CHARLENE SANJENKO

Founder, Indigenous Storyteller, Impact Producer, and Intuitive Media Visionary | Social Impact & Inclusive Innovation Entrepreneur since 2000 | Former two-term municipal politician | Sunshine Coast, the traditional territory of the Squamish (skwxwú7mesh) First Nations, BC

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Charlene SanJenko is a two-time Indigenous founder, former two-term elected official, and nationally recognized leader in cultural storytelling, program innovation, and community-based economic development. A proud Splatsin woman of the Secwépemc (Shuswap) Nation, she lives in the Pacific North West region on the Sunshine Coast within the traditional territory of the Sḵwx̱wú7mesh people, while working regularly across Canada, Seattle, and Mexico.

With over two decades of experience advancing women's leadership, Indigenous innovation, and impact-focused programs, Charlene brings deep expertise in building teams, growing movements, and designing systems that unlock human potential with a specific focus in the creative industry. She began her career in Canada's investment sector, leading national marketing and communications for 18 offices before shifting into entrepreneurship with a long-term commitment to inclusive innovation and transformative narrative change.

Charlene is a sought-after storyteller, facilitator, and strategist known for cultivating cross-sector partnerships, developing strengths-based artist-creator training programs, and empowering historically underrecognized voices to shape cultural narratives. Her work sits at the intersection of well-being, creative mobilization, ecosystem-design, and impact-driven media-technology, grounded in an Indigenous lens that prioritizes cultural integrity, agency, and systemic healing.

In addition to her entrepreneurial leadership, Charlene serves as the Lead Storyteller helping to launch The Fireweed Institute, a national Indigenous-led Centre of Excellence for Indigenous Entrepreneurship and Innovation. Her role supports the launch of this new national non-profit, including the development of narrative frameworks, program strategy, and movement-building initiatives that strengthen economic sovereignty and creative power for Indigenous communities across Canada.

Charlene believes cultural storytelling amplified through modern media and regenerative practices is one of the most powerful tools we have to shift public imagination, build collective power, and transform the systems that shape our future.

MEET CHARLENE SANJENKO: SPEAKER'S REEL | READY TO RISE

EXPERIENCE

2025 Contract The Fireweed Institute, Lead Storyteller supporting all areas of a new national non-profit with impactful storytelling, narrative design, and public-facing communications.

2021-Present *reGEN impact media*, Media-Tech Founder, Executive + Impact Producer, Indigenous Storyteller & Filmmaker, Media Visionary, Facilitator, Program Development, Fundraising, unceded territory of the Sḵwx̱wú7mesh Nation, BC

2013-Present *PowHERhouse Impact Network*, Founder, Publisher, Speaker, Trainer/Facilitator, Impact-First Storytelling, Content & Curriculum Developer, Team Leadership & Development, Events Producer, Sunshine Coast, BC

Strategically Leading Acknowledgements, Key Collaborations, Partnerships, and Projects

- 2025 MIT Solve Challenge Semifinalist
- 2025 Top 25 Women in Tech - Toast/Betakit
- 2024 Yale Innovation Summit - invited pitch presenter
- 2024 Coralus Venture
- 2024: Invest Vancouver: Impact Visioning & Facilitation for team clarity and cohesion
- 2024: Pacific Institute for Climate Solutions: Impact-First Storytelling & Narrative Design
- 2024: SVX Invest for Impact: Community-Building and Liaison between impact investors and Indigenous entrepreneurs to move more private capital in a good way
- 2021/2024: Indigenous Innovation Initiative: Impact Amplification & Digital Storytelling celebrating Indigenous innovation
- 2024: Seeds of Wisdom: Impact Visioning and Strategic Board-Level Facilitation
- 2024: Revolutionary Woman Global: Hosting online circles (PowHERcircles), programs (HER Global Challenge), and hybrid events focused on women's growth, healing, leadership, and capacity-building

EDUCATION & TRAINING

2025 Global Affairs International Business Accelerator for Indigenous Business
Mosaic Founder Accelerator for Non-Tech Founders

2024 Microsoft GTM Momentum Accelerator

2022-2023 Hands-on Mentorship & Best Practice Learning in Relational Filmmaking with Liz Marshall, LizMars Productions, BC

