



# Demographics of Be Heard Users

How can we increase participation from diverse voices?

# Context

- No consistent data on engagement participants' demographics prior to launch of Be Heard (late 2020)
- Growth of Be Heard registration is ongoing
  - Our observation: primary motivation is desire to share input on a topic of direct impact or interest
- Ongoing challenges with tracking demographics of in-person participants

# Current practice

Demographics collected at Be Heard registration:

- Postal code (neighbourhood distribution)
- Connections to New West (housing tenure, workers, business owners, etc.)
- Year of birth (age group)
- **Optional** additional info (select all that apply):
  - Identify as Indigenous
  - Identify as person of colour and/or part of racialized group
  - Identify as LGBTQ2S+
  - Born outside Canada
  - Moved to Canada within last 5 years
  - English is not first language – *new answer option added in 2022*
  - Low-income household / affordability challenges – *new; added 2022*
  - Children (under age 18) in household
  - Seniors in household
  - I or someone in household has a disability



# Analysis with 2021 Census

- Reviewed aggregated demographics of **3,458 registered\* Be Heard users** as of February 27, 2023
- Compared with **closest comparable** Census measure
- Focusing on a **few key stats** today – areas of concern, and where representation is good



Statistics  
Canada

Statistique  
Canada

\*participant list corrected to remove admin accounts, staff, pending activations, etc.

# Limitations of the data



- Be Heard demographics are **self-reported** and some may be false / incomplete
- Be Heard demographics are entered once at sign-up and **may be outdated**
  - We're trying to mitigate this with annual "spring cleaning" reminders to make updates
- Some Be Heard demographic questions **don't exactly match** the wording / approach of Census
- This data **only captures online** participants (no in-person)
  - Intercept / pop-up engagement (going where people are) is a **key tool** in reaching more diverse voices

# A few key findings

## Tenants / renters

45%

2021 Census, New Westminster

24%

Be Heard users

## Age 19 and under

16%

2021 Census (includes infants and young children)

1%

Be Heard users

# Racialized / person of colour

47%

2021 Census, "visible minority"

12%

Be Heard users



# Indigenous

3.1%

2021 Census

2.5%

Be Heard users

## Age 65 and over

16%

2021 Census

16%

Be Heard users

# Children in the household

20%

2021 Census

31%

Be Heard users (potential for multiple users in same household reporting)

# Recent and ongoing outreach

- Summer 2022 **pop-ups** promoting Be Heard
  - 17+ locations across New West
  - Connected with 450+ people
- **Youth Elections Ambassador** program
  - Follow-up meetings with ambassadors, ongoing relationships
- **CAN New West** (Community Action Network)
  - Ongoing engagement and relationships with people with lived experience of poverty
- City Hall visits / tours with **newcomers**
  - Partnership with Welcome Centre and Mosaic
  - Planning to offer tours regularly



# Let's discuss...



- What stands out to you from the data?
- Thoughts and reflections?
- Recognizing there is deeper, systemic, organization- and society-wide work to do – addressing systemic racism, history of exclusion, etc. – do you have any thoughts on additional efforts to increase participation from more diverse voices?