



### *Project Summary*

**Background:** People who face structural barriers to health and social equity are disproportionately engaged with and impacted by the criminal justice system (CJS). Many often experience complex co-occurring challenges, such as low educational attainment, food and housing insecurity, unemployment, and substance use. In Canada, while more research is needed to address health and social outcomes in correctional institutions, there is an even greater need to study the compounding and intersecting inequities beyond the institutional context, including injustices and barriers to health and social wellbeing that result in criminal justice involvement, and intergenerational impacts on families and communities. Research evidence to tackle these issues and the intersecting health and justice inequities sustained through state-based violence and oppression is necessary to enhance the lives of individuals, families and communities who are affected by the CJS.

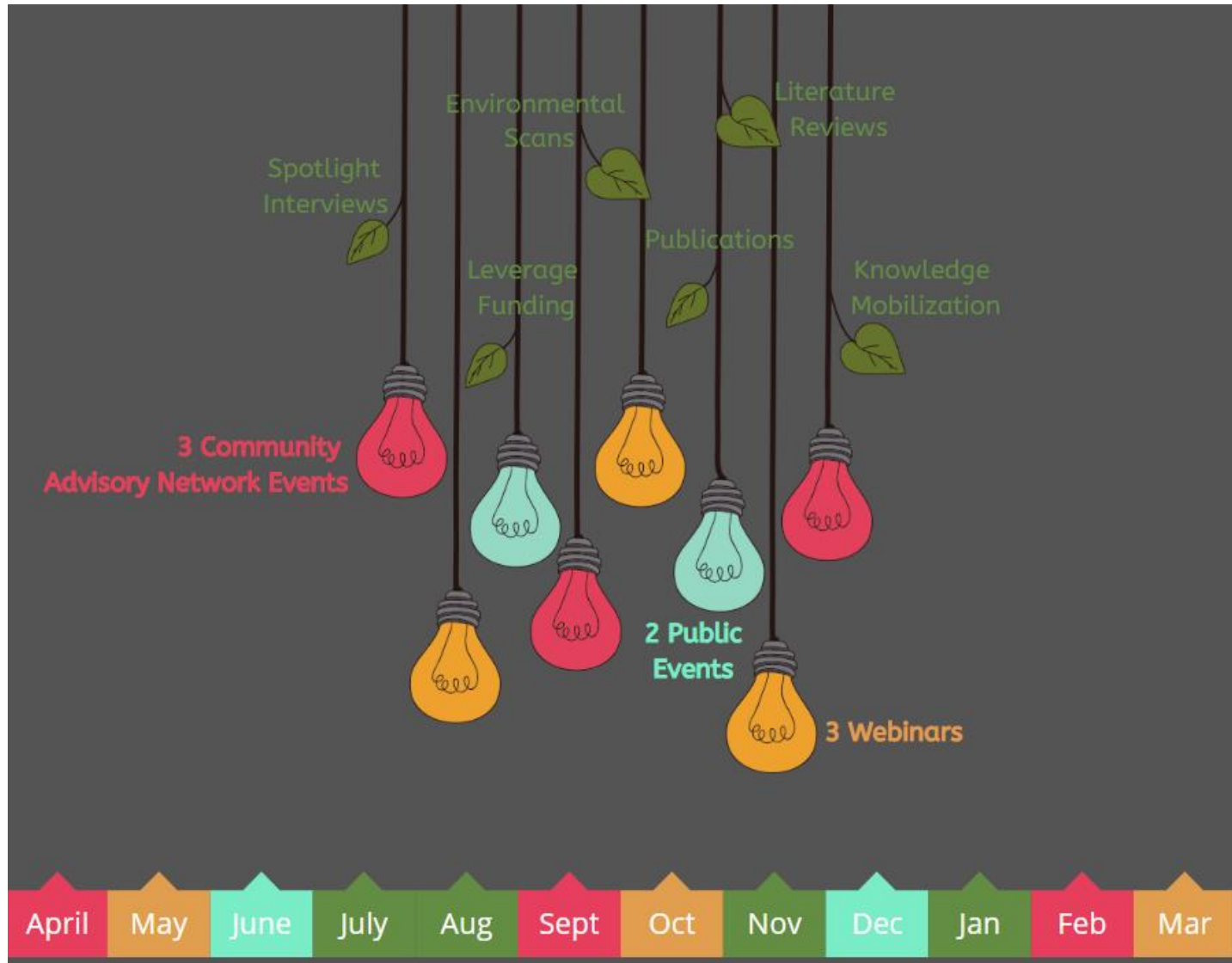
In our initial year of Cluster work (2019), we strategically refined a research agenda with persons, families and communities disproportionately affected by the Canadian CJS. We began to construct knowledge of the priorities held by our growing network of health and justice service providers, interdisciplinary academics, and justice-involved peoples to address the over-representation of Indigenous Peoples and other groups who experience health and social inequities (e.g. gender diverse, neuro-diverse, sexual minority peoples, and people who use substances) in the CJS.

**Aim:** In Year 2, the cluster goals reflect the importance of addressing the ongoing socio-historical (colonial) context that shapes determinants of health and justice. Research on criminal justice and health is typically individualist, behavioural and is often framed in terms of risk and deficit. Less focus is placed on investigating the role of systemic oppression on health and justice in Canada. We will generate a research agenda to be advanced through trans-disciplinary, inter-sectoral, and cross-social, participatory, arts- and strengths-based approaches that center people with lived experience of incarceration to catalyze research activities and policy engagement.

**Transformative Engagement:** Our outcomes achieved in 2019 reflect how justice-involved and Indigenous Peoples are the experts to guide the cluster, dismantling the knowledge hierarchies that persist within the academy and create barriers to their participation. In 2020, we are committed to supporting spaces and relationships that are inclusive, and promote equity and the value of experiences with diverse histories to address the priorities of people disproportionately impacted by the CJS.

**Activities:** Throughout 2020, we will hold three Community Advisory Network events to direct two public events as well as three webinars to move from identifying to formalizing new directions for funded interdisciplinary, intersectoral and Indigenous-led research to extend the impact of Cluster team members' existing programs of research and create evidence for programming and policy action to address intersecting health, social and criminal justice inequities.





Cluster members who have experienced incarceration and/or whose communities (including families) that have been impacted by the Criminal Justice System are offered Honoraria for their time, energy and knowledge at all Cluster Activities attended.

