

Life.
School.
House.

ANNUAL REPORT 2020

We are a membership-based Cooperative
of folkschools that connect communities
in caring relationships.

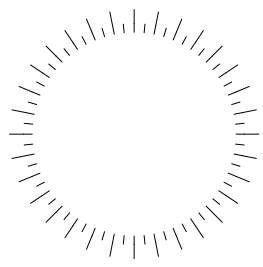




WE ENVISION A WORLD WHERE PEOPLE FEEL LESS ISOLATED AND MORE CONNECTED THROUGH THE ACT OF SHARED LEARNING EXPERIENCES.

CELEBRATING LOCAL WISDOM, BUILDING CONNECTIONS IN COMMUNITY, AND LEARNING ABOUT THE SOCIAL VALUE OF BARTER AND EXCHANGE.

"Life's most persistent and urgent question is, What are you doing for others?"
- Martin Luther King, Jr



FOUNDERS REPORT

The way I remember it, 2020 was just like any other year. As usual there were many unexpected challenges, blessings too, but our community was still at the centre of everything that felt right and true no matter what was going on in the world.

The year started with big expectations. For the first time since the LifeSchoolHouse project began we had staff resources committed on a full time basis thanks to generous financial support from our community. By mid-March we were mid-pandemic though, and all of a sudden our grand plans to share the LSH model far and wide became sidelined by homeschooling, travel cancellations and a lifetime supply of zoom calls. Still, we were a resilient community and found ways to stay in touch and support each other safely.

Our free Community Pantry fed our neighbours but also started a conversation about direct action and caretaking. Online Coffee Chats filled a conversation gap for some of our more disconnected members and Online Classes were an experiment in humanizing the digital world. When in-person programming started again in early July the response from the community was overwhelming. It was a treat to be back together and whatever restrictions and accommodations we needed to make to gather again, was well worth it.



Wonderful summer weather helped during a less than wonderful year and so we managed 53 swaps and outdoor classes between July and November with more than 404 attendees engaged in everything from soap making, rotational grazing, star gazing, embroidery, geocaching and more. We wore masks, sat on sanitized chairs and stayed physically distanced but the joy was still shared. We met new members, swapped skills and stories about our pandemic experiences, celebrated new babies and mourned together the losses of friends and family and plans that had never materialized.

At the same time as our summer programming was hitting a peak, our work was recognized with a Fellowship from [Ashoka Canada](#): a network of global changemakers whose support meant that we could start to share our message to a broader audience around the world. The LifeSchoolHouse in NS was spreading a movement of folkschooling across Canada.

We have much to celebrate: the generosity of hosts who offer space in their homes and barns and garages for community gatherings, the willingness of volunteer facilitators to share their skills, and the bravery of each participant who asks for what they need and offers what they can into this community. Above all, we celebrate the power that small and intimate gatherings can have on a population struggling with isolation and loneliness in a complicated year. All of this was made possible because of the willingness to share personal space at a time when it was otherwise impossible to gather. We built social capital, resilience, and a community centered around caretaking that has real 'staying' power. Looking forward to what more will grow at the LifeSchoolHouse!

B. Costa



Life.
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2020

TEN

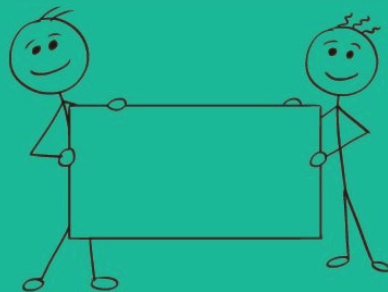
Host
Locations



1,200+
volunteer
hours from
community
members

97
Workshops

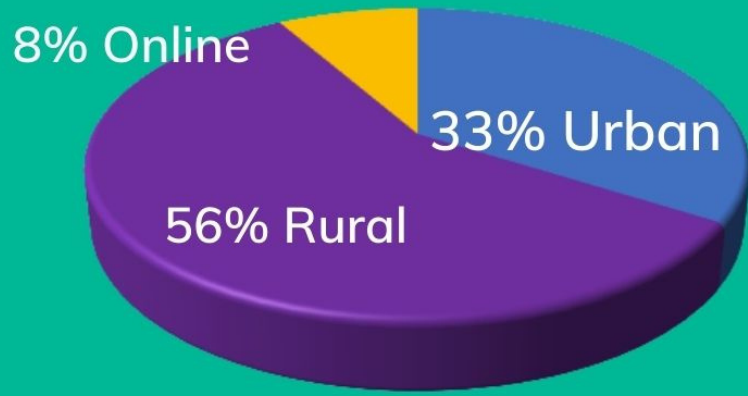
579



Workshop Participants

On average
workshops had
6
participants

Workshops
were
successful in
both urban
and rural
communities



296
people
participated in
maker's swaps



2020

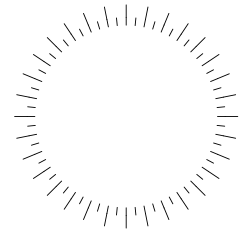
2,500
Items of
immeasurable
value were
bartered
between
Makers



"Can't Stop the Swap"

All this
during a
pandemic
year!

