



CANADIAN  
MUSEUMS  
ASSOCIATION

ASSOCIATION  
DES MUSÉES  
CANADIENS

# MOVED TO ACTION

## **Moved to Action: Activating UNDRIP in Canadian Museums**

**A Response to the  
Truth and Reconciliation  
Commission's Call to Action #67**



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This report was developed as a response to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Call to Action #67 under the guidance of the CMA Reconciliation Council. The Canadian Museums Association (CMA) is the voice for Canada's vibrant museum community, from small, volunteer-driven organizations to cherished national institutions, and for the millions of Canadians whose lives are enriched by museums. We advocate for public policies and support, we build skills across the profession, and we establish and inspire connections to strengthen and sustain museums.

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**Cover Image:** Tiaré Jung



Truth and Reconciliation Commission

## **Call to Action #67**

We call upon the federal government to provide full funding to the Canadian Museums Association to undertake, from collaboration with Aboriginal peoples, a national review of museum policies and best practices to determine the level of compliance with the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and to make recommendations.

# Introduction

In 2015, the Canadian Museums Association (CMA) was named in the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Call to Action #67, to deliver a report and recommendations as part of a national review of museum policies and their relationship with the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP).

Museums have, from their preliminary existence, been part of the colonial project. How do we acknowledge that truth while also supporting our work as community institutions?

We had many meaningful discussions on reconciliation and self-determination in museums with Indigenous heritage professionals, knowledge keepers, and community members. We heard critical reflection on the usefulness of the term reconciliation. One statement rang out: *Reconciliation is a gift for museums*. Together, we have an opportunity to be moved to enact and support Indigenous self-determination.

This takes coming together to move museums to action, but our work is not the same. As conveyed in this report, it is not up to Indigenous People to reconcile, but to speak truth to power. It falls to settlers to reconcile themselves to the true history of where institutions like museums have caused harm, and address this in ways identified by Indigenous Peoples.

It is our hope that this report, recommendations, and standards centre the Indigenous experience in museums to convey how settlers can assist in dismantling the parts of museums that continue to perpetuate colonial harm.

The first step is listening, to the words and perspectives of Indigenous heritage professionals and community members highlighted in this report. As you will see, this is the work of a community, with Indigenous and non-Indigenous museum professionals coming together to speak truth, to share their experiences and to set out a plan for the future of our sector.

We understand that for some the standards described in this report may seem aspirational, severe or overwhelming. These museum standards have been set with the understanding that achieving these will take time, respect, and reciprocity. Allow time to process and consider how to enact these standards. Prioritize and respect Indigenous perspectives and knowledge. Know that this is the work of many. Look to others to support this work. Then be moved to action.

## Land Acknowledgement

The CMA acknowledges that its Secretariat is located on the unceded, unsurrendered territory of the Algonquin Anishnaabeg People. As a national association, our work takes place in the territories of all Indigenous peoples in what is known as Canada. We acknowledge the colonial legacy of museums and commit to recognizing and promoting Indigenous peoples' self-determination over their lands and culture through history and today.



## INTRODUCTION

On the national level, it has been exactly 30 years since the CMA worked with the Assembly of First Nations to produce *Turning the Page: Forging New Partnerships between Museums and First Peoples*. This influential research, released in 1992, offered a good foundation at the time. Since then, we have learned more and heard more. A turn toward decolonizing initiatives that centre Indigenous knowledge and perspectives means that *Turning the Page*, although an important chapter in the history of our sector, no longer reflects museum standards.

This report seeks to determine the level of compliance that museum policies and best practices have with UNDRIP and hopes to provide a national baseline of support for Canadian museums. In the absence of definitive national guidance, how have museums been implementing the principles of UNDRIP? What are the standards today?

Although specific UNDRIP Articles are highlighted in this report for their direct application to areas of the museum sector, many UNDRIP Articles generally apply. In other words, although the Articles in UNDRIP are interrelated and meant to be respected as a whole, certain fundamental principles inform all Articles in UNDRIP. For more information on UNDRIP and for an assessment of UNDRIP's application to the heritage sector and museums, review Catherine Bell and Melissa Erickson's **UNDRIP and Indigenous Heritage Report**, developed as a companion resource.

### The United Nations Declaration of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP)

The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) is a comprehensive international instrument on the rights of Indigenous Peoples. It establishes a universal framework of minimum standards for the survival, dignity and well-being of the Indigenous Peoples of the world. It also elaborates on existing human rights standards and fundamental freedoms as they apply to the specific situation of Indigenous Peoples.

UNDRIP is the principal framework upon which the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's (TRC) Calls to Action are based. The Calls to Action by the TRC are aimed at a range of institutions, laws, and programs affecting Indigenous Peoples, and legislation aimed at its implementation. UNDRIP is an expansive declaration consisting of 46 Articles. Because it is a declaration and not an international treaty or convention, it is viewed by State signatories as aspirational until implemented through national law, although some scholars debate this.

The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples was adopted by the General Assembly on Thursday, 13 September 2007, by a majority of 144 states in favour, 4 votes against, including Canada. Canada's stated reason for opposing the declaration was that it lacked clear guidance for implementation and conflicted with the existing Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, which the government believed already protected the rights of Indigenous People.

In the intermediary period, UNDRIP received increasing support at the federal level, and was adopted by one province, British Columbia, in 2019, through the *Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act*.

In December 2020, the federal government introduced Bill C-15, The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act, which received Royal Assent in June, 2021. Bill C-15 requires the federal government to prepare an action plan to achieve the objectives of UNDRIP by 21 June 2023.

# How to use this report

Everyone at every level can contribute to their museum's implementation of UNDRIP. Think of the sector as an ecosystem, with each person having something to offer. Read on, listen, and work diligently from a place of humility, knowledge, and confidence.

This report is fundamentally designed to offer heritage institutions a holistic overview of UNDRIP as it relates to their institutions.

While we encourage all museum workers to read every section, the sections in this report can be read in any order. We recommend that you start with Historical Considerations and then proceed based on your areas of expertise, capacity, and interest.

We anticipate this report will be revisited as museums seek to activate the standards it describes. For that reason, *The Standards* for each section are situated upfront, and establish the baseline as recommended and reflected in our engagements and research. *The Review* section follows, which provides the analysis, research, and evidence for the Standards.

## The Truth and Reconciliation Commission

Funded by the Indian Residential Schools Settlement Agreement (2006), the Truth and Reconciliation Commission was established to acknowledge and provide a witness to Residential School experiences.

The Commission heard from over 6,500 witnesses and survivors, creating a historical record now housed by the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation in Manitoba. As part of its comprehensive final report, 94 Calls to Action were issued to further the aims of reconciliation.

To date, definitive consensus between four reporting organizations indicates that only five are complete. Individual organizational assessments range with 11 considered completed by the Yellowhead Institute and Indigenous Watchdog, 13 considered completed by CBC Beyond 94 and 17 considered complete by the Federal Government.

## INTRODUCTION

### Indigenous Nations, Communities, and Peoples

*Indigenous Peoples* is a collective name for the original peoples of North America and their descendants, who include First Nations, Metis, and Inuit. It is the primary term used in UNDRIP.

*Indigenous communities* are distinct social, linguistic, and cultural groups who share collective ancestral ties to the lands and natural resources where they live, occupy, or from which they have been displaced.

*Indigenous Nations* refer to the larger governance structure of a collective of Indigenous Peoples as recognized by the community or non-Indigenous government.

In some instances, these may be the Indigenous Nations who occupied territories and exercised jurisdiction at the time of colonization. As these Nations do not necessarily all exist today as they existed at the time of European colonization, for example as a result of displacement or due to the Indian Act, we do not simply refer to a “frozen-in-time” definition of Indigenous Nations, but one that is defined by Indigenous Peoples themselves.

For the purposes of this report, this term is used to refer to a governing body made up of Indigenous Peoples in a manner determined appropriate by Indigenous Peoples themselves. The term Indigenous community is used in reference to distinct groups of Indigenous Peoples outside of formal governance activities of the Nation.

### Indigenous Self-Determination

Self-determination is defined by Indigenous groups obtaining control over the full set of rights to govern themselves in all aspects of their political, social, economic, and cultural lives.

This means that Indigenous Peoples have the right to define for themselves how best to build capacity and guide interactions within their communities. This applies to engagement and consultation activities, which require consent.

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Repatriation is at the heart of supporting Indigenous cultural sovereignty. How and are museums with Indigenous collections supporting this process?

Museums and individuals that work with Indigenous collections should prioritize this section.

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Community engagement is at the heart of modern museum practice. How are current models of engagement affecting Indigenous self-determination?

Curators and those who work with community outreach, educational programs, etc. should prioritize this section.



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A key part to decolonizing an institution is undoing systemic barriers. How are administrative museum policies and structures supporting decolonization?

Museum executives, board members and government representatives should prioritize this section.

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Implementing UNDRIP is everyone's job. How are museums implementing UNDRIP within every facet of their operations?

Museum administrators and those in departments that support museum operations (incl. HR, finance, security, admissions, and more.) should prioritize this section.

### 100 Methodology

The methodology and scope for engagement, research, and analysis for this report.

### 114 Acknowledgements

The CMA would like to thank the members of the Reconciliation Council, working groups, engagement sessions, interviewees, program administrators and all those who took time to contribute their guidance and expertise to this project. Find a list of those contributors here.

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# Historical Considerations

## Indigenous Cultural Heritage and Museology in Canada: A Brief History

This section traces the relationship between Indigenous cultural heritage and museology in Canada against the backdrop of the colonial project, and considers how genocidal and assimilationist policies, practices, and attitudes shape the relationship between Indigenous Peoples and museums.

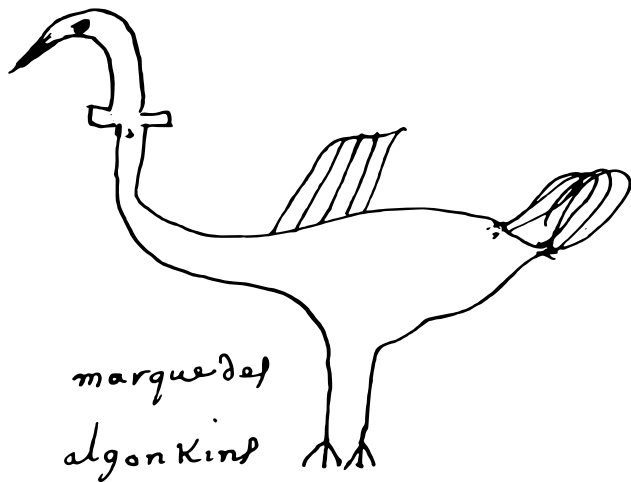
Museums and colonial endeavours are inextricably linked to the erasure of the histories of Indigenous Nations. This includes the extraction of Indigenous ancestral remains and cultural belongings. The impulse to remove cultural belongings and ancestral remains from Indigenous Nations was spurred by monetary and territorial gain, notoriety, and the exoticizing of Indigenous cultures, and backed by racist and genocidal policies, practices, and beliefs. Some of these impulses remain today in museums, where we see the lingering paternalism over the ownership, preservation, and care of cultural belongings, and settler authority over the interpretation of Indigenous representations.

## Protecting and Maintaining Indigenous Cultural Heritage

Since time immemorial, Indigenous communities preserved and protected their cultural heritage. In part, this occurred through the inextricable connection between cultural items and traditional knowledge, including ceremonies, protocols, and stories. The connection to and protection of these knowledge systems persisted even in the face of extreme duress and genocide faced by Indigenous communities.

### Licence to Steal: From the Doctrine of Discovery to the Indian Act

Colonial decrees such as the Doctrine of Discovery, among others, provided a legal framework that justified European colonization and the seizure of lands around the world, including North America. Coupled with the belief that Indigenous Peoples were biologically inferior, and would eventually be extinguished, Indigenous Peoples were dehumanized in the eyes of the European colonial powers.



*Signature of one of the Algonquin signatories to the Great Peace of Montreal, 1701. Image courtesy of the National Archives of France.*

These beliefs provided spiritual, legal, and political underpinnings for the removal of Indigenous Peoples' lands and possessions. First contact with Indigenous Peoples between explorers and missionaries came with the removal of Indigenous cultural belongings to attest that there were Indigenous populations in the Americas. Sacred cultural belongings were taken and sent to Europe to fund missionary efforts, to bolster the fame of the explorers, as well as to satisfy the curiosity of European populations who exoticized Indigenous Peoples. This quickly led to the exhibition of Indigenous Peoples as "human zoos"—living displays as relics of past evolutionary stages, in the eyes of the Imperialist public, as at the Crystal Palace in London in 1851 and the Jardins d'Acclimatation in Paris in 1883. The tradition of living displays was later transferred to North America. For example, the Chicago World's Fair (officially titled the World's Columbian Exhibition) in 1893 featured living Indigenous communities from across the North American continent. Wild west shows and later exhibitions like the Calgary Stampede continued this tradition of exploitation.

The plundering of First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Nations was motivated and bolstered by the overt genocidal policies and practices of the Canadian government. The removal of ancestral remains and cultural belongings happened in conjunction with land dispossession, forced relocation, and attempted erasure of Indigenous Nations. This begins with the Gradual Civilization Act in 1857 under George Brown and continued with the implementation of the Indian Act and establishment of residential "schools" under Sir John A. Macdonald, which were nothing more than genocidal institutions masquerading as educational facilities. The resistance of Métis People at the refusal of the government to recognize their title and land rights was met with federal dispossession of these lands, enacted through government policies like scrip. The removal of Indigenous ancestral remains and cultural belongings, and those who took them, now had firm moral, spiritual, and political directives.

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Tantamount to genocidal practices, the removal of ancestral remains and sacred burial items resulted from the dehumanizing of Indigenous Nations. As one example among many, in 1827, Scottish explorer William E. Cormack saw the ancestral remains of Demasduit and Nonosbawsut in an elevated sepulchre erected by the last survivors of their Beothuk people. Cormack took the skulls of Demasduit and Nonosbawsut, as well as sacred burial items, and sent them to Edinburgh, Scotland where they were eventually housed at the National Museum of Scotland. The repatriation of the ancestral remains of Demasduit and Nonosbawsut was only recently completed in 2020 and required international coordination.

