

**SOLID STATE**  
COMMUNITY INDUSTRIES

**2019-2020  
ANNUAL REPORT TO STAKEHOLDERS**



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Solid State Community Industries  
10326 Whalley Boulevard, Surrey, BC, V3T 4H4, Canada

# WE BUILD CO-OPS



# WHO WE ARE



We are a not-profit organization based in Surrey, British Columbia. Our mission is build workers coops and other cooperative enterprises with youth from racialized migrant backgrounds.- either to earn an income for themselves, or to serve others in the communities. Our co-ops span a wide variety of fields: from catering to web design, from art galleries to event planning.



Through the process of building their own worker's co-ops, we provide skills training, education in business and life skills, and an understanding of various business models.

More importantly, our model is most fundamentally about building long-term attachments and commitments. It is our contention that in working cooperatively over an extended period of time, our cohorts develop a new sense of place and belonging, and a different way of being in the world.



# MESSAGE FROM THE CO-DIRECTORS



It has been a year of growth and excitement for Solid State. We tripled the number of people we serve, tripled our staff capacity, moved into a bigger and brighter location, and were featured in a national TV show (!). The community's awareness of our work has also increased significantly, and we are getting many requests to partner and co-create.

All of that is true – and awesome – but more importantly, we really came to understand what we are doing. 2019-20 was our third full year of operations, and it became very evident what we are good at, what we are not, where we can make the most impact and where we are headed.

So much good happened at Solid State this year, which is a little baffling given how much was happening around us. In the face of a epidemics of police killings, racist and xenophobic violence, a pandemic, deepening climate change and economic

precarity, Solid State felt like a place of everyday conviviality, shared meals, exciting and productive work, and so much good-humoured hopefulness.

As always, all of that is only possible because of the hard work, perseverance, creativity and sheer intelligence of the youth who work on their co-ops every day. In a time when young people are so often derided as lazy and self-absorbed, the youth at Solid State demolish those characterizations thoroughly.

We would love you to come hang out with us! Please take this as an invitation to come and eat a meal with us, anytime.

Much respect.

Archana Ananthanarayan and Matt Hern,  
Co-Directors

# WHAT HAPPENED IN 2019-2020



The most obvious change in Solid State is that we got so much bigger: we expanded from 3 cohorts in September 2019 to 13 cohorts one year later. We now have a staff of fifteen, approximately 90+ co-op members and whole community of friends and supporters mobilized around us. Please do see the (hugely upgraded and lovely) [Solid State website](#) to read more.

We moved into our new space in Whalley in Sept 2019. It was almost perfect: in a central location, and accessible to good transit, decently-sized, and all ours. We had a great time moving in, painting, and getting it set up.



Then almost immediately, we were selected by the reality TV home-improvement show Holmes on Homes. They had just launched a new show featuring non-profits, and we were one of their very first subjects. In February they began renovations by demolishing the entire interior, taking it down to the studs. In March (you may have heard) the pandemic hit, delaying their work significantly. The crews (construction and film) were able to resume their work in June, and kind of miraculously, were able to finish in August with a huge launch party.





The show will air sometime in early 2021 – and the space looks amazing. We thought it was great before, now it is another thing entirely. We have just started getting adjusted, and it is a wonderful space to work out of!

One of things we are most proud of is how many Solid Staters graduate from high school and carry on to post-secondary institutions and/or good, full-time work.

In 2020 we saw a dozen of our youth graduate, and every one of them is either in university/college and/or employed.

In celebration of everyone's hard work – graduating from high school, toughing out their school years, staying in great humour and graduating from the (first?) COVID lockdown – Solid State organized a full-day yacht trip for the six cohorts with members graduating from grade 12. It was a spectacular day: three separate trips with

everyone dressed beautifully, many, many photos taken and fitting celebration.

Solid State continues to gain a profile nationally and internationally. One of our goals is to contribute to a solidarity economy by seeding hubs in other locations. We are starting pilot Solid State hubs in New Brunswick and Nova Scotia in 2021, and have are in conversation with several European locations, including refugee camps. This is not a priority right now (this piece is a little ahead of schedule for us) but when interest comes, we are not turning it down.



# THE SOLID STATE COHORTS

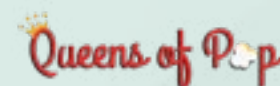


## Mavins Marketing



This is our first co-op. Founded in 2017, these OGs are still together, this group is thriving in its third year, building websites and developing branding and design, and expanding their client base. Every single original member is now enrolled in a post-secondary institution and the lads who started in grades 10 and 11 are all grown-up! See <https://www.mavins.xyz/> for more.

## Queens of Pop



The Queens finished this school year with everyone graduating, and everyone enrolled in post-secondary. Now that we have our space and kitchen back, QofP is ready to pop back up (sorry) and continue making fancy popcorn and snacks. See <https://www.queensofpop.ca/> for more.