2021-2022 16-week Screenwriting Mentorship with Naomi McDougall Jones, BC

2020 Dramaturg training with Nicolle Nattrass for Feed the Fire one-woman show (See Exhibition Work below)

2013-2014 SFU Community Economic Development Certificate Program

2011-2018 Two-Term Municipal Councillor, Town of Gibsons, BC

1995-1997 Canadian Securities Course

SPEAKING EVENTS, TEACHING, LECTURES, AND FACILITATION

2025 WeCan Entrepreneurs' Network - International Women's Day Forum 2025

2024 Yale Innovation Summit
Impact United: Taking Steps in BC
Story Money Impact: Senior Artist, Curriculum Development & Facilitation
HER Global Challenge: Co-Facilitator, Curriculum Development
Impact Visioning Circles: Lead Facilitator

2023 HILTI North America Indigenous ERG, Virtual Keynote

2023 The Impact Investing Podcast Episode 49: Building the field of regenerative media. Kind Wealth, David O'Leary. Podcast.

2023 Indigenous Day of Learning, Advocis Financial Advisors Association, Bear Mountain Resort, Victoria, BC. Keynote.

2022 International Women's Day, Indigenous Learnings. Government of Saskatchewan, Virtual Keynote.

2022 *PodCatalyst Episode 31: Charlene SanJenko on Brands That Shift to Lift.* Catalyst. Podcast.

2020/2021 Impact Producer / Lead Facilitator: Indigenous Innovation Initiative. Impact Amplification, Digital Storytelling, Virtual Fundraising Event, Group Facilitation

2018-2021 Impact Producer / Lead Facilitator: HILTI. Emerging Leader Amplification, Digital Storytelling, Event(s) Partnership

2019 All-Island Entrepreneurial Summit. Bear Mountain Resort, Victoria, BC. Keynote.

2018 SPEAK! Canada. Edwards School of Business, University of Saskatchewan. Curriculum Development, Training, & Facilitation.

2018 *RavenSPEAK:* Ready to Rise. Public Speaker.

IMPACT PRODUCTION PROJECTS / IMPACT STORYTELLING

2025 *IMPACT STORYTELLING & NARRATIVE DESIGN.* In support of the rural & remote community climate resilience project

GAME ON! Interactive Series. A reGEN Original production in development.

THE POWHERHOUSE PLAYBOOK. 52-week journal in development.

2024 *NIKA & The FireDancer.* reGEN impact media. feature film script under development. (Indigenous Impact Producer)

The Story of Us. Seasonal Digital Media Arts Publication. (Writer/Publisher)
PowHER TV Season 2. reGEN impact media. Unscripted episodic series under development. (Executive/Impact Producer)

#MoreFromMedia Regenerative Storytelling Playbook. Book proposal

2023 *s-yéwyáw: Awaken.* LizMars Productions, BC - (Featured participant, Writer, Co-Producer) [production funded by Telus originals]

2023 *Coming Home.* reGEN impact media., BC (Featured participant, Writer, Co-Producer, Indigenous Impact Producer)

2023 *In Conversation with Kukpi7 Wayne Christian, limited podcast series.* reGEN impact media., BC (Co-Host, Co-Producer, Indigenous Impact Producer)

2023 *Hammond Castle.* Naomi McDougall Jones, USA, Brave Jayne Films and Blue Firefly Films (Indigenous Impact Producer)

2015-2020 *500 Days in the Wild.* Rebel Sister Productions. (Early-Development Impact Producer, Event Producer, Relational Fundraiser)

SCREENINGS / FESTIVALS

s-yéwyáw: Awaken. 2023 Hot Docs Festival. (Co-Producer) Toronto, Ontario

Coming Home. Sechelt Arts Festival. (Filmmaker) Sunshine Coast, British Columbia

PRODUCTION CREDITS

2025 *The Fireweed Institute* launch video. (Director & Producer)

2023 *Auntie Whispers.* reGEN impact media., BC (Director & Producer)

2021 *How Healing Happens.* reGEN impact media | D. Vermeulen
Engagement video, podcast series & digital toolkit (Co-Director & Producer)

2021 *Paddling Together*. reGEN impact media | D. Vermeulen
Video learning, (Featured Artist, Co-Director & Producer)