This collecting frenzy formed the basis of many museum collections as part of larger colonial practices that focused on the containment, control, and destruction of Indigenous People and their heritage. For example, the federal government's ban on the potlatch through the 1884 "Potlatch Law," led to the large illegal seizure of Kwakwaka'wakw material culture in 1921. Cultural belongings from this collection would make their way into various museums and private collections across North America and the world. Another example, the church bell from the Métis community of Batoche was stolen at the time of the 1885 Resistance and taken to Ontario as a "spoil of war."

Museums sought out artefacts to illustrate the Indigenous Peoples worldwide. Institutions traded belongings to assure this "representation." For example, the Smithsonian sent Wendat and other North-East belongings, among others, to the Peter the Great Collection in St-Petersburg, Russia as they had none. European institutions offered belongings from Indigenous Peoples on that continent in exchange.

Families were also forced to surrender cultural belongings in order to convert to Christianity. CCalls went out to Catholic missions around the world to "donate" Indigenous cultural belongings, first in 1877 to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the priesthood of Pope Pius IX (1772-1878), which included belongings from the Cree of Keewatin and Métis communities in South-East Saskatchewan. At the Vatican, Pope Pius XI (1857-1939) commissioned the major 1925 exhibition of cultural belongings from all Catholic missions of the world. Over 40,000 objects of a greater 100,000 gifted became the permanent collection of the new Missionary Ethnological Museum. Indigenous belongings acquired at this time include a kayak made by the Inuvialuit, which is still held by the Vatican.

Other families sold or exchanged items to survive the extreme policies of the government. On the prairies, the implementation of the pass and permit system along with starvation policies meant items were sold under extreme duress, often under the directive of the Indian Agent. Hundreds of priceless sacred belongings from the Nakota Nation were purchased by collector Donald Cadzow and sold to the Smithsonian Institute. With many relegated to road allowance communities and living in poverty, many Métis sold beadwork and other cultural belongings to collectors. The duress under which Indigenous Peoples' cultural belongings were surrendered, sold, stolen, or had confiscated calls into question items acquired by museums that are listed as sales or acquisitions.



*Métis Dog Sled, approx. 1860. Missionary Ethnological Museum, Musei Vaticani, Society for the Propagation of the Faith. 103795. Photo — Collection M-P Robitaille.*

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That is not to say that communities don't have pride in or stand by this cultural and economic exchange. As one example, over centuries the Wendat Nation sold thousands of moccasins, cases, trays, baskets, mittens, snowshoes, tea cozies, vests, coats, and other items to tourists, the military and the bourgeoisie to bring income into their communities. There are other instances where cultural belongings were distributed as gifts in ceremony or other cultural protocols, and gift-giving practices are common among many Indigenous Nations. Many of these cultural belongings are now in museums all around the globe.



*Kwakwaka'wakw potlatch masks. Image from The North American Indian. Seattle, Wash: E. S. Curtis, 1907. Masked Dancers, plate 358, 1904.*

## Anthropological Complicity & Salvage Ethnography

The precursor to Canada's national museums began in the 1850s. The museum founded by the Geological Survey of Canada mounted its first "ethnological" exhibit in the early 1860s: a single display case containing Indigenous stone implements, stone pipes, and a few fragments of pottery. These collections grew with government-backed extraction and the surrender of cultural belongings via Indian agents and the likes of government-hired fieldworkers under Edward Sapir, chief ethnologist for the Geological Survey of Canada's Department of Anthropology.

The fervour for Indigenous cultural belongings and cultural knowledge was bolstered by ethnographers like Franz Boas (1858-1942) and his followers throughout Europe and the Americas. Believing that Indigenous Nations would be eradicated, ethnographers undertook "salvage ethnography," where they collected and removed traditional knowledge and belongings from communities. This information, in the hands of museums and anthropologists alike, was conveyed into representations of Indigenous Peoples as existing only in the past. Franz Boas's approach to anthropology emphasized studying material culture alongside other forms of culture and experience, prioritizing the role of the ethnographer to translate these intersections. Museums adopted this framework in their paternalistic approaches to representation and collections management.



### Imperialist Underpinnings of the Canadian Museums Association

The burgeoning interest in the scientific methodologies of the twentieth century prompted the desire for increased professionalism in the museum sector. This, along with concern for formal protection of cultural heritage after WWII, prompted the genesis of the Canadian Museums Association (CMA).

In the 1930s, British Museums Association delegates Sir Henry Miers and S.F. Markham conducted a review and report on the museums of Canada. In their review of one hundred Canadian museums, they remarked on the need for the professionalization of museological positions, especially in collections and curatorship. As Miers and Markham concluded, “For two generations, collectors and curators have devoted much labour to the making of museums [...] the time has now come for a new generation to consider how to use them.” (Report on the Museums of Canada, p.63.) They additionally note that these museums must begin to: “exemplify notions of science by displaying objects according to rational and organized principles.” The Canadian Museums Association, formed in 1947, created the first credited diploma program for museum workers in Canada in the mid-1960s. This diploma program was an extension of the British Museum Association’s professional diploma.

### Professionalization & Paternalism

As mentioned above, the 1950s saw an increased focus on the need for skills related to museums and archives. At this time, the library, archives, and arts priorities were restructured at the National Museum of Canada. A new Natural History Branch was developed with a section on human history in 1958. That section focused on ethnology, archaeology, physical anthropology, and folklore.

The professionalization of the museum in alignment with scientific methods provides the imperialist and paternalist backdrop for museological approaches to Indigenous heritage moving into the mid-twentieth century. With daily life sharply controlled in every sense for Indigenous Peoples into the mid-twentieth century, attempts to retain or regain cultural heritage and cultural belongings came up against this same colonial and paternalistic mindset.

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### Political Push-Back and Indigenous Advocacy

Of course, many Indigenous Peoples had continued to politically organize and conduct ceremonies through underground means despite Indian Act controls. This political advocacy began nationally in 1918 with the League of Nations, increasing throughout the 1930s and 1940s at the regional and provincial levels. For example, the Indian Association of Alberta formed in 1939, the Federation of Saskatchewan Indians formed in 1944, and the North American Indian Brotherhood formed in 1945. The first Inuit co-operative—based on commercial fishing and logging, but also including the sale of carvings and other Inuit art—was established in April 1959 at Kangiqsualujuaq (formerly George River) in Nunavik (Northern Québec).



*Inuit artists Iyola Kingwatsiak (left) and an unidentified man examining prints at West Baffin Co-operative in Kinngait, Nunavut. Image courtesy of Rosemary Gilliat Eaton / Rosemary Gilliat Eaton fonds / Library and Archives Canada / e010836089.*

With collective rights movements like the American Indian Movement (AIM) and Black Rights movements in the United States in the 1960s, collective rights organizing in support of Indigenous rights in Canada gained momentum as well. Increasing urbanization of Indigenous populations prompted gathering and organizing to promote Indigenous rights in urban centres, primarily through Friendship Centres. As more Indigenous People migrated to urban centres in the mid-1950s, these centres became the cultural hub for many Indigenous community members. For instance, the Saskatoon Indian and Métis Friendship centre was the hub for Métis political organizing in that city during the mid-twentieth century.

Alongside this political activism was the continuation of genocidal and assimilationist policies and practices on the part of the Canadian government. Indigenous Nations reeling from the intergenerational trauma of residential schools now had child removal policies of the 60's Scoop to contend with. Rampant racism in the justice system meant over-proportionate numbers of Indigenous Peoples were represented in prisons. Indigenous communities experienced an epidemic of missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls. As well, chronic underfunding meant poor conditions for education, health, and housing on reserves.

### Expo '67 & the Reckoning at the “Indian Pavilion”

With the Centennial Year in 1967, the World Fair was held in Montreal, where the Canadian Pavilion was meant to convey nationalist fervour. However, the so-called “Indian Pavilion”—its own name an indication of the pervading attitudes of the times—was a significant turning point for Indigenous self-representation. The pavilion planning brought together Indigenous leaders, artists, and others from across the country. Inside, exhibit material included Indigenous perspectives on early contact, assimilationist residential schools, and the deplorable conditions of reserves. Until that point, neither exhibits nor the media had been upfront on the genocidal and assimilationist policies and practices endured by First Nations, Métis, and Inuit peoples. This signalled the future of the interruption of nationalist narratives by Indigenous Peoples thorough museums.

### Against Assimilation

The response of Indigenous communities to the proposed assimilationist White Paper in 1969 further asserted that assimilation tactics must be set aside in exchange for recognition of Indigenous Peoples as rights holders. The 1969 White Paper (formally known as the “Statement of the Government of Canada on Indian Policy, 1969”) was a Canadian government policy paper that attempted to abolish previous legal documents relating to Indigenous Peoples in Canada, including the Indian Act and treaties. It also aimed to assimilate all Indigenous Peoples under the Canadian state.

With the widespread criticism of the policy, national attention was drawn to the need to formally acknowledge Indigenous Peoples’ right to self-determination. A few years prior, in 1965, in this movement of affirmation of self-determination, the Musée des Abénakis was created to tell of the Wôbanaki Nation’s history and culture from the perspective of its people within Quebec. The Indian Association of Alberta developed the Red Paper in reaction to the White Paper. Their report recommended, among other things, the creation of the cultural centres program with the aim of creating Indigenous student self-worth, identity, and dignity. This brought a wave of activism, academic work, and court decisions lasting decades.



*Gathering for “Red Paper” discussion in response to the “White Paper.” 1970. Image courtesy of Duncan Cameron / Library and Archives Canada. PA-193380.*

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In the 1970's the National Indian Brotherhood (NIB), led the Indian Control of Indian Education movement, with a central focus on the importance of Cultural Centers. This movement gave rise to the formalizing of cultural centres across Indigenous Nations, with the First Nations Confederacy of Cultural Education Centres established in 1972. As a response to these calls for support the Secretariat of State and the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development set aside 42 million to be spent over 5 years on the Cultural Education Centres Program. The U'mista Cultural Society began in 1974 to ensure the survival of all aspects of cultural heritage of the Kwakwaka'wakw. The Haida Gwaii Museum opened in 1976 and built an international reputation for showcasing Haida historical and contemporary art, cultural belongings and scientific material culture. In 1976, the Société d'histoire et d'archéologie de Pointe-Bleue sees to the conservation and transmission of cultural knowledge of the Pekuakamiulnuatsh (Innu/Innu) of the Lac St-Jean region in Québec by instituting the Musée amérindien de Mashteuiatsh as a means to affirm distinct Innu identity and territory.

The 1973 Supreme Court Calder case, which reviewed the existence of Aboriginal title over lands historically occupied by the Nisga'a peoples of northwestern British Columbia, asserted that Aboriginal title had existed at the time of the Royal Proclamation of 1763, the first time that the Canadian legal system acknowledged the existence of Aboriginal title to land and that such title existed outside of, and was not simply derived from, colonial law. From the Calder case emerged the modern treaties process comprising comprehensive land claims negotiations and Aboriginal self-government agreements.

Métis self-government initiatives regarding cultural heritage and education also took shape around this time. In April 1976, the Association of Métis and Non-Status Indigenous Peoples of Saskatchewan met to discuss strategies for Indigenous-controlled educational and cultural institutions for Métis and Indigenous non-status Peoples, leading to the establishment of the Gabriel Dumont Institute in 1980 and, later, the Louis Riel Institute in Manitoba.

In 1984, representatives from Indigenous Nations in Quebec instituted the "Société d'Éducation et de Muséologie en Milieu Autochtone" (SEMMA) and proposed participatory projects concerning heritage, linking community schools and the museum network. The SEMMA was the first provincial Indigenous heritage circle to operate in Canada.

### National Museum Policy: Overlooking Indigenous Concerns

Around the same time, the federal government launched the National Museums Policy. Established in 1972, it was based on the goals of “democratization and decentralization.” From this policy came the creation of such key programs as the Museums Assistance Program, the National Inventory Program (now known as the Canadian Heritage Information Network), and the Canadian Conservation Institute. The founding of these organizations coincides with the recognition in Canada of conservation as a distinct museum profession and heritage discipline. Unfortunately, at the time of its founding, there was no effort made to include Indigenous views and perspectives in framing what a unique and distinctive Canadian conservation profession on the world stage might look like. The priority was with recruiting foreign conservators from abroad, especially from the United Kingdom, who arrived here with their colonial mindsets as part of their conservation practice.

The Cultural Property Export and Import Act, which contains provisions to control the export and import of cultural objects, followed in 1977 and was developed in accordance with the 1970 UNESCO Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export, and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property. These policies and programs, however, did not prioritize Indigenous cultural heritage, concerns, or the perspectives of Indigenous Nations.

### Self Determination Over Cultural Heritage

The proceeding decades saw some growing attention to Indigenous perspectives and rights to control their cultural heritage. The Museum of Anthropology at UBC, conceived in the 1970s, featured a visible storage system, considered the first of its kind as a way of prioritizing access for researchers and community members. Another precedent-setting example, the Canadian Museum of Civilization (now the Canadian Museum of History) returned confiscated potlatch items to the Kwakwaka'wakw at Alert Bay and Cape Mudge in 1978. However, this was not a mainstream concern among museums.

The newly “patriated” Constitution Act in 1982 included Section 35, which recognize and affirm “existing Aboriginal and treaty rights,” including the inherent right to self-government. This formal recognition by the federal government set the stage for Indigenous Peoples to define the parameters that support their self-determination.

This move toward recognizing Indigenous self-determination in museums would unfold over the coming years in various ways. For instance, the Prince of Wales Northern Heritage Centre established an archaeological training program in 1983 with local Dene, Inuvialuit, and Inuit trainees, with Elders from these communities advising on the project.

With the opening of the Musée de la Civilisation Québec (MCQ) in 1989, the museum developed a *Policy in regards to First Peoples of Québec and their Heritage*. One of the first policies of its kind, it became fundamental to all MCQ's operations and projects. While formally published in 1989, the policy was recommended as a model to follow by all Canadian museums at the Conference for Museums and First Peoples initiated by the Assembly of First Nations in November 1988.



