

BRAID-JC / JCAAP Annual Report 2025



Happy Holidays!

Thanks to the generous support of our collaborators and partners, 2025 was a full and productive year for our project. This report offers a brief glimpse into our activities and accomplishments over the past year. We sincerely appreciate your continued support and wish you all the very best in the year ahead.

** BRAID-JC (Bridging Resilience<->Resistance Across Inter/Intra-Community Dialogues) is a research project by JCAAP (Japanese Canadian Arts and Activism Project), Factor-Inwentash Faculty of Social Work, University of Toronto, led by Izumi Sakamoto.



JCAAP team members (March 2025): from front left -- Lisa Toi, Ai Yamamoto, Yuya Keyaki; back left - Izumi Sakamoto, Sofia Callaghan, Mitsuko Noguchi, Momo Ando, Izumi Niki (Not pictured here include: Viveka Ichikawa; Boomba Nishikawa; Marie Tomeoki-Downton, who worked until April 2025; Hana Greenberg, who joined JCAAP in October 2025)



Data Collection & Analysis

50+ Shin-Ijuusha Women	Youth (18-30)	Seniors (65+)
<p>Focus: Data analysis, knowledge dissemination</p> <p>The research with Shin Ijuusha women in their 50s and 60s were originally conducted with Tonari Gumi (report found here).</p> <p>Conducted additional interviews with Japanese immigrant women who have experienced gender-based discrimination in Japan with a funding by GATE.</p> <p>Analyzed the aggregated data (40 participants) and presented findings in conferences.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Cultural negotiation process <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Uncertain about their future and mostly unprepared for their senior years ○ Effects of Immobility: Japan’s mono-citizenship Policy ○ Cultural negotiation effort at individual levels ● Underlying legacy of imperialism ● Large impact of language barrier and accent 	<p>Focus: Data analysis, knowledge dissemination, writing</p> <p>In total, we had 30 participants in our focus groups and interviews conducted, of which most of them identified as having mixed (racial/ethnic) backgrounds.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Sofia Callaghan (Gosei, mixed background) has been analyzing the mixed-identity and writing a paper using the analogy of “wayfinding.” ● Boomba Nishikawa (Yonsej, mixed-background) with a UTEA fellowship (2024), has been writing a paper about the influence of the “Cool Japan Policy” on Japanese Canadian identity. ● The Team will move into further analysis focusing on other themes (e.g., intersectionality of queer identity, language, cultural mixed-ness, activism). 	<p>Focus: Data collection & initial data analysis</p> <p>With the generous support from Tonari Gumi and two other JC community groups, we conducted 3 focus groups and 3 individual interviews with 18 seniors in total.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 3 focus groups (15 people): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 1 focus group in Toronto ○ 2 focus groups in Vancouver ● 3 individual interviews with seniors in Toronto ● Out of 18 participants: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 14 Shin-Ijuusha in Japanese language interviews/focus groups ○ 4 Nisei & Sansei in English interviews/focus groups <p>We were touched by the resiliency of the seniors and various contributions that they have made to the JC and local communities over the years, as well as stories of discrimination and hardships that they experienced .</p> <p>More data collection to follow. in 2026</p>

In addition to exploring themes within each population of focus groups and interviews, the team is exploring the **themes that cut across all three focus group populations**. For example, language barriers, importance of family, enough-ness, and difficult finding spaces to talk/share about Japanese/Japanese Canadian-ness, as well as the conditions in which bridge-building efforts were successful within the diverse JC community.

Knowledge Mobilization (Presentations)

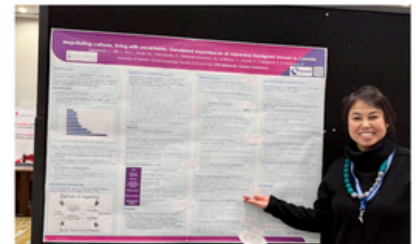
Conference Presentations



2025-03 GATE



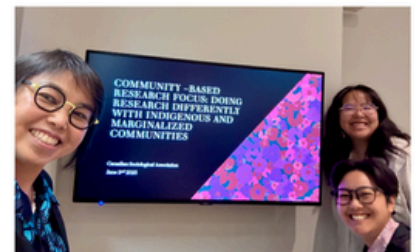
2025-06 CSA Presentation 2



2025-03 Metropolis



2025-01 SSWR



2025-06 CSA Presentation 1

Pictured above include: Izumi Niki, Yuya Keyaki, Izumi Sakamoto, Viveka Ichikawa, Momo Ando & Ai Yamamoto

