ECHO Trainee Presentation
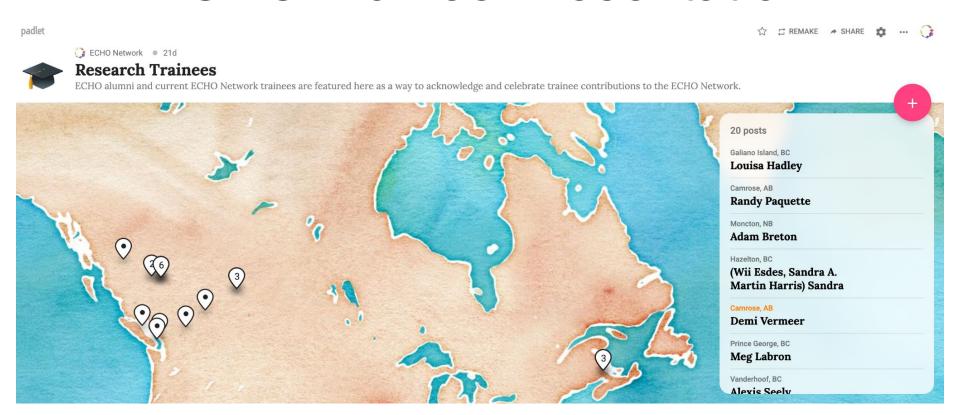

June 29, 2022 - ECHO Network Annual Meeting 2022

DETAILS

The game: **Two Truths and a Lie**

Purpose: **the trainee team submitted 2 true statements and 1 false statement (i.e. the lie) about their experience with the ECHO Network. Building off of reflections from the 2021 trainee reflective practice activity* and soon to be manuscript!**

How to play: **guess which statement is the lie by clicking that option in the poll**

*explaining the lie (reading from the screen) includes relevant quotes from the reflective practice activity

We [the trainees] are mostly…

A. Bachelors students

B. Located in BC

C. Research assistants

Key Skills for a Research Assistant

DiscoverPhDs ©

Planning
The ability to think strategically

Organising
Organisation and time management skills

Analytical
Attention to detail

Teamwork
Written and oral communication sk..

Intuition
Critical thinking and problem solving skills

Network
Liaison with different parties

Experience
Research and lab based experience

Scientific
Familiar with the scientific method

We are mostly…

A. Bachelors students ✅

The largest percentage of trainees are master's students working across the 4 regional cases. Either trainees are currently engaged in their masters study or have completed their degree already.

I feel that ECHO is…

a. Routinizing EDI (JEDI) as a part of my approach and thinking

b. Shifting power dynamics and traditional mental models

c. Discussing the (J)EDI topic but not necessarily implementing it.

I feel that ECHO is…

> a.   Routinizing EDI (JEDI) as a part of my approach and thinking ✅

While some trainees felt that EDI was a focus in their ECHO experiences, other trainees felt that "there have been many conversations, which is a good start, but I haven't experienced how it [EDI] is being implemented beyond that" or implemented in less-obvious contexts (i.e. how could a team like GECHO have benefitted from GBA+).

"However, I would have liked to learn even more with the other people in the ECHO program on the issue of equity. I did not have the opportunity to deepen or know the current research done by the researchers."

The hierarchical dominance and power dynamics within the ECHO Network are…

a.   A significant issue provoking complaints from trainees throughout the regional cases.

b. Non-existent, there is no hierarchical structure within the ECHO Network.

c.   Often healthy and well-balanced, however sometimes, trainee's may feel as though principal investigators neglect their creative input occasionally.

The hierarchical dominance and power dynamics within the ECHO Network are…

b. Non-existent, there is no hierarchical structure within ECHO. ✅

The majority of trainees have found that the "power dynamics are generally quite healthy" and that "hierarchy can be natural in a workplace." However, at times, principal investigators can be hearing "mostly what they want, or pick up where their brain is already taking them." Further, trainees found that PI's and supervisors were very supportive of mental health and cared about their health and wellbeing.

