Global Grants 2025 - Individual Grantee Reports

Lenard Monkman

Position: Creative Producer/Indigenous Content Specialist

Organisation: CBC/Radio-Canada

Activity: Indigenous Strategies

Location: Swedish Radio (SR), Sámi Rádio

Date: 13 - 19 June 2025

Youth engagement presentation by Lenard. Credit: Lenard Monkam

Objectives

A primary goal for this exchange was to learn from the host organisation's established approaches to Indigenous engagement, programming, and strategy, particularly focusing on global best practices in media representation and innovative podcasting. Equally important was sharing our insights from the National Indigenous Strategy, ensuring a reciprocal exchange of knowledge.

The initiative significantly strengthened relationships within the Public Media Alliance (PMA) network, building connections with the host team, community representatives, and fellow media professionals, which will foster future collaborations. As a journalist, this provided invaluable exposure to diverse cultural contexts and media approaches, serving as a crucial professional development opportunity that aligns with my organisation’s commitment to enhancing Indigenous media practices. Finally, fostering cross-cultural dialogue and mutual learning was paramount. This involved not only sharing media strategies but also deeply engaging with Sámi culture and local contexts in Kiruna, enriching our collective understanding of Indigenous experiences globally.

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Experience

My experience in Kiruna was a pretty intensive two-day immersion into the world of Sámi public media and Indigenous affairs, meticulously designed to maximise learning and collaboration. Day one was largely conference-based, featuring presentations from SR Sámi Rádio and CBC/Radio-Canada,

including my own on "Engaging Indigenous Youth." We delved into impactful youth podcasting, exemplified by "Albma Duođas - For real?!", and explored broader Indigenous media strategies and Sámi Parliament elections. The afternoon culminated in a comprehensive two-part workshop, fostering deeper collaborative engagement on storytelling and representation.

SR Sámi Rádio Presentation. Credit: Lenard Monkman

Day two provided invaluable cultural and contextual understanding. Visits to the Sámi Parliament (Sámediggi) and the Sámi Theatre offered direct insights into Sámi governance and cultural expression. A unique highlight was the lunch meeting with a reindeer herder, providing a personal connection to traditional Sámi livelihoods and their contemporary challenges. The visit concluded with a fascinating tour of the LKAB underground mine, grounding our discussions in the local economic reality and its impact on Indigenous lands.

Throughout these engagements, I actively worked on presenting our National Indigenous Strategy and contributing to collaborative workshops alongside the host organisation 's Indigenous Strategies team, SR Sámi Rádio, and CBC/Radio-Canada colleagues. Key takeaways included a profound understanding of the host organisation’s nuanced Indigenous engagement approach, innovative digital storytelling through youth podcasting, and the political-cultural dynamics within the Sámi community.

The vibrant cross-cultural dialogue and the enthusiasm for youth-led storytelling were particularly exciting. Collaborating around podcast development and future youth content exchanges may provide meaningful tangible outcomes. While the limited timeframe presented a challenge, requiring effort, it pushed us to think universally about Indigenous media principles. This visit significantly impacts my career, the National Indigenous Strategy, and our organisation by broadening our global perspective, informing strategy refinements, and taking concrete steps toward a future Indigenous content exchange. This work directly aligns with UN Sustainable Development Goals like Quality Education (4), Reduced Inequalities (10), and Partnerships for the Goals (17). The visit was mutually beneficial, enriching both organisations with enhanced knowledge, strengthened networks, and a clear path for international collaboration.

Conclusion

The exchange was exceptionally rewarding due to direct engagement with Sámi media and cultural institutions, offering insights into youth-led podcasting and Indigenous engagement. The collaborative

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workshops and cultural insights were invaluable. I learned a lot about the struggles that the Sámi Radio journalists and people faced and found their experiences to be very similar to the Indigenous experience within Canada. In the short term, I'll integrate new podcasting techniques and youth engagement strategies into our content and refine our National Indigenous Strategy based on benchmarking insights. The long-term impact is significant: establishing the Indigenous Youth Content Exchange in 2026 will create a sustained global platform for young Indigenous storytellers. My sincere acknowledgements go to the Public Media Alliance (PMA) for the Global Grant, our host organisation SR Sámi Rádio, and CBC/Radio-Canada for their support.

Match funded opportunity

Robert and Lenard with Sami Radio. Credit: CBC/Radio-Canada

Parallel to Lenard's visit, Robert Doune, Senior Director of The National Indigenous Strategy, CBC/Radio-Canada visited Sweden. This was made possible through match funding provided by the Indigenous Office at CBC/Radio-Canada. The purpose of Robert's visit was to learn about the host organisation's approach to Indigenous engagement, programming, and strategic planning. During the trip, he also shared insights from CBC/Radio-Canada's National Indigenous Strategy, with the aim of encouraging cross-cultural dialogue and mutual learning.

As part of the programme, Robert explored innovative podcasting techniques with the guidance of a content expert and began discussions around a potential follow-up exchange with another PMA member organisation. These discussions focused on fostering sustainable knowledge sharing and collaboration. A key outcome of the visit was the development of a proposal to launch an Indigenous Youth Content Exchange, with the goal of initiating the programme in 2026.

Building on this progress, a one-week engagement was proposed with Sveriges Radio Sameradion, a PMA partner organisation. The purpose of this engagement was to exchange knowledge and experiences around Indigenous strategies and youth-focused initiatives, as well as to formally establish a plan for the 2026 Youth Content Exchange. The initiative sought to strengthen CBC/Radio-Canada's National Indigenous Strategy by learning from international models and sharing the organisation's own practices and approaches.

This project was well aligned with the aims of the PMA Global Grant, particularly in promoting international collaboration and delivering both organisational and societal benefits. Activities included

orientation and immersion with Sameradion's Indigenous Strategies team, participation in workshops and presentations on Indigenous programming, and meetings with local community representatives to understand their engagement practices. The programme also included collaborative content development, podcast exchanges, and joint workshops focused on storytelling and Indigenous representation in the media. These efforts were grounded in previous international work and supported the creation of a framework for the proposed Indigenous Youth Content Exchange, due to be launched in 2026.

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