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At the time other provincial and regional museums were in the process of revising general collections policies, and, for the first time, making them accessible to the general public. In 1990, the Manitoba Museum was first to publish its policy pertaining to Indigenous collections. The Manitoba Museum was the first to publish its policy pertaining to Indigenous collections in 1990. Few museums had yet to diffuse their policy to the public. As well, in 1991, the Société des Musées Québécois passed a resolution on the rights of Indigenous Peoples to repatriation and access to collections.

### Turning the Page: An Indictment of Indigenous-Museum Partnerships

In 1988, Indigenous right to control representations of their cultural heritage in museums came to an apex. The Lubicon Nation strongly objected to the content of *The Spirit Sings: Artistic Traditions of Canada's First People* – an international-scale exhibition led by the Glenbow Museum to complement Calgary Winter Olympic Games. The exhibit presented Indigenous cultural belongings without reference to the living cultures and realities of Indigenous communities. Sponsorship of the exhibit by oil company Shell, while violating the land rights of Indigenous Nations provided another reason for the boycott of the exhibit. Lubicon Lake First Nation boycotted the exhibition and enlisted the help of the Assembly of First Nations (AFN).

The AFN and the CMA took the lead in addressing these concerns by hosting a national conference and organizing a follow-up Task Force, with the first meeting held at Woodland Cultural Centre in 1990, which culminated in the joint report release in 1992 entitled “Turning the Page: Forging New Partnerships between Museums and First Peoples.” The report summarized the results of national consultations with Indigenous Peoples and offered a series of recommendations hinging on partnerships between Indigenous Peoples and museums related to interpretation, access, repatriation, training and implementation.

In years that followed, implementation of these recommendations brought divergent approaches to Indigenous perspectives on and interactions with museums. This came in the form of engagement with Indigenous communities to consult on exhibit material and storage and preservation of cultural belongings and ancestral remains, but these were by no means standardized regionally or among institutions. In 1996, the “Nous les Premières Nations [We the First Nations]” permanent exhibit opens at the Musée de la civilisation in Quebec. The development of the First Peoples Hall at the Canadian Museum of History is one of the notable projects to come directly as a result of the Task Force report, although this was not completed until 2003. Indigenous Cultural Centres responded as well, with exhibits like “Fluffs and Feathers” by the Six Nations-run Woodland Cultural Centre established in Brantford, Ontario—one of the first exhibits that addressed how Indigenous Peoples had been represented in museums.

The 1996 Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples (RCAP) also called for renewed repatriation measures and Indigenous control of interpretation and representation in museums. A central feature of RCAP was making a case for the inherent Aboriginal right to self-government based on historical conditions, the Constitution, and international law.



*Danny Gaspé, from the Kahnawake Reserve protests on opening day of the “Spirit Sings” exhibition in Ottawa, June 1988. Canadian Museums Association Archive.*

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### Moved to Action: Activating UNDRIP in Canadian Museums

Supported by the Canadian Museums Association

### Repatriation Renewed

Repatriations became more active in the 1990s, with some examples including the return of medicine bundles to the Tsuut'ina Nation in 1989, and the Six Nations Confederacy's wampum belts in 1991 by the Canadian Museum of History. The Prince of Wales Northern Heritage Centre assisted in negotiations to repatriate ancestral remains held by the Danish National Museum to the Inuit of Nauyasat (formerly Repulse Bay). As well, the Glenbow museum developed a loans policy that acknowledged the significance of Indigenous ceremonial objects in 1989. Some larger institutions formalized these processes through the development of repatriation policies.

The formalized recognition of Indigenous self-government through federal agreements included efforts for control of cultural heritage and repatriation. The reclaiming of cultural belongings held in Canadian national and provincial museums became a standard feature of the federal land claims process of both the Nisga'a and Nunavut agreements, and all land claim, self-government, and treaty agreements today have chapters relating to culture, language, and heritage.

### Recognizing Rights and Title Through the Courts

With the Supreme Court Delgamuukw decision in 1997, recognition of Indigenous title was cemented in the courts. Additionally, part of the ruling specified that oral histories of Indigenous Peoples were to be accepted as evidence proving historic use and occupation. The duty to consult was also affirmed by the Delgamuukw case. This landmark case impacted the fields of history and anthropology, as well as the resource sector. These impacts would factor into the museum sector as well in the areas of research, exhibits, programming, and engagement, among others.

### Making Way for Indigenous Autonomy in Cultural Heritage

The movement into the twenty-first century saw an increase in the number of Indigenous museum professionals. Indigenous artist-run centres and collectives also expanded. The successful longevity of Inuit co-operatives in the production of stone carvings and limited-edition prints for sale in an international market set an early example, dating back to 1948 when the first official public show and sale of sculptures occurred in Montreal. In 1995, Tribe: A Centre for the Evolving Aboriginal Media, Visual and Performing Arts, Inc was founded in Saskatchewan—a roving artist-run centre that focuses on bringing attention to Indigenous art and issues by partnering and collaborating with various galleries. The increased momentum of Indigenous-led work in museums was occurring alongside the conversations about Indigenous methodologies related to research and interpretation in both museums and academic contexts.

## SECTION 1: HISTORICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Indigenous-led spaces such as cultural centres and Indigenous-run interpretive centres continued to develop across Indigenous Nations, though with fluxes in support from federal programs. The Inuit of Nunavik then followed by creating the AVATAQ Cultural Institute in 1980. Ever since then AVATAQ manages its ethnology and art collection, an archives and library, as well as an archaeology repository and a linguistics programme in the Nunavimmut effort towards self-governance. As another example, the Aanischaaukamikw Cree Cultural Institute, which had been discussed for decades, began the project in 1998. After many years of fundraising, Aanischaaukamikw opened its doors to the public in 2011.

Backgrounding all this development, Indigenous communities continued to be subjected to unequal treatment, and crises related to imprisonment, child and family services, an ongoing endemic of missing and murdered Indigenous women, as well as unequal access to education and basic community services.

## Contemporary Considerations

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission, which ran from 2008 to 2015, brought renewed public attention to the legacy of residential schools and colonialism for the public in all facets. The report and accompanying Calls to Action included indictments for museums' contributions to the colonial project, most notably Call-to-action #67.

In 2016, Canada formally endorsed the UNDRIP, 9 years after they initially voted against it. This led to the development and eventual enactment of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act, which came into force on June 21st, 2021.

In May of 2021, the recovery of 215 unmarked graves on the grounds of the former Kamloops Indian Residential School, and the thousands more that were added as more recovery projects were carried out, brought renewed attention to Canada's colonial history, and to the role of museums in this history.

What we see within this report is that the colonial legacy of museums is a truth our sector must own and contend with. From the initial points of contact to a lasting legacy built into the fabric of our museum and memory institutions, to the way we reflect and support Indigenous self-determination today, museums are involved in the colonial project.

## SECTION 1: HISTORICAL CONSIDERATIONS

### Timeline

Note that this is not a comprehensive timeline of historic events, but is a selection of examples to reflect the relationship between Indigenous cultural heritage and museology over time.

#### Time Immemorial

Indigenous Peoples present on the territory now commonly referred to as Canada preserving, protecting and maintaining their cultural heritage. Each Indigenous Nation has their own origin story that connects them to their ancestral lands since time immemorial and expresses their cultural and spiritual ties to these lands, among other things.



Indigenous knowledge keepers from Nations across Turtle Island keep faithful accounts of history, both social and scientific, by means of oral traditions and storytelling. These were passed from generation to generation and endure today. These means of keeping history have assisted Western science, exploration, settlement, and settler survival from the time of contact through to today.

#### 18,000–10,000 BCE

Irrefutable archeological evidence of human occupation in the northern half of North America, including the Tanana River Valley (Alaska), Haida Gwaii (British Columbia), Vermilion Lakes (Alberta), and Debert (Nova Scotia), to name a few examples.



#### 10,000–2000 BCE

Settlements and communities are present almost everywhere in what is currently Canada. From coast to coast, Indigenous Peoples have established spiritual, cultural, economic, social, scientific, and governance systems. Some examples of these governance structures include the Mi'kmaq Grand Council, the Haudenosaunee Confederacy, and the Blackfoot Confederacy, just to name a handful.

## SECTION 1: HISTORICAL CONSIDERATIONS

**1492**

Pope Nicholas V issued the papal bull *Dum Diversas*, seen as the roots of the Doctrine of Discovery, used as legal and moral justification for colonial dispossession of sovereign Indigenous Nations

**1537**

Frobisher's search for the Northwest Passage to Asia constitutes first known contact with Inuit.

**1535**

France declares the Colony of Canada as part of the larger territory of New France.

**1500**

Huron-Wendat Village Councils.

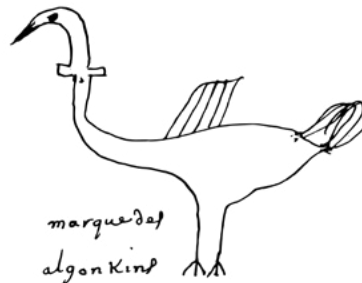


**1710**

Three Kanyen'kehà:ka chiefs and a Mahican journeyed to London, England, where they were presented to Queen Anne. Portrait of Tee Yee Neen HO Gaw Ro of the Kanyen'kehà:ka showing one of the wampum belts presented to Queen Anne at that visit.

**1725-1779**

Maliseet, Passamaquoddy, Mikmaq and Wendat Peace and Friendship Treaties established.



**1701**

The Great Peace of Montreal was signed between New France and 39 First Nations including Haudenosaunee, Odawa and Algonquin representatives.





## SECTION 1: HISTORICAL CONSIDERATIONS

**1763**

British Royal Proclamation of 1763 protects all traditional First Nations land east of the Mississippi River and west of the Appalachian Mountains and sets out procedures for the purchase of these lands with the consent of the First Nations.



**1796(?)–1820**

Life of Demasduit, a Beothuk woman held in captivity and documented by British colonists.

**1831**

First Residential School, the Mohawk Institute, opens in Brantford, ON.



**1851**

Exhibition at the Crystal Palace in London, England featured living Indigenous people as displays alongside their belongings as a curiosity, reflecting alleged Western dominance. This approach continued through the 19th century with the Jardins d'Acclimatation (1883) and Chicago World's Fair (World Columbian Exhibition, 1893) as notable examples.

**1854**

Douglas Treaties negotiated with First Nations in British Columbia.

**1867**

Canadian Confederation.

## SECTION 1: HISTORICAL CONSIDERATIONS

**1876**

Indian Act is introduced by the Canadian government as a stronger enforcement of policies set out by the Gradual Civilization Act (1857) and the Gradual Enfranchisement Act (1869).



**1885**

Northwest Resistance takes place as an action of self-determination for Métis and First Nations in the plains. Connected to the previous Red River Resistance (1869–70), where Canada sent the military to suppress the Métis resistance and Provisional Government under Louis Riel, it resulted in the execution of Louis Riel and dispersal of the Métis peoples from their homelands. Cultural belongings of the Métis, Cree and Blackfoot are brought East as trophies by militia. Many Métis and First Nations men were imprisoned, including those pictured here.

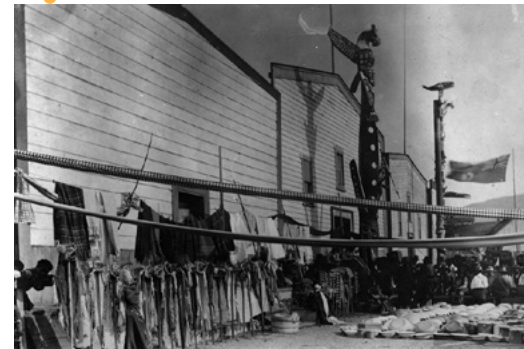
**1871 to 1877**

Numbered Treaties  
One to Seven signed.



**1877**

Indigenous cultural belongings collected to celebrate the 50th anniversary of priesthood of Pope Leo XIII, including those of the Cree of Keewatin and the Métis of Southern Saskatchewan shown here.



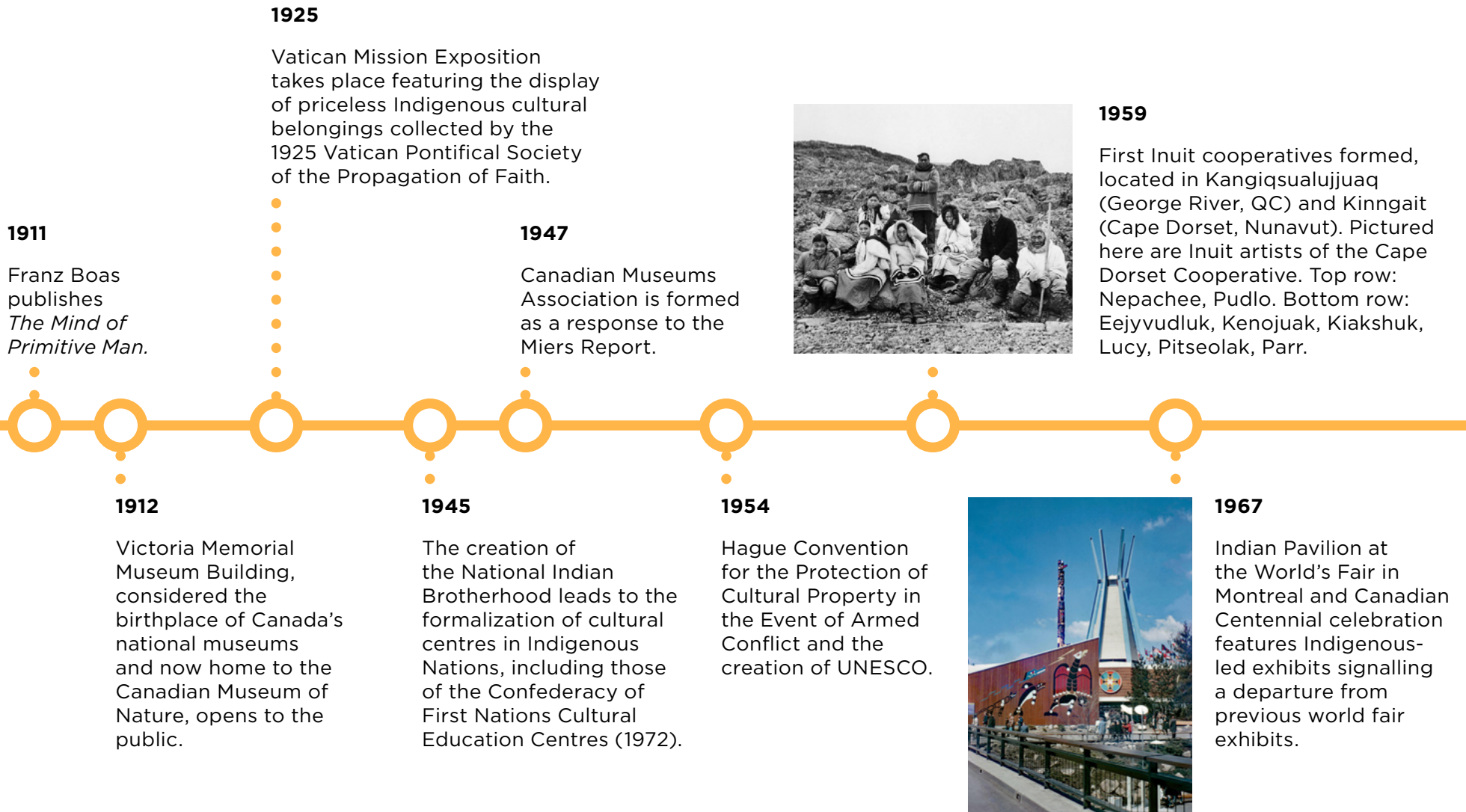
**1884 to 1951**

Potlatch was banned as part of an amendment to the Indian Act, such as the Kwakwaka'wakw potlatch pictured here.

