THE UNIVERSITY OF
WINNIPEG

Guidance for Research with Indigenous Communities and Participants

1.0 Purpose

The purpose of this guideline is to provide information on conducting research involving First Nations, Inuit, and Métis peoples in Canada.

2.0 Background and Resources

Indigenous peoples include those who are First Nation, Inuit, or Métis. The University of Winnipeg recognizes the distinctiveness of all Indigenous communities across Canada and is committed to supporting Indigenous researchers, partnering with Indigenous peoples, and expanding knowledge related to the rights and responsibilities of the peoples in this area. Generally, working with Indigenous groups or on Indigenous land in a good way requires fostering meaningful relationships through trust building. This takes time, sometimes years. There are many ways to work well with Indigenous communities and participants but all require formal consent, and most Indigenous governments and Nations have a formal or informal process for research and engagement consent. Below is a list of resources to start out.

2.1 Guidance on how to engage respectfully in research with Indigenous peoples:

> 2.1.1 University of Manitoba Faculty of Health Sciences' [Framework for Research Engagement with First Nation, Metis, and Inuit Peoples](#)

> 2.1.2 University of Manitoba's [Working in Good Ways: A Framework and Resources for Indigenous Community Engagement](#)

> 2.1.3 Manitoba First Nations Education Resource Centre's [Guidelines for Ethical Research in Manitoba First Nations](#)

> 2.1.4 Assembly of First Nations' [First Nations Ethics Guide on Research and Aboriginal Traditional Knowledge](#)

> 2.1.5 Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami's [National Inuit Strategy on Research](#)

> 2.1.6 National Aboriginal Health Organization's [Principles of Ethical Métis Research](#)

> 2.1.7 First Nations Information Governance Centre's [The First Nations Principles of OCAP](#)

> 2.1.8 Ontario Federation of Indigenous Friendship Centres' [USAI Framework](#)

> 2.1.9 CIHR's [Guidelines for Health Research Involving Aboriginal Peoples](#)

> 2.1.10 Tri-Council Policy Statement 2 (2018) [Chapter 9, Research Involving the First Nations, Inuit and Métis Peoples of Canada](#)

> 2.1.11 3rd Edition of [Toolbox of Research Principles in an Aboriginal Context](#)

2.3 Information about Indigenous peoples in Manitoba

- [Indigenous Organizations in Manitoba](#)

- [Pulling Together: Manitoba Foundations Guide](#)
- [Treaties in Manitoba](#)

2.4 Resources on Canadian Indigenous priorities, politics, and histories, written from the perspective of responding to settler questions about Indigenous research and issues:

Joseph, B. (2018). *21 Things You May Not Know About The Indian Act: Helping Canadians Make Reconciliation With Indigenous Peoples A Reality*. Page Two Books.

Manuel, A. & Derrickson, R. M. (2021). Unsettling Canada: A National Wake-up Call. 2nd ed. Between the Lines.

Tuck, E., & Yang, K. W. (2012). Decolonization is not a metaphor. *Decolonization: Indigeneity, Education & Society, 1*(1): 1-40. https://jps.library.utoronto.ca/index.php/des/article/view/18630/15554.

Vowel, C. (2016). Indigenous Writes: A guide to First Nations, Métis, and Inuit issues in Canada. Portage and Main Press.

3.0 Scope of Indigenous Research

Indigenous research is any research that includes a major Indigenous component, which can include:

3.1 Research conducted on First Nations, Inuit, or Métis lands;

3.2 Projects where Indigenous identity is a criterion for research participation;

3.3 Research that seeks input from participants regarding Indigenous culture, heritage, artifacts, traditional knowledge, or unique characteristics of Indigenous peoples;

3.4 Research in which Indigenous identity or membership in an Indigenous community is used as a variable for the purpose of data analysis;

3.5 Projects where interpretation of data results refers directly to Indigenous communities, peoples, language, history or culture;

3.6 Research that is likely to affect the wellbeing of Indigenous peoples;

3.7 Research focusing on a larger community that is known to include Indigenous people (regardless of their proportion), and where Indigenous-specific conclusions are anticipated; and

3.8 Research involving Indigenous people who comprise a sizeable* proportion of the larger community that is the subject of research even if no Indigenous-specific conclusions will be made.

