



Reclaiming My Language: A Course for Silent Speakers 2018-19 Call for Expressions of Interest

The *Reclaiming My Language Program* will be launched in September 2019. However, there will be a limited number of courses held during the pilot phase in 2018-19. The FPCC welcomes expressions of interest from community members who are interested in hosting a pilot course in early 2019.

Application Deadline

Expressions of interest can be submitted at any time but letters received by **November 19, 2018** will be considered for potential pilot courses in early 2019. Please email expressions of interest to:

Suzanne Gessner, Research & Development Linguist suzanne@fpcc.ca

Subject line: Reclaiming My Language Program

Course background

The First Peoples' Cultural Council (FPCC) *Reclaiming My Language* course is for people who understand but do not speak their First Nations language. The course is based on a successful program that was developed in Norway and Sweden for and by Indigenous Sami people. The model uses Cognitive Behaviour Therapy (CBT) to support silent speakers to overcome blockages about using their Indigenous language in their communities. The course runs for 10 weeks for 2-3 hours each week. Each class consists of a CBT lesson and a general language topic, such as how children and adults differ in learning a language. In addition, participants will share their feelings about speaking their language and will discuss their weekly homework assignments. The course also offers an internship opportunity for participants to volunteer in a community language program, such as in a daycare.

Who is a silent speaker?

A silent speaker is someone who has a good understanding of a language but does not speak it. There are many different kinds of silent speakers. Here are some examples:

- residential school survivors who spoke their language before attending school.
- people who grew up hearing a language and understand it but do not speak it.
- people who grew up with a fluent grandparent in the home and understand the language but do not speak it.
- people who have studied extensively and have developed a high level of ability in reading and writing their language but do not speak it.



- speakers who moved away from the community for some time and do not feel comfortable speaking now that they have moved back.
- speakers who speak a different dialect of the same language and do not feel comfortable speaking within a community where another dialect is more common.
- speakers who simply haven't spoken for years because they haven't really had anyone to speak with.

Other terms used for silent speakers include understanders, latent speakers or receptive bilinguals.

Who is NOT a silent speaker?

- a new language learner.
- language learners with beginner or intermediate language proficiency.
- someone who lost their language abilities due to stroke or other health issues.
- a speaker who can speak comfortably in most situations.

Expression of interest

If your community is potentially interested in hosting a *Reclaiming My Language* course, please submit a letter expressing your interest in the program. Your letter should include the following information:

1. Why do you think the *Reclaiming My Language* course is a good fit for your community?
2. There are 10 silent speaker participants in each course. Each participant is paired with a fluent mentor. In your letter, please indicate whether you could recruit 10 potential participants and 5-10 fluent mentors. (Neighbouring communities can be included.)
3. The course requires a **Co-Instructor Mental Health Specialist** who will be the main facilitator of the course. S/he must have recognized certification (e.g. psychologist, social worker, certified counsellor, etc.) and have experience with Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT). Ideally, s/he is located in the community or within a reasonable travel distance from the community. Crucially, the course needs to have a Co-Instructor Mental Health Specialist. Your community will have a greater chance of hosting the course if you can help us identify a certified mental health specialist who is familiar with CBT. In your letter, please list the names of some potential applicants for this role.
4. Please indicate whether your community has potential internship opportunities for participants to volunteer in a community language program, such as in a daycare.

For more information: Contact Suzanne at suzanne@fpcc.ca