**1885 to 1930s**

Pass System in effect as a government response to the Northwest Resistance, enforced alongside the agricultural permit system, which continued into the 1960s.

## SECTION 1: HISTORICAL CONSIDERATIONS



## SECTION 1: HISTORICAL CONSIDERATIONS

**1969**

The White Paper (Statement of the Government of Canada on Indian Policy) was issued by the Canadian government, withdrawn in 1970. This prompted Indigenous leaders to respond with the “Red Paper.”



**1970**

National Indian Brotherhood formed; leads to the formalizing of cultural centres across Indigenous Nations, including the First Nations Confederacy of Cultural Education Centres (1972).

**1970**

UNESCO Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property.

**1972**

National Museum Policy introduced.

**1974**

U'mista Cultural Society forms as an example of an early Indigenous-led cultural heritage society and subsequently, facility.



**1973**

Supreme Court Calder case asserts existence of Aboriginal title.

**1977**

Cultural Property Export and Import Act introduced.

## SECTION 1: HISTORICAL CONSIDERATIONS

**1982**

Constitution Act, 1982, is patriated; includes Charter of Rights and Freedoms.



**1988**

Lubicon First Nation opposes the “Spirit Sings” exhibition in Calgary, AB. Chief Billy Two Rivers from the Kahnawá:ke First Nation is shown here at “Spirit Sings” press conference in Ottawa, ON.

**1996**

Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples published their report.

**1984**

“Société d’Education et de Muséologie en Milieu Autochtone” (SEMMA) instituted in Quebec, which was the first provincial Indigenous heritage circle to operate in Canada.

**1992**

Release of the Task Force Report on Museums and First Peoples by the Assembly of First Nations and the Canadian Museums Association.

**1996**

Last Residential School, the Gordon Residential School, located on the boundary of Gordon’s First Nation, closes; the « Nous les Premières Nations » permanent exhibit opens in the Musée de la civilisation in Quebec.



## SECTION 1: HISTORICAL CONSIDERATIONS

**1997**

Supreme Court of Canada decision on *Delgamuukw v. British Columbia*.



**1998**

Nisga'a Final Agreement signed, recognising Nisga'a Lands and contains self-government provisions related to culture and heritage.



**2003**

First Peoples Hall opens at Canadian Museum of Civilization.

**2002**

The Commission des droits de la personne et des droits de la jeunesse of Québec publishes « Mythes et réalités sur les Peuples Autochtones » stating the fundamental importance of the international recognition by UNESCO of the rights of Indigenous Peoples to auto-determination. The Musée de la Civilisation and the Tshakapesh Institute (INNU) contribute to this book.



**2008 to 2015**

Truth and Reconciliation Commission undertakes its work to hear from survivors of residential schools. Justice Murray Sinclair speaks at a Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada event in Ottawa June 2, 2015.

## SECTION 1: HISTORICAL CONSIDERATIONS



**2016**

Canadian government endorses United Nations Declaration of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP). Assembly of First Nations National Chief Shawn Atleo holds up a copy of UNDRIP.

**2021**

Recovery of 215 unmarked graves on the grounds of the former Kamloops Residential School.

**Present day**

Indigenous Peoples continue to exert their self-determination in museum spaces.

**2020**

Return of Demasduit's remains from Scotland.

**June 2021**

Bill C-15, the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act (the UNDRIP Act or the Act), adopted into law and receives Royal Assent.

# Image Details

### 4000 BCE

Buffalo hunt on the Great Plains. Image courtesy of Library and Archives Canada, Acc. No. 1960-50-2.9.

### 1701

Signatures of the leaders of the signatory nations to the Great Peace of Montreal. Callière's secretary and others (for the pictograms). Digitization of 3 pages from the book, *The Great Peace: Chronicle of a diplomatic saga*, Alain Beaulieu, Roland Viau Montréal, éditions Libre Expression, 2001.

### 1710

Portrait of Tee Yee Neen HO Ga Ro of the Kanien'keha:ka showing one of the wampum belts presented to Queen Anne in 1710. Image courtesy of Library and Archives Canada, C-092415

### 1763

Royal Proclamation of 1763. Image courtesy of Library and Archives Canada, OCLC 1007612335.

### 1819

Portrait of Demasduit, a Beothuk woman held in captivity and documented by British colonists. Image courtesy of Library and Archives Canada, C-087698.

### 1831

Mohawk Institute Indian Residential School in Brantford, Ontario, Canada in 1932. Image courtesy of Canada. Dept. of Interior / Library and Archives Canada / PA-048104.

### 1877

Gifts from the Keewatin Cree and the Métis, said to be from Manitoba, to Pope Pius IX (1772-1878) for the 50th anniversary of his priesthood, Leo XIII (1810-1903) will exhibit them in 1925. *L'Opinion Publique*, April 5, 1877, p. 163. M-P Robitaille private collection, also available at Bibliothèque et Archives Nationales du Québec 0000164483.

### 1884

Kwakwaka'wakw potlatch, 1907. Image courtesy of Library and Archives Canada / PA-074039.

### 1885

Métis and First Nations prisoners following the North-West Rebellion, August, 1885. (L-R): Ignace Poitras, Pierre Parenteau, Baptiste Parenteau, Pierre Gariépy, Ignace Poitras Jr., Albert Monkman, Pierre Vandal, Baptiste Vandal, Joseph Arcand, Maxime Dubois, James Short, Pierre Henry, Baptiste Tourond, Emmanuel Champagne, Kit-a-wa-how (Alex Cagen, ex-chief of the Muskeg Lake First Nation, 1885. Image courtesy of Library and Archives Canada / C-006688b.

## SECTION 1: HISTORICAL CONSIDERATIONS

### 1959

Inuit artists of the Cape Dorset Cooperative. Top row: Nepachee, Pudlo, Bottom row: Eejyvudluk, Kenojuak, Kiakshuk, Lucy, Pitseolak, Parr. Kinngait (Cape Dorset), Nunavut, 1961. Image courtesy B. Korda/National Film Board. Library and Archives Canada/PA-118724.

### 1967

“Indians of Canada” Pavilion at Expo 67 in Montreal, QC. Photo – M&N, provided courtesy of Alamy Stock Photo.

### 1969

Gathering for “Red Paper” discussion in response to the “White Paper.” 1970. Image courtesy of Duncan Cameron / Library and Archives Canada / PA-193380.

### 1974

U'mista Cultural Centre. Photo – Universal Images Group North America LLC, provided courtesy of Alamy Stock Photo.

### 1988

Billy Two Rivers (Kaientaronkwen), Kahnawake First Nation at “Spirit Sings” press conference in Ottawa, April, 1988. Photo – Canadian Museums Association archives.

### 1998

Nisga'a Governance Centre. Photo – Universal Images Group North America LLC, provided courtesy of Alamy Stock Photo.

### 2003

First Peoples Hall at Canadian Museum of History (formerly Canadian Museum of Civilization). Photo – Jim Kelcher, provided courtesy of Alamy Stock Photo.

### 2008 to 2015

Justice Murray Sinclair speaks at a Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada event in Ottawa June 2, 2015. Photo – REUTERS, provided courtesy of Alamy Stock Photo.

### 2016

Assembly of First Nations National Chief Shawn Atleo holds up the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples during a news conference in Vancouver, British Columbia January 24, 2013. Atleo was attending a meeting of British Columbia Chiefs. Photo – REUTERS/Andy Clark, provided courtesy of Alamy Stock Photo.



**The new standards for implementing UNDRIP and supporting Indigenous self-determination in museums.**

## Standards for Museums

1. The return of cultural belongings is to occur with the full involvement of the appropriate Indigenous Peoples as equal partners, with research and funding capacity coming from museums at every step.
2. The categories of belongings considered for repatriation include not only ancestral remains and cultural belongings, but also associated information, such as the results of research, photographs, works of art, maps, archival documents, songs, plants, seeds, language recordings, digital material, and any other information related to the traditional knowledge, cultures, histories, and intellectual property of Indigenous Peoples.
3. The recognition that Indigenous Peoples have intellectual sovereignty over all material created by or about them. This includes the right to know about these belongings and connected traditional knowledge or intangible heritage, as well as the right to control access to these.
4. Knowing that in many cases the period of duress begins with contact and continues today, consider the impact this has on the provenance of your collections and related repatriation practices.
5. Except in circumstances where alternative stewardship measures are advised and agreed upon by the Indigenous rights holders, in no way should alternatives to repatriation be imposed or take the place of formal repatriation processes.
6. It must be left to Indigenous rights holders on how to best care for or lay to rest the items that have been repatriated. Recognize that this varies according to context and Nation-specific cultural protocols.
7. Ensure that repatriation policies enable museum staff to proactively act regarding repatriations, which includes the development of clear and enforceable processes. Actions proposed by professionals must be respected and supported by the institution's administration.
8. Approach resolution to overlapping claims in a manner that does not put the onus back on Indigenous Nations by providing research capacity, funding support, and assisting as a facilitator where appropriate.
9. Ensure that UNDRIP compliance is the responsibility of all museum departments and reflected in all museum experiences, including outreach and engagement activities.
10. Museums need to ensure an environment free of discrimination and built on understanding, dignity and respect.



## Standards for Museums

11. Develop hiring policies and practices that take Indigenous knowledge, experience, scholarship, and community relationships into account in areas of recruitment, evaluation, and compensation as essential pieces to decolonizing museum operations.
12. Incorporate into the job description relevant ways that Indigenous knowledge, skills, and perspectives are important for success in the role.
13. All policies, operational practices, and mandates must support the recognition of Indigenous Peoples' human rights and self-determination.
14. Regarding access to collections, recognize Indigenous Peoples as rights holders when it comes to accessing and stewarding their belongings. This requires co-development of methods of access and care of belongings that are defined by the Indigenous communities themselves. This may mean repatriation or stewardship.
15. Engagement and partnerships with Indigenous Nations must centre and support the needs and interests of Indigenous communities as identified by communities, while at the same time take the onus off Indigenous partners and communities.
16. In all areas of the institution, museums need to think beyond the simple engagement/consultation framework that has come to be the standard approach for these partnerships.
17. De-prioritize institutional timelines and respect the amount of time relationship building takes on the part of the community. As Indigenous community members are often tasked with labour involved with relationship building, this time and labour must be recognized and compensated by institutions.
18. Bring museum engagement and partnership activities beyond formal museum space by going into the community with whom the museum wants to engage.
19. For projects and activities that require longer partnership commitments, trade "one-off" single task engagements or event-based honorariums in favour of creating positions for Indigenous experts.
20. All knowledge and intellectual property must be properly credited, and all outcomes provided back to the Indigenous communities. Regarding intellectual property associated with exhibits, Indigenous communities ultimately own and control the depiction of their peoples and their stories, have authority over the creative process, and are best able to interpret the historical narrative to match their conceptual understandings and epistemologies.

**The new standards for implementing UNDRIP and supporting Indigenous self-determination in museums.**

## Standards for Museums

- 21.** Exhibits, programming, and educational material must properly cite Indigenous knowledge and recognize community knowledge. For exhibits, this must be at the same level as curatorial, programming, and interpretive staff.
- 22.** Ensure the proper use of terminology including names for Nations, communities, clans, families, and place names, throughout museum spaces, as well as archives and collections, as discussed in the Repatriation and Collections section. Use appropriate orthography or syllabics.
- 23.** Develop meaningful Indigenous governance with decision-making authority, not simply advisory bodies.
- 24.** Executive, governing, and advisory boards of cultural institutions in Canada must be restructured to include more Indigenous participation and management.
- 25.** Museums must understand the different decision-making processes and authoritative structures present within their institutions that perpetuate and impose systemic institutional barriers.
- 26.** Museums must reconsider where and how colonial authority is reinforced through governance.
- 27.** Museum executives and board members must take a leadership role in self-educating on Indigenous matters while recognizing the limits of their contribution.
- 28.** Establishing Indigenous advisory for your museum means weaving together systems of governance and giving advisors clear and decisive decision-making power.
- 29.** Use Indigenous-driven systems of evaluation and assessment to measure success of this work.
- 30.** Outside of the museum, museums should proactively support Indigenous-led cultural heritage organizations, cultural centres, and museums.



To support the findings of this report, the CMA has issued the following recommendations.