## Open City Events

Open City has been exceptionally active over the past year, incorporating as a co-op and working through covid putting on a whole series of collaborative online events and now building some new creative installation and events for 2020-21, starting with Islamic History Month. See <https://www.opencityevents.ca/>



## Ethos Lab



Ethos Lab has fully blossomed, incorporating as its own entity and leveraging the cooperative model to develop an online collaborative platform and creative co-working spaces for youth ages 12-18.

See: <https://www.ethoslab.space/>



## Fusion Five

Is our new cooking cohort with two lead cooks and four youth cooks. They have taken over all the cooking for Solid State and are now scheming to launch their own food business by the end of the year.



## Daily Dose of Blackness



This was the DDBers first full year with Solid State and they have built a website, podcast, youtube channel and merch store, highlighting and discussing issues of importance to Black youth.

See <https://www.dailydoseofblackness.com/> to read, watch and listen to their work.

## Just.Us Instincts



Just.Us launched this year and has already has completed a ton of projects. Originally intended to focus on one or two major Surrey-based festivals, they have pivoted beautifully to take on a whole series of social justice projects.

See: <https://www.instagram.com/just.usinstincts/>

## BLAC: The Black Arts Centre



Founded in the Spring of this year, BLAC - The Black Arts Centre has been moving very quickly and will be opening a new Black youth owned and operated gallery and performance space in Whalley in early 2021. We have an amazing storefront space in the City Centre Skytrain/Civic Hotel, a phenomenal staff and Advisory Board, and a super-ambitious set of plans.

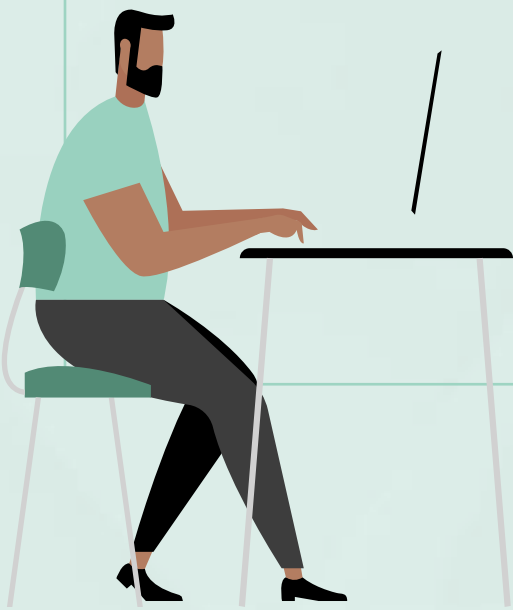
See: <https://www.blacartscentre.ca/>

## Options

Is a project being developed in collaboration with Options, a Surrey-based community services society. This cohort is working with a team of youth to provide tech training to seniors, especially those isolated by coronavirus, and to leverage those relationships to build some cultural solidarity and language learning for youth.

## Milieu

Milieu is a Surrey-based streetwear brand, producing a range of clothes from hoodies to shirts to overwear. They are building a style that can be both casual and a little dressy, but all infused with their unique sensibilities of boldness, confidence and warmth.



## Studio Pluto

Is a brand-new project of Solid State. They are a creative studio that specializes in website development for clothing brands, just launching co-op work September  
See: <https://studiopluto.co/>



## Diversity Training

This is our newest cohort, one we have been scheming on through the spring and have now launched, with a name to come soon! This co-op will be providing training and consulting services to organizations, non-profits, businesses, government and educational institutions who want to improve the capacity of BIPOC staff to move into positions of power and responsibility within their organization.

# WHATS NEXT IN 2020-21



**1** Solid State will continue to add cohorts through 2020-21. We are learning how to manage the ongoing and sometimes overwhelming volume of interest. We are convinced we are figuring out a durable model going forward, especially in the face of economic precarity and instability, and our goal is to build a network of co-ops here in Surrey. We do not have any set number we are aiming for, but we are seeking a critical mass to make real economic impact.

**2** We also intend to expand nationally and internationally. This is somewhat ahead of schedule, but we think we can definitely work with other organizations to build new co-op hubs further afield, and have several hubs under construction already.

**3** We love our teenage cohorts but our new crews are all trending older: people in their mid-late twenties. This is deliberate and we are most interested in creating living jobs and positioning Solid State as making a real economic impact in Surrey.

**4** Towards all this we are significantly expanding our budget: we are moving a number of our staff from contract to employees and strengthening our team, resources and the support we can offer to cohorts. We want to be able respond well to any young people who come to us with an idea, a vision, and energy.

**5** We are planning on opening at least two more spaces in the near future: one for our food business and one for the BLAC gallery, but it has also become very evident that in many ways, we have already outgrown our Whalley Blvd space and are going need to expand our HQ as well.





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