help monitor the conversation and address technological issues that arose, so that the artists could get the most out of the Artist Connect Series.



The Results

Artist Connect provided an opportunity to explore what a disability-led space looks like as a virtual, online program.

Over the course of the series, a total of 25 sessions were delivered collectively from all six partners.

Artists left the program with a refined sense and meaning of self-determination, interdependence, and connection.

After the series concluded, BEING Studio left with a better understanding of how virtual programming can be effectively delivered virtually across Turtle Island and the impact that it has had on their community. BEING Studio compiled a valuable checklist for others that outlines best practices to make Zoom programming accessible and welcoming for individuals with disabilities. To learn more, check out the Artist Connect Report produced by BEING Studio.

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You can draw what you want to draw, you can be who you want to be, and you can love what you have drawn and what you are.”

Debbie Ratcliffe, Virtual Coffee Host, Reflections on Self Determination