# Recommendations

## Recommendation 1

Enact strong legislation to support the repatriation of Indigenous belongings and ancestors.

## Recommendation 2

Provide dedicated funding for the repatriation process.

## Recommendation 3

Bolster financial support for Indigenous cultural centres, Indigenous-led national heritage organizations and Indigenous-led commemorative activities.

## Recommendation 4

Revise the National Museum Policy and Museums Assistance Program.

## Recommendation 5

Revise application processes to support Indigenous self-determination.

## Recommendation 6

Develop a cohesive collections strategy.

## Recommendation 7

Implement UNDRIP within all provinces and territories.

## Recommendation 8

Review existing laws related to heritage for compliance with UNDRIP.

## Recommendation 9

Develop a national UNDRIP professional development strategy for museum professionals.

## Recommendation 10

Support the development of peer networks and mentorship.

To support the findings of this report, the CMA has issued the following recommendations.

# Recommendations

### 1. Enact strong legislation to support the repatriation of Indigenous belongings and ancestors.

We recommend that federal and provincial/territorial governments support repatriation by enacting legislation with strong compliance measures, and with an accountability provision, that allows Indigenous representatives to ensure the legislation is being enforced in public and private collections. Legislation should also contain provisions for the financial needs of repatriation processes (see Recommendation #2).

This recommendation echoes similar recommendations made by the Indigenous Heritage Circle and Yellowhead Institute and was a matter of priority for the majority of Indigenous individuals and communities consulted on this project.

### 2. Provide dedicated funding for the repatriation process.

The repatriation process is currently a very costly and resource-intensive process for Indigenous communities involving extensive and difficult research costs, legal costs, costs of physical transfer and capacity, and infrastructure development within Indigenous communities.

We recommend that federal and provincial/territorial governments cover the costs to Indigenous communities of the repatriation process through dedicated and ongoing funding. This should be considered an investment that will have ongoing cultural and economic benefits for Indigenous communities and Canadians generally.

### 3. Bolster financial support for Indigenous cultural centres, Indigenous-led national heritage organizations and Indigenous-led commemorative activities.

Indigenous cultural centres and national heritage organizations need sustainable resources to support community goals of self-determination and to lead work on UNDRIP implementation in the museum and heritage sector.

Funding bodies should prioritize financial support for Indigenous cultural centres, Indigenous-led national heritage organizations and Indigenous-led commemorative activities, including the implementation of TRC Calls to Action 81 and 82 as Indigenous-led interpretive museum endeavours. Dedicated funding for capacity, infrastructure, core funding, repatriation, etc. must be provided.

This must be done with an understanding that this is an investment that will have ongoing cultural and economic benefits for Indigenous communities and Canadians generally.

To support the findings of this report, the CMA has issued the following recommendations.

## Recommendations

### 4. **Revise the National Museum Policy and Museums Assistance Program.**

As foundational planning and funding streams for museums in Canada, the National Museum Policy and Museums Assistance Program must be revised to support and enforce the Principles of UNDRIP in their structures and delivery.

This report recognizes that sustainable core funding for museums will strengthen the capacity of museums to be supportive partners in the decolonization process, and therefore also recommend that MAP funding is restored to its 1972 level adjusted for inflation.

### 5. **Revise application processes to support Indigenous self-determination.**

We recommend that application processes for Indigenous-focused heritage funding, grants and projects monitor for and require Indigenous leadership or authoritative guidance for their work. For example, through KPI measurement, Memoranda of Understanding, letters of support, etc.

### 6. **Develop a cohesive collections strategy.**

We recommend that museums collectively, under the authoritative guidance of Indigenous experts, organizations, and communities, and represented by museums associations in Canada and abroad, develop a cohesive strategy to identify and improve access to collections both nationally and internationally. This should include monitored and measurable outcomes related to repatriation.

This recommendation echoes and supports a similar recommendation made by the IHC and insists that this work must be carried out in a way that is appropriate to Indigenous protocols and inclusive of Indigenous knowledge systems with a goal of better facilitating repatriation, and to “ensure that the concepts of stewardship and protection are relevant to Indigenous heritage values, protocols, and methods.” (*Indigenous Heritage and the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*, Indigenous Heritage Circle) As recommended by the Indigenous Heritage Circle, this work should include adjustments to the National Digitization Strategy.



To support the findings of this report, the CMA has issued the following recommendations.

# Recommendations

### 7. Implement UNDRIP within all provinces and territories.

While UNDRIP has been enacted at the federal level, the structure of Canadian governance means that the outcomes of the legislation will be limited to the small number of items within federal jurisdiction.

We recommend that all cultural heritage workers advocate for the implementation of UNDRIP within all provinces and territories, and maintain pressure on governments who have enacted it to flow UNDRIP into actionable legislation in order to better enforce Indigenous sovereignty equitably within the Canadian heritage sector.

### 8. Review existing laws related to heritage for compliance with UNDRIP.

In line with recommendations provided by the Indigenous Heritage Circle, we also call for a review and revision of laws that intersect with Indigenous heritage. This is inclusive of the Cultural Property Export and Import Act, the Canadian Copyright Act, and federal and provincial/territorial not-for-profit and societies acts, among others.

### 9. Develop a national UNDRIP professional development strategy for museum professionals.

We recommend that the consortium of museums associations, under the authoritative guidance of Indigenous experts, organizations, and communities develop a national UNDRIP professional development strategy. The goal of the strategy is to assist museums in implementing UNDRIP at each level of their operations and within all museum positions. This work should establish a national baseline, use sector resources efficiently, and prioritize the needs of small and medium sized museums.

### 10. Support the development of peer networks and mentorship.

We recommend that cultural heritage organizations prioritize and support the development of peer networks and mentorship programs that support Indigenous cultural heritage workers, particularly those that prepare them for leadership positions within Canadian institutions.



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| 54 | The Review   |

# Repatriation and Collections

## Don't Wait, Repatriate!

*"1. Indigenous [P]eoples have the right to manifest, practise, develop and teach their spiritual and religious traditions, customs and ceremonies; the right to maintain, protect, and have access in privacy to their religious and cultural sites; the right to the use and control of their ceremonial objects; and the right to the repatriation of their human remains.*

*2. States shall seek to enable the access and/or repatriation of ceremonial objects and human remains in their possession through fair, transparent and effective mechanisms developed in conjunction with [the] [I]ndigenous [P]eoples concerned."*

UNDRIP Article 12

Repatriation of belongings is an essential part of upholding the articles of UNDRIP. Specifically, repatriation is referenced in UNDRIP Article 12, but also implied in Article 11, which upholds the right of Indigenous peoples to "maintain, protect, and develop the past, present, and future manifestations of their cultures, such as archaeological and historical sites, artefacts, designs, ceremonies, technologies, and visual and performing arts and literature." As UNDRIP makes clear, the continued dispossession and disconnection between living culture and artefacts/belongings held in collections limits the self-determination of Indigenous Peoples.

### Rematriation

There is growing usage of the term rematriation as an alternative to repatriation. Indigenous cultural workers may choose to use this term for many reasons, including an acknowledgement of matrilineal heritage systems, as well as an acknowledgement of patriarchy and colonialism.

Given the legal context of this report, we use the narrower term of repatriate but encourage museums to ask which term is preferred when working with Indigenous Nations.

*"By 'rematriate' we mean 'give back,' but unlike the legal term 'repatriate,' which signifies a simple transfer of ownership, 'rematriate' means something more profound: a restoration of right relationships and a true action of decolonization, aimed not just at righting a past wrong but transforming our collective future."*

Thunder Bay Library Rematriation Project

## SECTION 4: REPATRIATION AND COLLECTIONS

Power remains held by museums and related institutions regarding policy formulation, guidelines for deaccessioning, methods for return, and parameters related to collections, including classification, preservation and care. Museums must work to transfer that power to Indigenous Nations through significant decolonization in the policies, processes, categorization, and approaches to cultural belongings.

While colonial legal frameworks may uphold a museum's right to keep items within their collection, the historical and ongoing colonial context of their acquisition calls into question the ethical or moral right of a museum to possess them. Put another way, belongings acquired under duress must be considered unethically acquired.

It is best that museums move forward as though all belongings are to be returned to Indigenous Nations until determined otherwise through community consent. Only in cases where repatriation is not currently possible or desirable for these Nations, stewardship or alternative agreements are to be made based on the protocols of those Nations.



Yukon Historical & Museums Association Roundtable, April 21, 2022

### Belongings

Of central importance is the difference in meaning attached to “artefacts” or objects, terms used formerly by Western institutions, versus cultural belongings by Indigenous communities.

Some non-Indigenous cultural heritage workers may incorrectly determine that artefacts are simply objects of significance for learning about the past. In contrast, many Indigenous communities regard their belongings as kin, which includes not only cultural objects, but all intangible heritage and Indigenous intellectual property, including maps, photographs, archival documents, and songs, plants, seeds, and language recordings. These belongings are living parts of Indigenous traditional knowledge systems, cultural expressions, and Indigenous intellectual property.

It should be noted that not all Indigenous communities make use of the term belongings, and that care should be taken to determine what terms are in use in a community context.

The use of the term cultural belongings is already a standard for museums in Quebec. Defined in the first iteration of the provincial Cultural Property Act [Loi sur les biens culturels], it defines biens culturels, which translates to cultural belongings or cultural property, as all items of cultural heritage including artworks, historic sites, multimedia, etc., regardless of their affiliation to an Indigenous community. An Indigenous specific term is yet to be defined.

*“Many objects in museums are meant to be used, they are also living in the sense that in communities, families, and homes, they have a role, they belong and are utilized. And when they leave a family, they are no longer passed on as they are meant to be and the stories and teachings that go with the object are also not transmitted.”*

Mashteuiatsh Listening Circle

### The Standard

The standard is for the return of cultural belongings to occur with the full involvement of the appropriate Indigenous Nation as equal partners, with research and funding capacity coming from museums at every step. The rejoining of cultural belongings and community is something that should be done in earnest, with respect and a strong sense of service and stewardship that emphasizes Indigenous self-determination throughout.

*“If Canada is serious about UNDRIP we have a right to be the owners of our own cultural heritage.”*

Métis Crossing Listening Circle

#### **Recommended Resource:** **UNDRIP and Indigenous Heritage**

For an assessment of UNDRIP’s application to repatriation and collections in the heritage sector and museums, review Catherine Bell and Melissa Erickson’s UNDRIP and Indigenous Heritage Report, developed as a companion resource.

*See 5.2 Belongings – Access, Care, Repatriation*

There is no question that all cultural belongings must be returned to their home Nation, family, or individual, as deemed appropriate by the Indigenous rights holders. However, measures must also be taken to identify, contact, and initiate repatriations from the side of museums to take the onus off of Indigenous rights holders. Alternative options such as transfer of title, loans, replication, or shared stewardship are interim measures only unless otherwise determined by the Indigenous rights holders.

*“Museums need to give up their sense of ownership and get past the sense of fear in giving up their ‘stuff’.”*

Burnaby Village Roundtable

Repatriation initiatives have been prioritized and led by Indigenous Peoples for generations. The 1992 Task Force Report references repatriation as both a highlighted topic from consultations and in its recommendation. Section III, the Results of Consultations, Item D reveals a consensus among those consulted that was “in favour of a return of human remains and illegally obtained objects and with certain non-skeletal burial materials and other sacred objects... [along with] some agreement on the return to originating communities of a selection of other objects considered to be of special significance to cultural patrimony.”



*Métis Crossing Listening Circle, March 23, 2021*

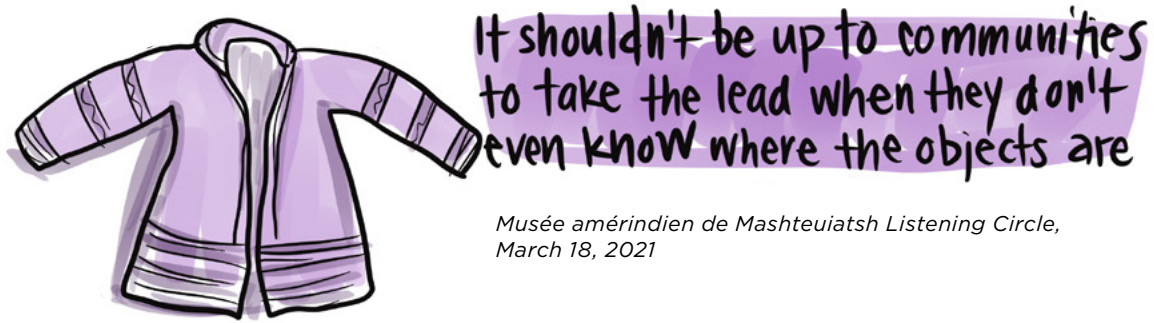
## SECTION 4: REPATRIATION AND COLLECTIONS

*The 1992 report refers to the repatriation or restitution of “Objects of Cultural Patrimony” and defines eligible objects as “human remains, burial objects, sacred and ceremonial objects, and other cultural objects that have ongoing historical, traditional or cultural import to an Aboriginal community or culture.”*

(Section IV, Recommendation 3)

By today’s standards, the categories of belongings considered for repatriation are much more expansive and clearly defined, and includes not only ancestral remains and cultural belongings, but also associated information, such as the results of research, photographs, works of art, maps, archival documents, songs, plants, seeds, language recordings, digital material, and any other information related to the traditional knowledge, cultures, histories, and intellectual property of Indigenous Peoples.

It is also important to consider relevant Indigenous ceremonial practices in the care for and repatriation of collections. Numerous Indigenous communities have important spiritual practices that are essential to the care and stewardship of belongings, these must be respected and accommodated at a level that exceeds Western collections care practices.



*Musée amérindien de Mashteuiatsh Listening Circle,  
March 18, 2021*

### Whose job is this?

Simply put, the bulk of work of repatriation should fall to the museum, with Indigenous communities informing the work at every step. Boards and administrators must understand and be proactive in implementation and practice.