* While the Tri-Agency does not define "sizeable" in the TCPS 2 (2018), the University Human Research Ethics Board considers "sizeable" to mean what a reasonable person would consider greater than incidental numbers of Indigenous peoples, which will vary on a case-by-case basis.

4.0 Indigenous Research Ethics

4.1 Indigenous peoples and communities have long been subject to historical exploitation by non-Indigenous researchers which has left a lasting legacy of mistrust of research relationships and created a barrier between the Indigenous community and the research community. Breaking this barrier requires fostering meaningful relationships through conducting research in a culturally sensitive manner. Ideally, researchers will be invited to do research, rather than offer to do research. Below are some guidelines to work toward ethical research with Indigenous peoples.

4.2 Before starting any research with Indigenous communities, it is important to make sure your study meets the Four R's of Indigenous Research Ethics (Kirkness & Barnhardt, 1991, "First Nations and Higher Education: The Four Rs—Respect, Relevance, Reciprocity, Responsibility")

4.2.1 Respect – Respect is due regard for Indigenous communities and their worldviews, as well as for the interconnectedness of all relations, including the natural world and elements. This regard includes respect for:

> 1) Indigenous sovereignty and self-determination;
>
> 2) Indigenous knowledges and practices;
>
> 3) Indigenous lands; and
>
> 3) appropriate control over information/knowledge.

4.2.2 Relevance - Is the research closely connected or appropriate to the education, experiences, perspectives, priorities, and ways of knowing, living, and doing in Indigenous communities? Is the research useful and meaningful to the Indigenous community/participants? This relevance includes, but is not limited to:

> 1) careful consideration of how the research is relevant to Indigenous peoples and communities, Indigenous worldviews, and their ways of living and knowing;
>
> 2) appropriate Indigenous research methods and methodologies, including storytelling, sharing circles, and engaging in ceremony to guide the research; and
>
> 3) adherence to research ethics and protocols established by Indigenous communities.

4.2.3 Reciprocity - What are the individual and collective benefits of your research to the peoples and community? Reciprocity must be continuous and intentional to ensure an ongoing exchange of knowledge and benefits. For research with Indigenous peoples and communities, possible benefits could include:

> 1) local hiring/training of members of the Indigenous community as research assistants, data analysts, translators, etc.;
>
> 2) meaningful collaboration with Indigenous stakeholders to design the study from the very beginning (e.g. ensuring an Indigenous project co-director; establishing an Elders' and Knowledge Holders' Advisory Council, etc.) and adequately compensating Indigenous collaboration and participation;

3) recognition of Indigenous peoples' contribution to the project (if desired by the community);

4) co-writing and co-presenting research findings with Indigenous partners and participants;

5) sharing the results of the research with the community in an accessible manner (if desired by the community); and

6) adjusting the research design so as to better fit the particular community's needs and priorities.

4.2.4 Responsibility – Responsibility includes accountability to Indigenous people for the knowledge put in your trust. Some of your responsibilities while working with Indigenous communities could include:

1) early involvement (prepare a comprehensive community engagement plan);

2) integration of scientific/technical work with Indigenous values;

3) commitment to cross-cultural education; and

4) balanced decision making/collaboration.

4.3 Note that Indigenous communities are distinct groups who may have specific additional ethical requirements and protocols. It is recommended that you always do additional background research into the specific community's ethical considerations prior to research.

5.0 The University of Winnipeg Indigenous Resources

- Elders Protocol
- Indigenous Data Management: Indigenous Data Sovereignty in Action
- Indigenous Insights Program
- Land Acknowledgement

6.0 Peer-reviewed Literature

Indigenous Research Methods and Methodologies

Andersen, C., & O'Brien, J. M., eds. (2016). *Sources and Methods in Indigenous Studies*. Routledge.

Archibald Q'um Q'um Xiiem, J., Lee-Morgan, J. B. J., & De Santolo, J., eds. (2022). *Decolonizing Research: Indigenous Storywork as Methodology*. Bloomsbury.

Barron-McNabb, Deborah. (2009). A Métis-Specific Gender-based Analysis Framework for Health. Prairie Women's Health Centre of Excellence, http://www.pwhce.ca/pdf/metisGBAFramework.pdf.