"having a trainee group…is really helpful in balancing the power dynamics which often exist in large-scale projects [and] gives autonomy to early career individuals who may otherwise be given less decision-making power in other projects."

In comparison to previous and/or other employment, I feel like working with the ECHO Network…

a. Created an aversion of members ever wanting to work with a team again because it has been predominantly stressful.

b. Helped members improve their ability to operate in team environments and interact with multiple different folks from various disciplines and backgrounds.

c. Encouraged members to interact with fellow colleagues and researchers due to a balanced workload and valuing relationships and connections within the team.

In comparison to previous and/or other employment, I feel like working with the ECHO Network…

a. Created an aversion of members ever wanting to work with a team again because it has been predominantly stressful. ✅

While some acknowledge that the initial shift of working in such an interdisciplinary environment comes with its challenges, trainees found that this employment opportunity has taught them valuable lessons when working in a team to reach a common goal. There was also a "a strong sense of community and teamwork within our case study and within the broader ECHO network."

"There is less guidance and clear direction provided compared to all of my non-academic work. It seems like there is a forgotten orientation gap between the people who are doing a masters project who receive that guidance outside of the work/team structure, and people hired on to otherwise work on ECHO work."

We wish that …

a. We better understood the influences and impacts of the E-C-H nexus and how to apply a tri-lens.

b. We leveraged less reductionist approaches

c. The environment lens was more integrated into ECHO work and further developed like the community and health lenses.

We wish that …

> b. We leveraged less reductionist approaches ✅

Trainees highly value the holistic approaches leveraged within the network! "Working with ECHO's interdisciplinary team has drastically improved my understanding of environment, community, health, as I now have a better understanding of the benefits (and challenges) of incorporating qualitative and quantitative methodologies when looking at environment and community health."

"Although the development of this type of lens is an individual experience, there may be ways that the Network could have better facilitated or encouraged this learning."

We have gained…

a. Experience with tools and processes from other fields than my educational background (e.g. GIS tools, arts-based and narrative tools)

b. A network of people who I can reach out to in the future and next career steps

c. Skills for chairing/facilitating meetings, organizing and coordinating meeting agendas and presenting at conferences

We have gained..

b. A network of people who I can reach out to in the future and next career steps ✅

While most trainees have come to know their regional case groups quite well and despite working with others from across the Network in ECHO teams there is still some distance between ECHO Network members. Having member profiles would have been helpful to understand everyone's background, their current affiliations, and other working groups and would help to know who to contact or reach out to for advice/opportunities without needing to ask others in the regional case team like the research lead.

ECHO as a whole was fairly successful in "taking notice for action" of issues related to:

A. Traditional ecological knowledge/Indigenous knowledge systems

B. Non-violent direct actions across Canada related to resource development

C. Cumulative impacts of resource extraction on rural/remote and Indigenous peoples.

B. Non-violent direct actions across Canada related to resource development ✅

During the span of ECHO, two significant acts of civil disobedience went largely unnoticed by the ECHO Network as a whole.

- Ongoing old-growth logging protests in the Fairy Creek watershed on Vancouver Island (over 1000 arrested) and smaller sister protests in other watersheds across BC.
- Ongoing TMX pipeline protests throughout BC and across Canada (many arrested, including Dr. Tim Takaro of the ECHO Network)

The ECHO Network…

A. Is fully bilingual

B. Encourages cross-sectoral discussions

C. Works a lot with youth to address the issue of climate change.

A. Is fully bilingual ✅

The ECHO network is not a fully bilingual network although it does encourage bilingualism. During the different meetings some trainees expressed frustration with the language as some only spoke French. This played a big role in their participation in the different network events as most of the activities we had were only in English.Trainees also had difficulty collaborating and bonding with other trainees because of the language barrier. The language issue is therefore an important point to raise in the next ECHO activities.