Ideas or fears that strong repatriation legislation and initiatives may lead to the emptying of museums should be set aside. The actual practice of repatriation is nuanced and takes a variety of forms including physical repatriation, transfer of title and provision of replicas to name a few. The point of this work is to centre Indigenous Peoples as the owners and stewards of their belongings and move away from the museum as the authority.

*“Repatriating items that do not belong to museums is NOT reconciliation, it’s their job.”*

Burnaby Village Roundtable

## SECTION 4: REPATRIATION AND COLLECTIONS

### The Language of Repatriation

Understanding the importance of terminology and language across languages is an important part of the decolonization process. Below you will find the terms “**community stewardship, caretaking and conservation/preservation**” translated into several Indigenous languages, and then translated back. What do you learn about cultural understanding underlying each term?

#### Anishinaabemowin

| Term                      | Meaning                          |
|---------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Oodenaang Ganawenchigewin | Caring for things in the village |
| Weweni Odaapinigewin      | Carefully taking things          |
| Weweni Ganawenchigewin    | Carefully caring for things      |

#### Denesuline

| Term                                                  | Meaning                                 |
|-------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------|
| Hayorłá koę ęła Yanisë hots'ł<br>nuhëch'anië bëghoëdí | Looking after the community<br>together |

#### Cree

| Term                                                                                             | Meaning                                           |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------|
| Ihtawinihk ohci mamawi<br>kitenecikewin                                                          | Looking after the community<br>together           |
| mamawi tipenecilewin                                                                             | Ownership of self                                 |
| kitenecikewin mena                                                                               | Taking care of things                             |
| pimocikewin manacikewin ka<br>itenitamahk ek                                                     | Being careful, responsible                        |
| mamawi tipenotamahl oma<br>kekwayk ka ahcakowik<br>mena eka ahcakowokkka ki<br>nakatamakaweyahka | Ownership of the spiritual that<br>was left to us |

*Note that these translations are meant to illustrate a concept and are not authoritative. They are not reflective of region or dialect, and we acknowledge that different speakers may produce different translations.*



## The Language of Repatriation ctd.

## Innu-Aimun

| Term                                                                 | Meaning           |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------|
| Innu-assi, kunuenitashun, akua e tutatshishunanut Minu-kunuenitakanu | Acquire knowledge |

## Inuktitut

| Term                 | Meaning                              |
|----------------------|--------------------------------------|
| ፈቃድ ለገረብ/ገረብ ምክትል    | Respecting the land/protector        |
| ሥራ ለሥራ ማድረግ/ለሥራ ማድረግ | Not damaging anything/<br>protective |

## Kanien'kehá:ka (Mohawk)

| Term                                                  | Meaning                                        |
|-------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------|
| Kanakeráhsera tehatihsnie's/<br>ronterihwatsterihstha | Community taking care/<br>managing the affairs |
| Ratinónhstats                                         | Protecting                                     |

## Michif

| Term           | Meaning               |
|----------------|-----------------------|
| Pishishkayihta | Regard for things     |
| Kischipayahtik | Carefully take things |
| Ashwayhta      | Careful of things     |

## Tsilhqot'in

| Term                                                                                                                                   | Meaning                                                                                                                                         |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Nexwenen gwaxe^htan / eguh or /Esghaydam<br>nexwelajegwaghinli gat\$'i su<br>belh nahnih - nen, nexwech'ih<br>deni nelhin gagunlhchugh | Those lands you are taking care of or preserve / look after all that your ancestors have handed down to you (pl) - lands, your (pl) way of life |

*Note that these translations are meant to illustrate a concept and are not authoritative. They are not reflective of region or dialect, and we acknowledge that different speakers may produce different translations.*

### Beyond Collections Access: Ownership, Control and Possession

Both the Task Force Report and the 1996 Report of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples (RCAP) assert the need for better collections access in relation to repatriation. In the case of RCAP, the recommendations included: *“Creating inventories of relevant holdings and making such inventories freely accessible to Aboriginal people; d) Cataloguing and designating appropriate use and display of relevant holdings”* (Volume 3, Gathering Strength, 3.6.4, 560-61).

Also stated in the 1992 Task Force Report are considerations for Indigenous rights to access collections. While neither RCAP nor the 1992 report link repatriation initiatives to issues related to access to collections, our engagements have made clear that there is a clear correlation between the two.

The new standard for this work lies in the recognition that Indigenous Peoples have intellectual sovereignty over all material created by or about them, as defined in UNDRIP Article 31. This includes the right to know about these belongings and connected traditional knowledge or intangible heritage, as well as the right to control access to these.



Our  
Museum houses  
People's belongings  
-robes, blankets-  
they can come  
get their belongings  
anytime.



We care  
for their  
belongings like a baby



Our treasures/  
belongings in  
museums are  
like family members  
held hostage

Saahlinda Naay (Haida Gwaii Museum)  
Listening Circle, February 8, 2021

We have heard that successful repatriation efforts require capacity for research initiatives to identify items and gather evidence to support a claim along with funding to support the physical and legal costs associated with repatriating.

*“A whole generation of people are coming that have the energy to fight for our representation in spaces. We are coming for our stuff. We are coming to have those conversations.”*

Haida Gwaii Listening Circle

To support this work, museums should examine, revisit, and ready their collections to enable themselves to actively notify Indigenous rights holders. This includes reviewing and changing approaches to collections management to better facilitate repatriation requests, including naming conventions, labelling, and re-examining the provenance of items.

Additionally, ensuring items are accessioned, are being respectfully stored and cared for, that Indigenous ceremonial practices are incorporated, conducting consultations before digitizing a collection, assessing areas requiring consultation, and documenting protocols or questions regarding access and use are central activities for collections management.

## SECTION 4: REPATRIATION AND COLLECTIONS

### **Recommended Resource:** **The First Nations in Quebec and Labrador's Research Protocol**

*Assembly of First Nations Quebec-Labrador*

The First Nations in Quebec and Labrador's Research Protocol is a guide for First Nations communities and regional organizations and research communities to establish rules for research activities performed with First Nations in their territory.

The protocol highlights three fundamental values to implement a collaborative research project between a First Nations community and researchers. The protocol addresses self determination for Quebec First Nations and it facilitates development of programmes and services designed by and for First Nations according to the realities of each community. The protocol also has been adopted in all contexts concerning the Inuit of Nunavik.

The AFNQL is attached to the Assembly of First Nations (AFN) and is the meeting point for the Chiefs of 43 communities of the First Nations of Quebec and Labrador.

The work is also bigger than just one institution; museums and other cultural memory institutions must work together to connect their collections, assisting in the rejoining of material cultures with their related traditional cultural knowledge systems and ceremonies.

*"It is really heartbreaking to think about how so much of why we now struggle to articulate those ceremonies or those important parts in Indigenous life are because these things have been deliberately dissected and taken into different institutions. For me, archives, museums, libraries—they all have to exist together, because they are all bringing different puzzle pieces together to help rebuild these knowledge systems."*

Jessie Loyer

### Illegally Obtained Ancestral Remains and Belongings

To comply with UNDRIP, museums must identify and divest their collections of items that have questionable provenance and return these to the appropriate individuals/communities. Expanding the defined period of duress becomes exceedingly important when assessing the legality of museums to return Indigenous cultural belongings.

*“Need to shift the paradigms of colonial idea of triumph of collection to thinking about how objects were acquired.”*

Burnaby Village Roundtable

For Indigenous belongings in what is currently Canada, many link the period of duress to the application of the strict laws under the Indian Act (1876-1951). However, the implementation of the Indian Act was preceded by centuries of removal of cultural belongings and ancestral remains by missionaries, government agents, amateur and professional collectors, and anthropologists. Genocidal colonial practices like the potlatch ban, residential schools, forced relocations, and the criminalization of Indigenous legal, spiritual, economic, and social systems resulted in the confiscation, removal, or sale-under-duress of many culturally important items.

#### Duress and Repatriation

The presence of duress calls into question the voluntariness of an acquisition. Duress is defined by one of the participating parties of any trade of goods or intellectual property being forced to act against their will or better judgement due to threat, violence or societal constraint.

Indigenous Peoples are seeking the return of their cultural belongings and ancestral remains and have long asserted that these were removed under duress due to political or religious coercion, dire economic circumstances, and other circumstances that meet the definition of duress. Any acquisitions taken from Indigenous communities under duress are considered unethical.

Moreover, acquisitions acquired under duress are not merely unethical. The presence of duress also impedes Indigenous rights as defined in UNDRIP. Their continued use, display, and ownership by museums violates the rights of Indigenous Peoples to free, prior and informed consent.

Some museums have developed policies and procedures that consider items acquired under duress qualified for deaccession or return. For example, the Smithsonian's Collections Management policy as of April 29, 2022, authorizes Smithsonian museums to return collections, in appropriate circumstances, based on ethical considerations, including those taken under duress.

In 2019, the Royal BC Museum announced that anything it acquired from Indigenous Peoples during the anti-potlatch years, from 1885 to 1951, will be considered eligible for repatriation because it was obtained at a time of duress.

However, as stated in this report, many consider the period of duress to extend far before and beyond the application of the *Indian Act* in Canada.

## SECTION 4: REPATRIATION AND COLLECTIONS

This period of duress does not have an end-date for Indigenous communities, many who are grappling with housing, access to clean water, and intergenerational trauma caused by colonial policies and practices such as the residential school system and the foster care system. Ongoing labour policies also do not prioritize participation in ceremonies that are essential to cultural self-determination. Therefore, the new standard is to consider that in many cases the period of duress begins with contact and continues today.

*“Indian agents confiscated and profited from items taken under duress. Many of these items were dispersed to government agencies and private collectors and they need to be given back.”*

Wanuskewin Listening Circle

Read the *Historical Considerations* section of this report for more information.



## Indigenous-Directed Preservation and Care

In line with the 1992 Task Force Report, museums are urged to share management of their collections by involving the appropriate Indigenous Nations when defining care, access, storage, use, and to recognize the traditional authority or individual ownership systems of the originating culture. These must be enforceable and actionable. By today's standards, in no way should these take the place of formal repatriation processes, except in circumstances where this is advised by the Indigenous rights holders.

### Indigenous Rights Holders

Indigenous rights refer to practices, traditions, and customs that distinguish the unique culture of First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Nations. Indigenous rights holders are Indigenous Peoples who hold title to Indigenous rights.

Indigenous rights are inherent, collective rights that have been held since time immemorial and flow and from legal and social orders created by each Indigenous Nation. These rights are maintained and protected in many ways, including in Section 35 of the *Canadian Constitution Act*.

### Not Stakeholders

'Stakeholder' is a common corporate term for partners. It is more appropriate to refer to Indigenous Peoples as rights holders rather than stakeholders.

## SECTION 4: REPATRIATION AND COLLECTIONS

Regarding the stewardship of collections, the notions of legacy and ongoing consent are no longer useful. Instead, this must be considered as an ongoing relationship that is renewed with Indigenous rights holders in a way that is defined by Indigenous laws and cultural protocols.

### **Recommended Resource:** **Caring for sacred and culturally sensitive objects**

*Miriam Clavir and John Moses*

Caring for sacred and culturally sensitive objects is part of CCI's Preventive conservation guidelines for collections online resource. This section presents key considerations related to sacred and culturally sensitive objects in heritage collections.

Museums must take care not to prescribe methods of preservation or care in order to repatriate, or once cultural belongings have been repatriated. The standard is that it must be left to Indigenous rights holders on how to best care for or lay to rest the items that have been repatriated. Recognize that this varies according to context and Nation-specific ceremonies and cultural protocols. Museums should accommodate necessary ceremonial practices while items are still within museum collections, and as a part of the return of the item. This may include smudging, food burning, or other protocols and ceremonies as defined by the communities.

*"Museums may be reluctant to give back because Indigenous People might end up burying them and museums would see it as a loss rather than honouring the ancestors."*

Membertou Listening Circle

However, this does not mean that responsibility for providing resources to assist in repatriation ends with the return of ancestors or belongings. When requested by the community, resources and training should be offered by the museum to learn Western methods of safeguarding and preserving cultural belongings in ways defined by Indigenous rights holders.

It is also important to document what belongings have been contaminated (ie. arsenic, fumigants, lead paint, etc.) as part of early conservation practices to ensure Indigenous Nations are not poisoned by the use of their cultural belongings once returned.



### Reconsidering Collections Policies

Where most existing museum collections policies provide a step-by-step process for receiving donations and accessioning them, collections policies need to pause the process for donations of Indigenous origin to contact the Indigenous Nation associated with the proposed donation. When the affiliated nation cannot be identified, the museum should make space in any agreements with the donor that would allow the museum to repatriate to the community of origin at a later time.

Deaccessioning should likewise be considered an opportunity for repatriation, as well as a transfer of ownership for items that are not officially within a museum's collection. Whereas the CMA's ***Deaccessioning Guidelines*** call for other accredited museums to be given a place of preference when deaccessioning an item, this preference should instead be given to the community of origin.

### Decolonizing Repatriation Policies

Ensuring that repatriation policies enable museum staff to proactively act regarding repatriations is the new standard. Recognition that concepts of ownership, governance, and laws vary between Indigenous Nations and those by which the museum abides is central to these policy principles, as is recognition of intangible elements and importance of cultural belongings from Indigenous perspectives.

*“Proactive repatriation is necessary. Don’t put the burden on communities to find their objects, belongings and knowledge.”*

#### Mashteuiatsh Listening Circle

Museums with Indigenous collections should have formalized repatriation policies to empower museum staff and the Indigenous communities to carry out this work and resource it appropriately. It is important that museums take time to formalize a policy, rather than working on a case-by-case basis so that a consistent approach aligned with UNDRIP is applied to every repatriation.

It is also important that the policy be easily accessible to communities, either as a public document or clearly and easily obtained by request to the institution. Obscuring access to any official policies and/or an inconsistent approach to repatriation work reinforces the museum's inherent power in the repatriation process, which is inconsistent with the goals of decolonization.

### Overlapping Claims

The 1992 Task Force report expressly placed the onus on Indigenous Peoples to resolve disputes regarding overlapping claims to belongings or ancestors. While our research indicates this is currently the predominant policy approach, the new standard is to approach resolution to these claims in a manner that is supportive to Indigenous Nations.