Castleden, H., Morgan, V. S., & Lamb, C. (2012). "I spent the first year drinking tea": Exploring Canadian university researchers' perspectives on community-based participatory research involving Indigenous peoples. *The Canadian Geographer, 56*(2): 160-179. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1541-0064.2012.00432.x.

First Nations Information Governance Centre. (2020). Strengths-Based Approaches to Indigenous Research and the Development of Well-Being Indicators. https://fnigc.ca/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/FNIGC-Research-Series-SBA_v04.pdf.

Hart, M. A. (2010). Indigenous Worldviews, Knowledge, and Research: The Development of an Indigenous Research Paradigm. *Journal of Indigenous Social Development, 1*(1A). https://journalhosting.ucalgary.ca/index.php/jisd/article/view/63043/46988.

Kovach, M. (2021). *Indigenous Methodologies: Characteristics, Conversations, and Contexts*. 2nd ed. University of Toronto Press.

McIlduff, C., et al. (2020). Model of engaging communities collaboratively: Working towards an integration of implementation science, cultural adaptation and engagement. *International Journal of Critical Indigenous Studies, 13*(1): 45-69. https://doi.org/10.5204/ijcis.v13i1.1346.

Native Women's Association of Canada. (2020). A Culturally Relevant Gender-Based Analysis (CRGBA) Starter Kit: Introduction, Incorporation, and Illustrations of Use. https://www.nwac.ca/assets-knowledge-centre/A-Culturally-Relevant-Gender-Based-Analysis.pdf.

Smith, L. T. (2012). *Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples*. 2nd ed. Zed Books.

Walter, M. & Andersen, C. (2013). *Indigenous Statistics: A Quantitative Research Methodology*. Routledge.

Wilson, S. (2008). *Research is Ceremony: Indigenous Research Methods*. Fernwood.

Wilson, S., Breen, A. V., & DuPré, L., eds. (2019). *Research and Reconciliation: Unsettling Ways of Knowing through Indigenous Relationships*. Canadian Scholars Press.

Indigenous Research Ethics

Bull, Julie, et al. (2019). Shifting Practise: Recognizing Indigenous Rights Holders in Research Ethics Review. *Qualitative Research in Organizations and Management*, 15(1): 21-35. https://www.emerald.com/insight/content/doi/10.1108/QROM-04-2019-1748/full/pdf?title=shifting-practise-recognizing-indigenous-rights-holders-in-research-ethics-review.

Castellano, M. B. (2004). Ethics of Aboriginal Research. *Journal of Aboriginal Health, 1*(1): 98-114. https://jps.library.utoronto.ca/index.php/ijih/article/view/28935/24063.

Evans, M. et al. (2012). Funding and Ethics in Métis Community Based Research: The Complications of a Contemporary Context. *International Journal of Critical Indigenous Studies, 5*(1). https://doi.org/10.5204/ijcis.v5i1.94.

Fitzpatrick, E. F., Martiniuk, A. L., D'Antoine, H., Oscar, J., Carter, M., & Elliott, E. J. (2016). Seeking consent for research with indigenous communities: a systematic review. *BMC Medical Ethics, 17*(1), 1-18. https://doi.org/10.1186%2Fs12910-016-0139-8.

Hayward, A., Sjoblom, E., Sinclair, S., & Cidro, J. (2021). A New Era of Indigenous Research: Community-based Indigenous Research Ethics Protocols in Canada. *Journal of Empirical Research on Human Research Ethics, 16*(4), https://doi.org/10.1177/15562646211023705.

National Aboriginal Health Organization. *Considerations and Templates for Ethical Research Practices*. National Aboriginal Health Organization, 2007, https://achh.ca/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/Guide_Community_FNC_ConsiderationsandTemplates.pdf.

Indigenous Evaluation

Chandna, K., Vine, M. M., Snelling, S., Harris, R., Smylie, J., & Manson, H. (2019). Principles, approaches, and methods for evaluation in indigenous contexts: A grey literature scoping review. *Canadian Journal of Program Evaluation, 34*(1): 21-47. https://doi.org/10.3138/cjpe.43050

Johnston-Goodstar, K. (2012). Decolonizing evaluation: The necessity of evaluation advisory groups in Indigenous evaluation. In R. VeLure Roholt & M. L. Baizerman (Eds.), *Evaluation advisory groups. New Directions for Evaluation, 136,* 109–117.