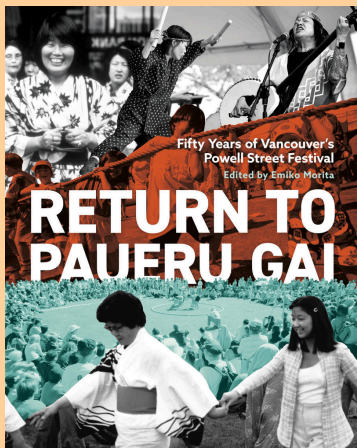
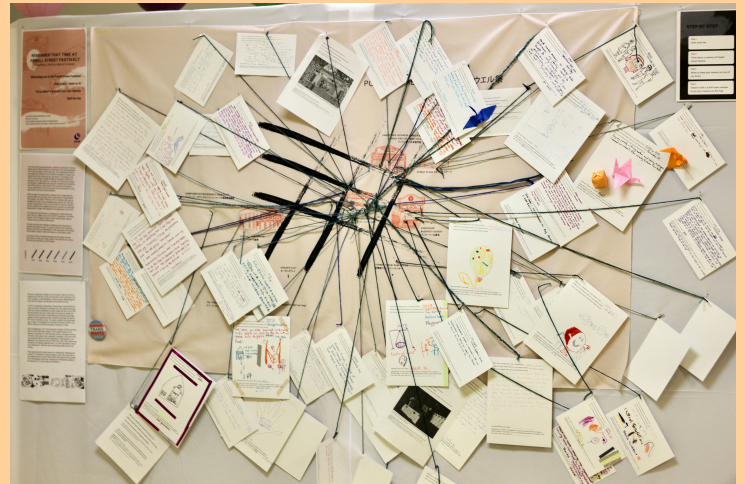
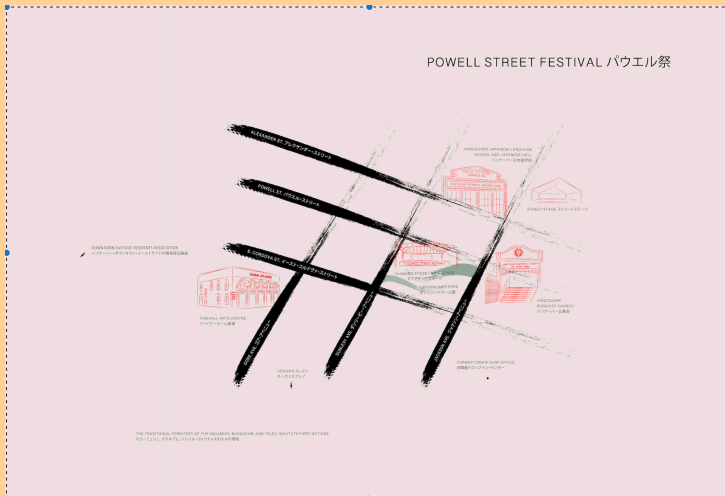
Conference	Presentation
<p>Roundtable at Society for Social Work and Research Conference:</p> <p>January 15-19, 2025</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>Cultural negotiation among Japanese immigrant women in Canada: Power dynamics, social location and shadows of imperialism</i> (Izumi Niki & Izumi Sakamoto) ○ <i>Mixed JC Youth: Wayfinding in the borderlands</i> (Sofia Callaghan) ○ <i>“Cool Japan” and Japanese Canadian identity</i> (Boomba Nishikawa) ○ <i>Beyond stereotypes: Exploring the lives of mixed-race Japanese women in Canada through critical feminism and intersectionality</i> (Viveka Ichikawa) ○ <i>Making connections as (subtle) resistance through JCAAP</i> (Izumi Sakamoto & Momo Ando)
<p>Poster at 27th Metropolis Canada Conference:</p> <p>March 13-15, 2025</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>Negotiating cultures, living with uncertainty: Gendered experiences of Japanese immigrant women in Canada</i> (Izumi Sakamoto, Izumi Niki, Lisa Toi, Momo Ando, Yuya Keyaki)
<p>Research Roundtable on the Gender and the Economy:</p> <p>April 28, 2025</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>Escaping Inequity: Gender, migration, and socio-economic pathways of Japanese women and non-binary migrants in Canada</i> (Izumi Sakamoto, Izumi Niki, Yuya Keyaki)
<p>Presentations at Canadian Sociological Association Conference:</p> <p>June 3, 2025</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>Transformative Research: Japanese Canadian Identity, Resistance, and community-building through JCAAP</i> (Izumi Sakamoto, Momo Ando, Ai Yamamoto) ○ <i>Cultural negotiation among Japanese immigrant women in Canada: Power dynamics, social location and shadows of imperialism</i> (Izumi Niki, Izumi Sakamoto)

50+ Focus Group Data; Youth Focus Group Data; Other Research Data

Other JCAAP Projects

Activities with [Powell Street Festival \(PSF\)](#)