ANNUAL TREASURER'S REPORT - 2020

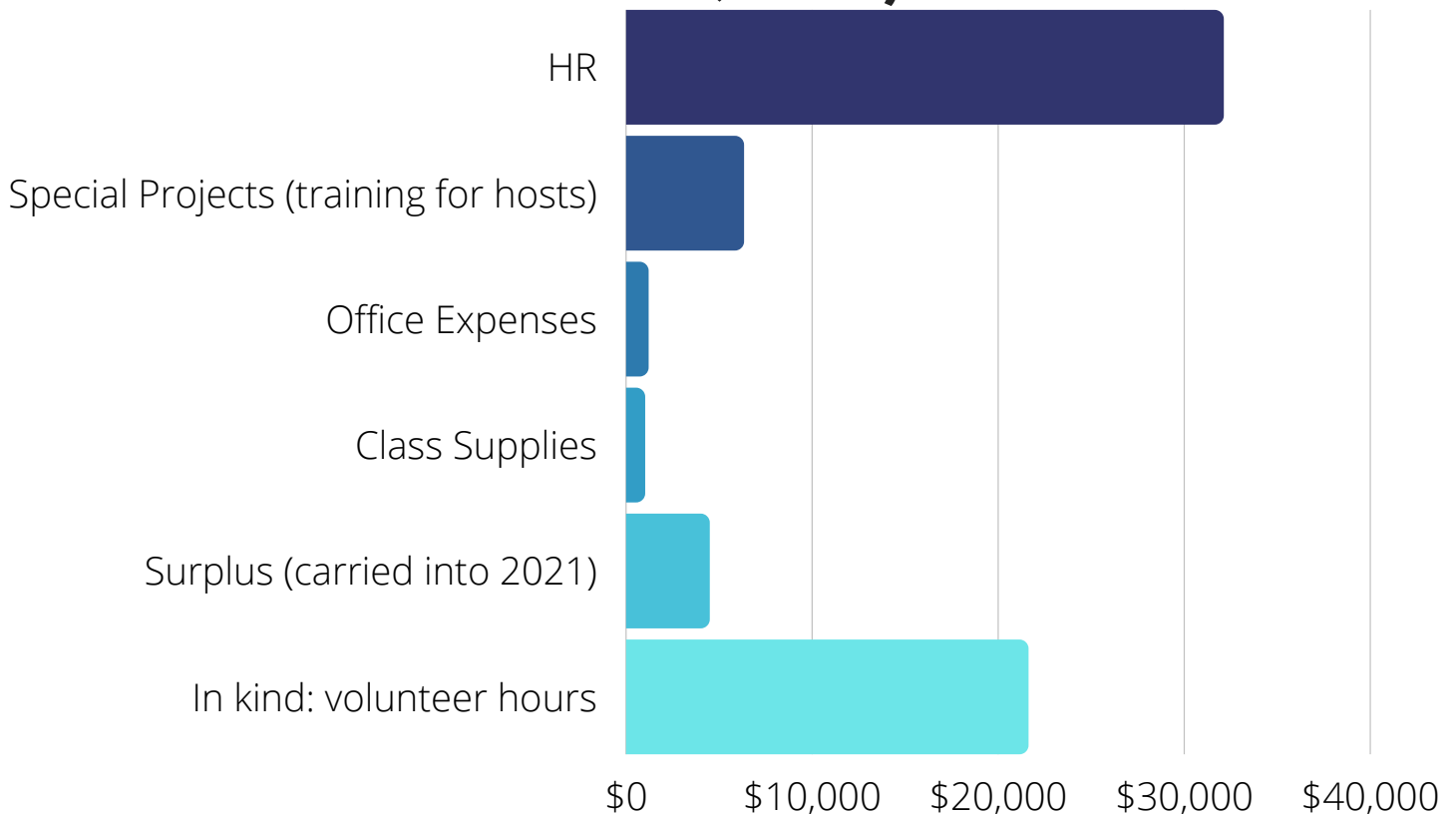


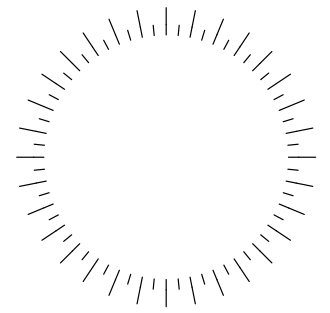
The LSH budget year runs from November 1 2020-October 31 2021. This means that at the time of publication we are currently in the middle of a budget year. For the current year, we managed to build our entire programming calendar with planned income total of \$56,157.66 and we are currently projecting to be under budget by nearly \$10,000. We are still a young organization which means spending patterns are still in motion and hard to predict and this current budget year will be the first budget that includes employees for at least 11 months. In addition to funding received from a private donor from our community, we received two grants from Venture for Canada and a grant from the NS Health Board in 2020.

In 2020 we have implemented new financial policies and procedures including the creation of a programming fund for Host to assist with any expenses and with the introduction of employees we now have detailed instructions and processes for Payroll.

A budget for the coming year will start to be drafted in August-September 2021.

ALLOCATION OF RESOURCES 2020 (TOTAL BUDGET: \$45,050)





THANKS TO OUR COMMUNITY OF SUPPORTERS, HOSTS, FACILITATORS AND FRIENDS. WE ARE FOREVER CHANGED BECAUSE OF YOU.

.....
"The greatness of a community is most accurately measured by the compassionate actions of its members."
.....

Coretta Scott King