We have heard of circumstances where placing these negotiations outside of museum involvement has halted repatriation. Repatriation experts consulted for the purposes of this report agree that museums cannot remove themselves from the process entirely but can assist by providing research capacity, funding support, and assisting as a facilitator where appropriate. Developing research frameworks that support and reflect Indigenous perspectives, including considering the local Indigenous views on territory and governance, reflecting Indigenous approaches to intellectual property can support culturally appropriate approaches to addressing disputes.



*Kanaweyimik, Battlefords Tribal Council, Whitecap Dakota First Nations, Western Development Museum Roundtable, March 14, 2022*

## SECTION 4: REPATRIATION AND COLLECTIONS

### Fund the Full Process

Museums with Indigenous collections need to make repatriation costs a part of their operational plan allowing available and limited Indigenous-focused grant funding to be reserved for Indigenous communities. Over time and today, museums with Indigenous collections have monetarily benefitted from Indigenous holdings through admissions, fees for loans, film and image permissions and cannot plead lack of resources or inability to provide assistance.

In addition to this, revenue sharing with the communities whose cultural belongings have benefitted the museum must also be a consideration here.

All museums can also support advocacy efforts to make more funding available by working together to assert the need for more proactive financial support from all levels of government.

See the Operations report section for more information.

*“Repatriation mainstreams real history, provides opportunity for reparation, healing, cultural revitalization, economic benefits, capacity building. It benefits everyone.”*

Nika Collison, Reconciliation Council Member

#### **Moved to Action Resource** **More than Giving Back**

This quick reference guide provides additional information and resources to support repatriation and collections management practices.

#### **Moved to Action Resource** **Small Museums Handbook**

This concise but comprehensive handbook considers small museum approaches, strengths and unique challenges in a scaled-down review of the report content.



Avataq Institute Roundtable, June 20, 2022

### The Review

The centrality of repatriation to Indigenous cultural sovereignty cannot be overstated. Within our engagement work, repatriation was an area of focus and concern for every Indigenous community and individual we consulted, frequently listed as a top priority for cultural engagement work. Many times, it was frankly stated that reconciliation cannot begin until repatriations have occurred.

Information concerning the number of repatriations following the 1992 Task Force report is limited, but testimony from Indigenous communities and current collections numbers indicate the frequency and quality of repatriations from Canadian museums does not comply with UNDRIP. We heard that reasons for the low number of successful repatriations range from the lack of funding and capacity to complicated administrative processes, as well as hesitance from museums due to fear of mistakenly attributing repatriated belongings to the wrong community. Additionally, as previously stated, power is still held by museums regarding policy formulation, guidelines for deaccessioning, methods for return, and parameters related to collections, including classification, preservation, and care, making repatriation difficult for Indigenous communities.

The 2019 Government of Canada Survey of Heritage Institutions carried out specialized research on the status of Indigenous cultural artifacts and ancestral remains within Canadian museum collections. Findings indicate there are 6.7 million items in the care of Canadian cultural heritage institutions and that roughly 26% or one-quarter of Canadian heritage institutions house Indigenous cultural artifacts/belongings, with a much smaller number (1.3%) housing ancestral remains. Repatriation of cultural belongings is relevant to one quarter of Canadian institutions, and yet reported repatriation of objects is very low. We cannot enumerate the repatriations that have occurred as these have not been tracked nationally.

As one Nation-specific example, the Haida Nation has been locating and gathering information on Haida belongings since the mid-90s. The Haida Nation currently knows of over 12,000 pieces attributed to the Haida in upwards of 300 museums globally. These initiatives have lasted over thirty years and they have expended well over \$1M resulting in the return of the remains of just over 500 ancestors home from museums and universities.

## SECTION 4: REPATRIATION AND COLLECTIONS



Image courtesy of Rebecca L. Bourgeois. From *Repatriation in Canada: A Guide for Communities*. U of A: Edmonton, AB, 2022.

Canada does not currently have any federal legislation or federally-backed strategies for repatriation. In 2019, Bill C-391 Indigenous Human Remains and Cultural Property Repatriation Act received unanimous support in the House of Commons but failed to make it through Senate processes before the completion of parliamentary proceedings for the year. The proposed bill secured the development of a “national strategy for the repatriation of Indigenous human remains and cultural property” in cooperation with Indigenous Peoples across Canada. Some concerns with C-391 included the lack of funding attached to the process, although the hope was that these details, including funding processes, binding legal implications, and nationally-recognized jurisdiction for Indigenous communities in these matters, would be put forth as part of the resulting national strategy. Although repatriation itself as it relates to cultural heritage, falls under provincial jurisdiction, we heard in our consultations that the desire was to see federally-funded programs for repatriation with strict and binding guidelines to bolster the capacity and authority of Indigenous communities in these initiatives.

## SECTION 4: REPATRIATION AND COLLECTIONS

A legal and policy review at the time of this report indicates that Alberta's provincial repatriation act is the only act in Canada, but this is restricted to Blackfoot cultural belongings and ancestral remains. As well, there are few institutions with formal repatriation policies. Two of nine federal museums and seven out of thirteen provincial/territorial museums have repatriation policies. In assessing the survey data collected by the CMA in 2019, out of 300+ respondents, few had formal policies in place at that time, although around 10 smaller museums indicated they were actively involved in discussions related to repatriation but do not have policies in place. Key Performance Indicator (KPI) research conducted to inform this report indicated that approximately 10% of promising institutions have publicly available repatriation policies, although anecdotally we know this number to be much higher, leading us to conclude that many of these policies are not publicly accessible.

Information collected from the side of museums during the engagement phase indicates that there remains a gap between approaches to repatriation among institutions. Some, like the Canadian Museum of History, have been actively repatriating ancestral remains and belongings since the 1970s, while others who have Indigenous items in their collections are unsure of where to start. The Royal Saskatchewan Museum has repatriated all ancestral remains.

### Key Performance Indicators

Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) are identified critical (key) measurable indicators of progress toward an intended result. KPIs are used to measure and analyze strategic and operational improvement. KPIs include setting targets (the desired level of performance) and tracking progress against that target.

For example, KPIs developed for the research and analysis of UNDRIP implementation for this report included the identification of measurable activities such as the existence of a repatriation policy as an indicator for the museum's intention to support repatriation requests from Indigenous communities. See the Methodology Section for more information.



## SECTION 4: REPATRIATION AND COLLECTIONS

It was noted that standard museum practices, whether intentionally or unintentionally, can be invoked such that they have the net effect of limiting or preventing Indigenous access to their cultural properties in institutions. For example, conservation principles and standards are still routinely invoked even today such that they have this outcome. Indigenous Peoples do not passively accept museums and their practices (including conservation) as unquestioned social goods, and Indigenous People are often most concerned with uncovering the circumstances under which Indigenous cultural properties came to leave Indigenous hands in the first place to end up in museums so far removed from their communities of origin.

Part of this problem could relate to a perceived bottleneck within Indigenous collections. The Heritage Survey (2019) indicated that of the 6.7 million items, 94% are cared for by the eight institutions with the largest archeological collections. While the survey does not indicate who these institutions are, we have determined these to be the following, based on the size of their archaeological collections. We understand these to possibly be:

- Canadian Museum of History
- Le Laboratoire et la Réserve d'archéologie du Québec
- Parks Canada
- Prince of Wales Northern Heritage Centre
- McCord Stewart Museum
- Museum of Manitoba
- Museum of Ontario Archaeology
- Royal British Columbia Museum (RBCM)
- Royal Ontario Museum

Indigenous communities with active repatriation programs have put significant effort into researching museums collections, identifying items, submitting proposals and obtaining funding for repatriation initiatives. Testimony heard from Indigenous communities in our engagements cited a lack of ability or capacity to access collections information or to locate items held by institutions. The process is often slow, underfunded, understaffed, not prioritized, and places an uneven burden on Indigenous communities to conduct the research and participate in the policy processes, or satisfy the burden of proof defined by the museums.

### Unclear Provenance

In our engagements with repatriation experts and museum professionals, we heard that even in collections that are digitized and accessible, the persistence of incorrect or vague terminology or references leads us to assume that there is not enough information available to clearly trace the provenance of belongings. Incorrect and outdated nomenclature, such as the use of colonial terms for places or tribal names for themselves can contribute to the confusion on the provenance of belongings.

Fear of misidentifying the community connected to the belongings was cited as a reason for hesitancy among some of these institutions. We heard examples where cultural belongings in collections are not well documented. Provenance, when known, is often unclear, or unverified, thus doubtful. Sometimes, the provenance and origin of the objects are an invention of its donor or seller. This means that no matter how well-intentioned the museum may be to return cultural belongings, without knowing the provenance, it is simply not possible.

*“When we talk about repatriation, one of the difficulties because of the uneven practice of documenting thoroughly and properly where different things have come from—there’s a lot of confusion as to where items came from because of Indian Affairs and the Indian Act separating communities, giving them different names—as a result, many museum databases actually use really old, outdated names and that doesn’t help communities when communities are trying to figure out where their treasures have landed.”*

Lou-Ann Neel, CMA Unvarnished podcast, “Day of Reckoning”

When looking at museums with online access to collections and archives, 35% of museums meet this criterion. Online access to collections and archives is found in most national and provincial/territorial museums and some regional museums. Art galleries tend to have more accessible online galleries, as several have curated Indigenous galleries available online. Most national, provincial/territorial, and some regional, museums have online access to collections and archives. Most are easily discoverable.

**Many communities don't know  
that their belongings are in  
museums**

*Musée amérindien de Mashteuiatsh  
Listening Circle, March 18, 2021*

## SECTION 4: REPATRIATION AND COLLECTIONS

While a few regional programs and initiatives exist for providing online access to collections, including the Reciprocal Research Network (RRN), there is nothing comprehensive and accessible or relevant to all communities nation-wide, although in our engagements we heard critical reflection on how any regional or national database of Indigenous collections would need to be culturally sensitive and culturally-specific regarding protocol related to digitization.

### Lack of Infrastructure

We heard that Indigenous communities often lack the infrastructure to house ancestral remains and cultural belongings. The recent Cultural Spaces in Indigenous Communities program launched by Crown Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada provides an indication of the need for these spaces, with 340 applications received across the country for FY 2022-23 for construction or revitalization of cultural spaces. Only 33 of these will be funded over the 2022-23 fiscal year.

*“Our museum here is too small. It would be good if our museums could be expanded. Lots of artifacts are in Montreal that could be displayed. Lots of collections are outside our museums but our museums are too small to hold them all.”*

Avataq Listening Circle

*“If there was a Nunavik-wide museum we would want all the artefacts to be brought back home—for example, if a big artefact could not bring it home, but if it was a Nunavik-wide museum we would be able to get it back.”*

Avataq Listening Circle

Even in cases where there is existing infrastructure in the form of cultural centres, we heard that these centres are often operationally under-resourced.

### Access to Collections

While we heard critical reflection on barriers to access to collections, there are examples where institutions have responded to community feedback and created accessible and creative programs to ensure collections access. There are also regional considerations here, particularly for those in the north. Difficulty of access to cultural centres in areas with only seasonal or fly-in access means that access to repatriated belongings is simply impossible when housed in large and centralized institutions.

*We need other ways for communities to access their heritage, even having access to lists & images of objects*

Musée amérindien de Mashteuiatsh  
Listening Circle, March 18, 2021

## SECTION 4: REPATRIATION AND COLLECTIONS

The Aanischaaukamikw Cree Cultural Institute's **Community Loans Program** has taken standard museological principles related to loans and revised them to serve the needs of community members utilizing a decolonised approach when incorporating belongings that are still in use into their research and exhibits. The program centres the needs of the lender at all times, allowing temporary and permanent removals of the object from the museum's collection in 24 hours and 7 days respectively. The program operates using verbal or written feedback from lenders and supports lender visits, as well as provides lenders with high resolution digital images.

See *Beyond Property and Trade: Establishing a Community Loans Program* (Muse Jan/Feb 2019) for more information.



Give communities  
special access  
& other ways for  
recognizing belonging,  
sharing, collaboration

*"Musée amérindien de Mashteuiatsh Listening Circle,  
March 18, 2021"*

The Reciprocal Research Network, an online tool to facilitate reciprocal and collaborative research about cultural heritage from the Northwest Coast of British Columbia, began with the Musqueam people, the Stó:lō Nation, and the U'mista Cultural Society & UBC Museum of Anthropology. It is an example of establishing ongoing respectful relationships and a model of how cultural memory institutions can develop research protocols specific to Nations or communities regarding tangible and intangible Indigenous knowledge in their collections. The RRN enables communities, cultural institutions and researchers to work together to research cultural items held at 29 institutions, all from the same convenient interface. Members can build their own projects, collaborate on shared projects, upload files, hold discussions, research museum projects, and create social networks.

From our KPI research, when looking at museums with online access to collections and archives, 30 of the 84 museums meet this criterion, with 8 coming from Western provinces (1 in Alberta, 3 in British Columbia, 3 in Manitoba, and 1 in Saskatchewan), 7 from Ontario and 5 from Atlantic provinces (2 from Nova Scotia and 3 from Newfoundland and Labrador) as well as 5 from Quebec and the North (4 in Yukon, 1 in Northwest Territories).

## SECTION 4: REPATRIATION AND COLLECTIONS

We also heard reflection on repatriation being one part of the spectrum of Indigenous initiatives within museums and heard recommendations on places where museums might assist in the revitalization of cultural knowledge by connecting communities to their collections. In particular, as a function of the history and legacy of the residential schools experience in Canadian history, the primary cultural and heritage priority for many Indigenous groups is language retention and language revitalization rather than the disposition of artifacts. In this sense, museums may be seen as useful to Indigenous groups to the extent they may retain little known language resources (manuscripts, sound recordings, etc.) in their archives that may assist in language revitalization efforts.

### Stewardship and Co-Management

As cited above, we heard that stewardship needs to be directed by Indigenous rights holders. In our engagements, we heard examples where Nation-specific rights-based frameworks guide these arrangements.