- This year at 49th PSF, JCAAP shared a community table with [Powell Street Festival Society \(PSFS\)](#) helping with the PSFS's 50th anniversary data collection efforts and showcasing the PSF Map Project from 2023 while collecting more PSF memories (shown in pictures below; [Remember that time at Powell Street Festival? — Interactive Mapping Installation](#) and a memory card filled out by Willow Yamauchi.
- Izumi Sakamoto, Ai Yamamoto, and Momo Ando wrote a chapter in the book "[Return to Paueru Gai, celebrating 50 years of Vancouver's Powell Street Festival](#)" (Cover art shown below; to be published in April 2026 - pre-order now to get a 30% discount at the link above!)
- Ai Yamamoto received funding from the [Japanese Canadian Legacy Fund](#) to create a film showcasing the [Salmon BBQ booth](#) at Powell Street Festival.
- Have started thinking through how to disseminate our research findings at the 50th PSF, which will be in August 2026.



What year or decade/year is your memory from? 1990s
Where at Powell Street Festival is your memory from? childrens area
Tell us your memory/story from Powell Street Festival:
My daughter, Sophie Yamauchi came here as a toddler and played with the balloons and ate salmon. Every August she was thrilled to go to Powell Street. Imagine how proud we are now she is the E.D. of the festival!
(optional) What's your name? Willow Yamauchi
(optional) Do you have roots/ancestry in what is colonially known as Japan or Ryūkyū islands or Ainu Mosir? If yes, what generation/sedai do you identify with? (e.g. Issei, shin-nisei, gosei etc.) _____



University of Toronto Excellence Award (UTEA) Project

- Yuya Keyaki, who received a University of Toronto Excellence Award (UTEA) in 2025, has been working on a multilingual (Japanese and English) project that shares about *Japanese Canadians for Social Justice (JCSJ)*, the *Hummingbird Project*, and the *Earth Spirit Festival (1991 and 1993)*.
 - This research will be shared through social media posts, as well as a written piece.

Featuring the
Japanese Canadian
Groups Work in
Solidarity

Hummingbird Project

ハミングバード
プロジェクト

A group aims to raise awareness in
colonialism, the DTES and Nikkei history

植民地主義、バンクーバーダウンタウンイース
トサイド地域、そして日系人の歴史についての
認識を高めるために活動する団体

IG: @hummingbird_project_2024

連帯して活動する
日系カナダ人団体

Mitsuko Noguchi's Film Series

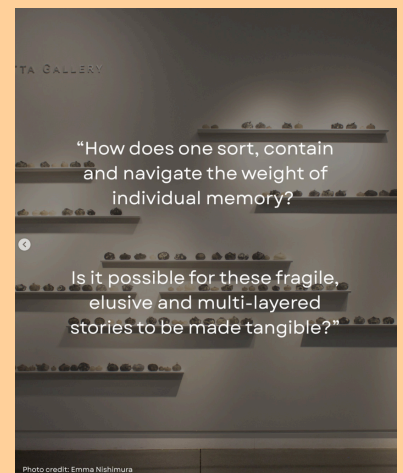
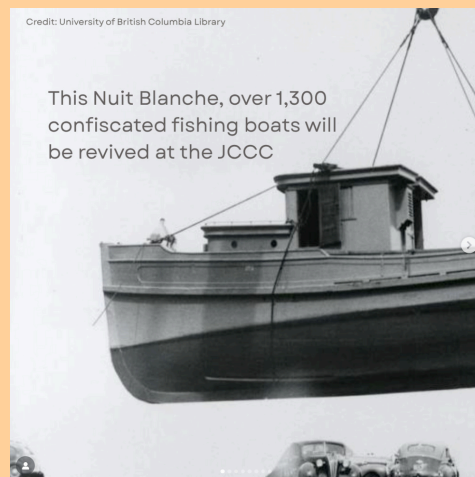
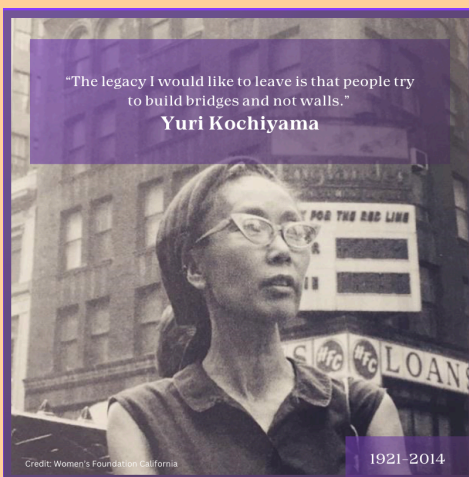
- [Mitsuko Noguchi](#) (a 2023 UTEA Fellow with JCAAP and undergraduate student in design at UofT) created a film series called *Grab Your Senbei* that explored different areas of the Japanese Canadian community (taiko, Japanese Canadian artists, PSF, Japanese Canadian history, and mixed heritage).
 - The launch happened on March 7th, 2025 at the Factor-Inwentash Faculty of Social Work, UofT.
 - See the videos on our website here! [Grab Your Senbei](#).