Sweet Grass, Braiding for Better. reGEN impact media | D. Vermeulen
Video learning, (Featured Artist, Co-Director & Producer)

2020 *Feed the Fire Promotional Video.* PowHERhouse Impact Network,
Sunshine Coast, BC, (produced, written and performed)

EVENTS AND MEDIA EXPERIENCES

2020-2023 *GATHER for HER, (podcast seasons 1-7).* PowHERhouse Impact Network,
Sunshine Coast BC, (producer and co-writer)

2018-2019 *Western Canada Impact Accelerator*, PowHERhouse Impact Network, Regina,
SK (producer)

2015-2018 PowHERtalks National Speaker Series, over 200+ women on-stage

2015-2016 PowHER TV series, PowHERhouse and Shaw TV community television
partnership

BIBLIOGRAPHY & MEDIA

Business Woman of the Month. SME Indigenous Magazine, August 2023

At the 2023 Hot Docs Festival, our Works-in-Progress Screenings highlighted six innovative international projects presented by Hot Docs alumni talent. Hot Docs, 2023

7 Celebrations series continues at Vernon's SilverStar Mountain Resort. Handschuh, D. Castanet, February 1, 2023

2022 BIPOC Founder Showcase. Disruption The BIPOC Issue, December 2022.

Indigenous creators partner on doc to share traditional teachings. Babiera, A. Playback, October 3, 2022

New initiative helps Indigenous People reconnect with community, culture. Garcha, G. Global News, September 30, 2022

Indigenous and Settler Filmmakers Collaborate on ELDERS' PROJECT. a Telus original press release, September 30, 2022

After connecting with her home, Splatsin member wants to help others. Wind Speaker, July 4, 2022

reGEN project, Our Nation Heals, to launch this fall in Splatsin. Handschuh, D. Coast Reporter, June 28, 2022

Media has the power to shift the trajectory of our future': Gibsons entrepreneur launches a new media company. Beairsto, B. Coast Reporter, May 2, 2022

Two Sunshine Coast women nominated for distinction awards. Coast Reporter, March 7, 2022. PowHERTV. PowHERhouse, 2021

Will Your Business Shift? Marketing News Canada, 2021

Funding push on for Dianne Whelan film. Jespersen, R. Coast Reporter, October 16, 2020

Canadian Filmmaker Partners with CPAWS to Keep Canada Wild. CPAWS SNAP partnership announcement, 2020

TED Talks-Style Women's Series Kicks Off in Nanaimo, BC October 24th. Cision PRWeb

SanJenko nominated as woman of distinction. Wood, C. Coast Reporter, May 1, 2014

PUBLICATIONS

The Story of Us. Published by PowHERhouse in partnership with reGEN impact media, amplifying the emerging sector of regenerative media, Seasonal starting Spring 2024.

Harnessing the Power of Influence. International Association of Business Communicators, September 2024. Industry article.

Brand Allyship is Our Play for Expansive Impact. International Association of Business Communicators, February 2024. Industry article.

Freeway to Fat Loss. Sunshine Coast, BC, PowHERhouse, 2012. Amazon.

PowHERhouse digital magazines. 12 issues, 2017. PowHERhouse
Impact Media Group (wrote and published)

Charlene SanJenko: Media is a mirror of the reality we want. Coast Reporter, undated. News article.

RECOGNITION, SCHOLARSHIPS, GRANTS AND AWARDS

2024 Coralus Venture

2023 First People's Cultural Council Arts Strengthening

2023 Indigenous Capacity-Building Grant, United Way, May 2023

2023 Indigenous Healing & Community Safety, Civil BC, Province of BC, May 2023,

2022 Investment Readiness Program, SPRING Activator, Fall 2022

2022 Blueprint: Backing BIPOC Businesses Program, AMEX/Ryerson, August 2022

2021 Indigenous Healing & Community Safety, Civil BC, Province of BC, April 2021

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS

Current Member of the Canadian Women's Network, Scroobious Founders Community, Social Venture Institute, and International Coralus

2020-2022 Founder of a collective called the *Turtle Island Creative Impact Coalition* for Indigenous and non-Indigenous artists and filmmakers across Turtle Island