Kawakami, A. J., Aton, K., Cram, F., Lai, M. K., & Porima, L. (2008). Improving the Practice of Evaluation through Indigenous Values and Methods: Decolonizing Evaluation Practice— Returning the Gaze from Hawai'i and Aotearoa. In N. L. Smith & P. R. Brandon (Eds.) *Fundamental Issues in Evaluation* (pp. 219-242). The Guildford Press.

LaFrance, J., Nichols, R., & Kirkhart, K. E. (2012). Culture writes the script: On the centrality of context in indigenous evaluation. In D. J. Rog, J. L. Fitzpatrick, & R. F. Conner (Eds.), *Context: A framework for its influence on evaluation practice. New Directions for Evaluation, 135,* 59–74.

Rowe, G., & Kirkpatrick, C. (2018). Na-gah mo Waabishkizi Ojijaak Bimise Keetwaatino: Singing White Crane Flying North: Gathering a Bundle for Indigenous Evaluation. Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives, https://policyalternatives.ca/sites/default/files/uploads/publications/Manitoba%20Office/2018/03/Gathering_A_Bundle_for_Indigenous_Evaluation.pdf.

Wehipeihana, N. (2019). Increasing Cultural Competence in Support of Indigenous-Led Evaluation: A Necessary Step toward Indigenous-Led Evaluation. *Canadian Journal of Program Evaluation / La Revue canadienne d'évaluation de programme, 34*(2): 368–384. https://doi.org/10.3138/cjpe.68444

Indigenous Knowledge Mobilization

Barnes, H. M., Henwood, W., Kerr, S., McManus, V., & McCreanor, T. (2011). Knowledge Translation and Indigenous Research. In E. M. Banister, B. J. Leadbeater, & E. A. Marshall (Eds.), *Knowledge Translation in Context: Indigenous, Policy, and Community Settings* (pp. 161-180). University of Toronto Press. https://www.jstor.org/stable/10.3138/9781442689961.14

Ellison, C. (2014). Indigenous Knowledge and Knowledge Synthesis, Translation and Exchange (KSTE). National Collaborating Centre for Aboriginal Health, https://www.nccih.ca/docs/context/RPT-IndigenousKnowledgeKSTE-Ellison-EN.pdf.

Estey, E., Smylie, J., & Macaulay A. (2009). Aboriginal Knowledge Translation: Understanding and Respecting the Distinct Needs of Aboriginal Communities in Research. Canadian Institutes of Health Research, https://cihr-irsc.gc.ca/e/documents/aboriginal_knowledge_translation_e.pdf.

Smylie, J. K. (2011). Knowledge Translation and Indigenous Communities: A Decolonizing Perspective. In E. M. Banister, B. J. Leadbeater, & E. A. Marshall (Eds.), *Knowledge Translation in Context: Indigenous, Policy, and Community Settings* (pp. 181-200). University of Toronto Press. https://www.jstor.org/stable/10.3138/9781442689961.15

Smylie, J., Olding, M., & Ziegler, C. (2014). Sharing What We Know about Living a Good Life: Indigenous Approaches to Knowledge Translation. *Journal of the Canadian Health Libraries Association, 35*(1): 16-23. https://doi.org/10.5596/c14-009.

Indigenous Data Management, Governance, and Sovereignty

Carroll, S. R. et al. (2020). The CARE Principles for Indigenous Data Governance. *Data Science Journal*, 19(43): 1–12. https://doi.org/10.5334/dsj-2020-043

Montenegro, M. (2019). Subverting the Universality of Metadata Standards: The TK Labels as a Tool to Promote Indigenous Data Sovereignty. *Journal of Documentation*, *75*(4): 731-49. https://doi.org/10.1108/JD-08-2018-0124.

Rowe, R., Carroll, S. R., Healy, C., Rodriguez-Lonebear, D., & Walker, J. (2021). The SEEDS of Indigenous Population Health Data Linkage. *International Journal of Population Data Science*, *6*(1), https://doi.org/10.23889/ijpds.v6i1.1417.

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