Pictured above include JCAAP team members, participants of the event, and Vidya Elango and Karen Suzuki from Japanese Canadian Cultural Centre's (JCCC) Sedai Project on the bottom right.

Social Media Activity

- Lisa Toi has been creating and posting on [JCAAP's Instagram](#) to:
 - promote the work of JCAAP (e.g., audiograms capturing the voices of Sansei activists);
 - highlight artists and their work, and to promote upcoming events/launches across Canada (e.g., shown below centre is the “[The Shape of Loss](#)” performance installation by [Louise Noguchi](#); shown below right is the *Collected Stories* by [Emma Nishimura](#));
 - showcase Japanese Canadian and Japanese American female activists.



What is the impact of JCAAP on youth researchers?

- One of the original aims of the BRAID-JC project was to “engage JC youths in research training, leadership development and knowledge mobilization as Youth Research Fellows”.
- The current JCAAP team is composed of mostly JC youth, including Shin-Nisei (Ai Yamamoto, Momo Ando, Lisa Toi), Yonsei (Boomba Nishikawa) and Gosei (Sofia Callaghan) along with newcomers from Japan (Yuya Keyaki & Hana Greenberg, as of Oct. 2025).
- As such, we started to explore what being part of JCAAP (which is a community-based participatory research, in which the researchers may share the same/overlapping identities with the people being researched) has meant for youth team members:
 - Presented this topic at the *Society for Social Work and Research (SSWR)* conference in Seattle in January and at the *Canadian Sociological Association (CSA)* conference in June in Toronto.
- Questions being explored:
 - What has being part of JCAAP meant for you?
 - What is the significance of a community-based participatory project like JCAAP for youth researchers, particularly one in which Japanese Canadian youth conduct research with other Japanese Canadian youth?
 - What has been the impact of JCAAP on research participants? (Several youth participants explicitly noted their appreciation for having a project like this.)
 - How has participation in JCAAP influenced identity exploration among youth researchers?



Wordcloud above was created by JCAAP Youth Researchers.

In 2025, JCAAP Team continued to attend community events related to Japanese Canadian communities, including the ones shown below and other online events.



"The Gate of Memory" Toronto Launch With Mona Oikawa (Izumi S & Boomba)



At Louise Noguchi's Nuit Blanche performance installation, "The Shape of Loss" at JCCC. Pictured in the centre: Mitsuko Noguchi who was the endurance performer/drawer for this installation.



With artist, Ayumi Goto (2nd from left) in front of her collaboration art piece at the *Interwoven Identities: Navigating Beyond the Surface* exhibit (Ai Yamamoto, furthest right).



"The Asianadian" commemoration event (Nov. 2025) at Toronto Reference Library with Terry Watada (left) & Lynn Kutsukake (above)



Toronto Showing of the documentary, *Between Pictures: The Legend of Tamio Wakayama* at JCCC. Speakers: Cindy Mochizuki (dir.) and Mayumi Takasaki (filmed)



"Forgiveness" star, Yoshie Bankloft (centre) at the Stratford Festival

Attending JC-Related Events in the Community



Setsuko Thurlow at the Hiroshima Nagasaki Commemoration event marking 80th anniversary of the atomic bombs, at the Peace Garden, Toronto (August 6, 2025)



Pictured also are Yuya Keyaki (L), Izumi S. and Lisa Toi (R) on the picture above right.

New Developments & Next Steps for 2026

Archives:

- Earlier this year, Izumi Sakamoto was invited to serve on the Advisory Committee for the [Sedai Project](#) at the Japanese Canadian Cultural Centre (Sedai Project collects, documents, preserves and shares the history of Japanese Canadians), leading to ongoing informal conversations with the Sedai Team throughout the year.
- Separately, Ai Yamamoto, a long-serving JCAAP researcher, has long been advocating for the creation of archives that foreground perspectives from the “margins” of the Japanese Canadian community—perspectives that we believe are already partially captured through our current research and accumulated database.

Next Steps:

- Building on recent developments, the JCAAP team is exploring ways to bring together several shared interests in the coming years, including drawing on archival materials, engaging youth & intergenerational JC community members, and further analyzing and disseminating knowledge from our accumulated database.
- Continuing data analysis and knowledge dissemination through academic, community, and social media channels, including a session for an inter-group community dialogue.
- Envisioning a new phase of the project that builds on insights generated through the current research.





Contact information

Thank you for reading our report. We look forward to discussing these and more updates from our project in early 2026. Hope to work with you more in the coming year!

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