For example, in the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls Legacy Archive, the National Inquiry developed a set of policies governing the Legacy Archive that centres decolonizing Indigenous protocols for archives from its very foundations. Beginning with UNDRIP, the Legacy Archive's policies include Articles 8.1, 11.1, 12.1, 15.1, and 31.1.3. With that, the Legacy Archive will always allow a donor to change her/his/their minds about her/his/their donation in any capacity (continuing consent) and apply standards of free, prior, and informed consent. The power of ownership will always stay with the donor. The Legacy Archive will always be respectful of the relationship and honour the donation for which it was given.

We heard critical reflection on current collections policy approaches to donations and acquisitions. For example, if a donor offered to donate artwork created by a well known First Nations artist, the museum's current policy would be to accept the donation following their established procedures; however, if one applies UNDRIP, there is a question as to whether the museum has a moral, and possibly legal, obligation to contact the artist's family or community to determine whether the artworks should be accepted by the museum, or if the family and community should have the opportunity to discuss the return of the works to their home community.

## SECTION 4: REPATRIATION AND COLLECTIONS

As an agreement bringing together Indigenous principles and laws, the example of Carey Newman's witness blanket was often cited as a promising new approach. This innovative and ground-breaking agreement between the Canadian Museum for Human Rights and Newman for joint stewardship and caretaking of the Witness Blanket at the CMHR allowed for the syncretism of Kwakwaka'wakw law and governance and Canadian contract law to facilitate a long-term relationship based on a protocol agreement or memorandum of understanding. This powerful agreement lays out the CMHR's roles and responsibilities for physical caretaking and preservation as well as integrating spiritual components into the care of the Witness Blanket.

More space also needs to be made to incorporate Indigenous ceremonial practices into collections care models where they are defined by communities as essential to the care of the object. We heard many instances of museums not allowing smudging or food burnings to take place, predominantly citing collections care or facility policies and fire codes as a reason. In other instances, it was related that smudging, when permitted, was subject to disrespectful internal protocols that interrupted the proceedings.

## Urgent Need for Funding

Consulted Indigenous communities and non-Indigenous museums alike universally reported a lack of resources in repatriating items. To date, it has been predominantly Indigenous communities who have provided and secured financial resources. As stated previously, lack of access to funding was stated as one of the key hindrances to repatriation initiatives.

Regarding approaches to new funding streams, we heard that funding should be Indigenous-led, with the funds flowing through Indigenous communities to museum partners. From Indigenous community perspectives, we heard that museums shouldn't receive grants earmarked for Indigenous communities. We also heard that museums require additional resources for digitizing and making collections accessible.

### **Recommended resource:** **Indigenous Repatriation Handbook**

*Royal BC Museum and Haida Gwaii Museum*

This comprehensive resource presents a comprehensive review of the repatriation process that is helpful to both community and museum and includes relevant tools that will assist with the process.





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# Engagement and Partnership

## Think Beyond Museum Walls

*“Indigenous Peoples have the right to maintain and strengthen their distinct political, legal, economic, social and cultural institutions, while retaining their right to participate fully, if they so choose, in the political, economic, social and cultural life of the State.”*

UNDRIP, Article 5

*“Indigenous Peoples have the right to determine the responsibilities of individuals to their communities.”*

UNDRIP, Article 35

Engagement is a starting point and not the end goal for building partnerships with Indigenous communities and Nations. To align with UNDRIP, partnerships are not simply reciprocal: the power rests with the Indigenous communities to “determine the responsibilities of individuals to their communities,” as defined in UNDRIP Article 35. In other words, partnerships that centre and support Indigenous self-determination in accordance with UNDRIP take into consideration that Indigenous communities are sovereign rights holders.

As the method through which partnerships with Indigenous communities are initiated and maintained, the importance of Indigenous-led engagement cannot be understated. UNDRIP Article 18 asserts that Indigenous communities maintain “the right to participate in decision-making in matters which would affect their rights, through representatives chosen by themselves in accordance with their own procedures, as well as to maintain and develop their own Indigenous decision-making institutions.” This means all engagements must consider the needs of the communities first, support the interests of the communities as identified by them, and ensure that communities determine the form and procedure through which they are engaged.



Musée amérindien de Mashteuiatsh Listening Circle, March 18, 2021

### The Standard

The standard for engagement and partnerships with Indigenous Peoples is that this work must centre and support the needs and interests of Indigenous communities as identified by communities, while museums provide necessary resources to support and facilitate the work. Museums must consider their intentions for the engagement and ensure that the museum has the capacity to maintain the relationship for the long term.

*“Museums need to think about ‘who is this relationship for? Who is the gathering of this knowledge for? Where is that knowledge going?’”*

Métis Crossing Listening Circle

The 1992 Task Force Report focused on forming Indigenous-museum partnerships at every level of the museum, devoting an entire section to “Creating Partnerships” (Section IV), which outlines “equal partnership, mutual interest, co-responsibility, commonality of interest” as the core of these partnerships. Although a well-meaning first step, these specific recommendations are museum-centric and do not speak to first understanding community needs and interests.

With this context in mind, it is understandable that museum-initiated partnerships with Indigenous communities became the common method to incorporate Indigenous perspectives for museum-led projects and activities.

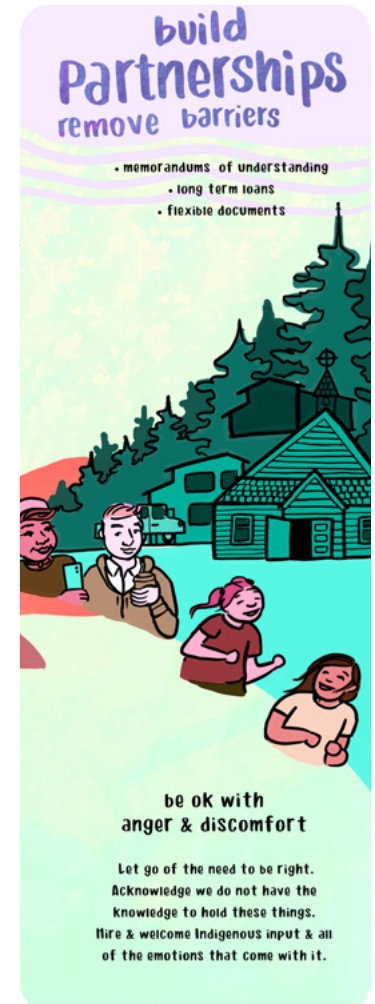
Whereas the Report drew attention to the need for partnerships with Indigenous communities in all areas of the institution, museums need to think beyond the simple engagement/consultation framework that has come to be the standard approach for these partnerships.

### Non-Extractive Partnerships

*“Invest in community collaboration. Formulate recommendations directly with communities. Leave capacity in community. Connections need to become institution-to-nation.”*

Heather Igoliorte,  
April 13, 2022

In our engagements, we heard that Indigenous communities were often approached with pre-formulated, one-time requests to fulfill a museum-driven project. These must be replaced with ongoing methods of participation that centre Indigenous rights and ceremonies, are responsive to community-specific needs, and leave capacity in communities long-term.



*Reconciliation and UNDRIP for Small Museums CMA National Conference, April 27, 2022*

## SECTION 5: ENGAGEMENT AND PARTNERSHIP

We heard that museums who built more successful relationships began with an offer to assist with current Indigenous community initiatives, and not with a request that the community support museum programs. Requests were in line with the long-term goals of the community, reflected community protocols, and supported long-standing relationship building.

Ideally, engagement work being carried out by your institution will have resulted in long and lasting bonds where Indigenous community members feel reflected and supported by your institution and want to deepen the connection.

*“If you do good work, people will ask you to come back and do some more.”*

Malvina Eagle, Western Development Museum Roundtable, March 15, 2022.

### Indigenous-Led & Community-Responsive

*“We have to accept that institutional timelines do not fit community capacity. Requests should be accompanied with a right of refusal and a right to demand support.”*

Karine Duhamel

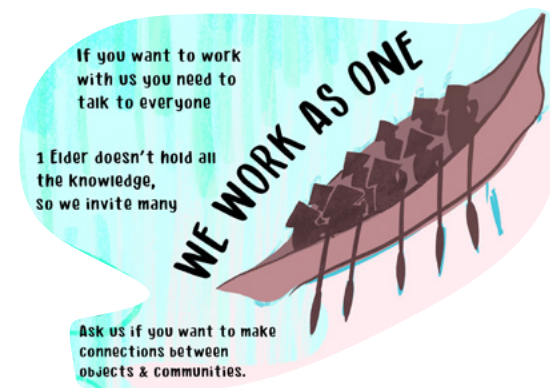
Time, labour, funding, and capacity are central to this work. Today’s standard is to de-prioritize institutional timelines and respect the amount of time relationship building takes on the part of the community, which includes supporting Indigenous protocols and ceremonies. As Indigenous community members are often tasked with labour involved with relationship building, this time must be recognized and compensated by institutions.

#### **Recommended Resource: UNDRIP and Indigenous Heritage**

For an assessment of UNDRIP’s application to engagement and consultation in the heritage sector and museums, review Catherine Bell and Melissa Erickson’s UNDRIP and Indigenous Heritage Report, developed as a companion resource.

*See 5.6 Community Perspectives, Involvement & Support*

In engagements with Indigenous communities, we heard that communities are often approached without conducting any foundational work ahead of time. Indigenous communities we consulted suggested that, where possible, research the community’s strategic plan or priorities. Ensure that all leadership and staff are informed of the community before approaching them with a request. Be cautious not to come with a pre-formulated plan.



*Avataq Institute Roundtable,  
June 20, 2022*

## SECTION 5: ENGAGEMENT AND PARTNERSHIP

Museums also need to approach any requests respecting that the community may not have the desire or the capacity to partner at this time. Remember that an invitation is not engagement.

Those undertaking engagement initiatives should consult the Building an Engagement Strategy from the Inside Out self-serve facilitated session toolkit that has accompanied this report.

### Recommended Resource: Towards Braiding

*Elwood Jimmy and Vanessa Andreotti with Sharon Stein*

***Towards Braiding*** is an ongoing collaborative process between Elwood Jimmy and Vanessa Andreotti hosted and funded by the Musagetes Arts Foundation.

This collaboration involves several modes of relational engagement with Indigenous and non-Indigenous artists, scholars, and communities, including visits, gatherings, and consultations.

- **Towards Braiding** (download the book)
- **Towards Braiding handout 1:** For organizations starting the journey [of engagement with Indigenous Peoples, knowledges, communities)
- **Towards Braiding handout 2:** Mis-steps on the path to braiding: opening conversations about inappropriate and appropriative engagements

## Consolidating an Approach

Staff who lead engagement and partnership work are able to do more when they have strong financial and structural support. Making a strong choice to support UNDRIP by decolonizing and prioritizing UNDRIP through board dynamics, strategic plans and policies will ensure that staff carrying out engagement work can do so confidently knowing they will be supported by the institution and have access to the resources they require to be informed of history and current paradigms, and to support their growth in prioritizing decolonization and anti-racism.

See the *Operations* and *Governance* sections of this report for more information.

### Nothing About Us Without Us

"Nothing about us without us" is a slogan that has long stood for calls for self-governance, with origins going back to the development of Central European democracy in the 16th century. It was popularized by disability rights activists in the 1990s.

The term is meant to assert the right of people to be directly involved in decision making processes that represent them. This term has been adopted by Indigenous people often in reference to asserting their right to authority and control over their cultural heritage, including cultural objects, intangible heritage, intellectual property, and representations and interpretations of their history, culture, and traditional knowledge. It was frequently shared throughout engagement sessions for the CMA Reconciliation Program.

### Think Beyond Museum Walls

*"Institutions can be an entryway sometimes, but it's only the door. It's not coming in and sitting at the kitchen table."*

Métis Crossing Listening Circle

Participants advised that today's standard is for museums to bring their engagement and partnership activities beyond formal museum space by taking themselves to the community with whom they want to engage. This shifts the power dynamic between the potential partners. This is not meant to be simply an outreach strategy, but conducted in the spirit of full reciprocal partnership, and can indicate a starting point that prioritizes community needs, rather than having museum needs prioritized over those of the community.

This also allows the museum to develop a deeper understanding of the community with whom they want to work and should be viewed as a positive learning experience for museum staff.

*"We need to move focus away from museums as a permanent space but think of this as part of a temporary camp within traditional territory."*

Mary Jane Johnston, Yukon Historical & Museums Association Roundtable



Kanawayimik, Battlefords Tribal Council, Whitecap Dakota First Nations, Western Development Museum Roundtable, March 14, 2022



### Re-Evaluating Compensation

*“Working with a museum’s process can be off-putting and overwhelming. We need support to navigate through the systems. Have Indigenous People to support that work. Make sure it is mutually beneficial. The first step begins with consultation with many people, including representation from Elders, youth and others. Pay people for the work they are doing. We are not doing work for free; compensation and community gain needs to be considered.”*

Lennox Island First Nation Listening Circle

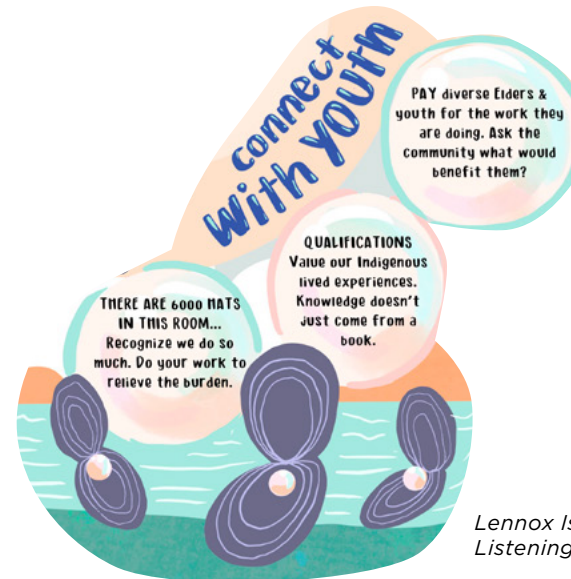
Many Indigenous cultural heritage professionals expressed dissatisfaction with remuneration practices when working with museums. Often being asked to work for free or at a very low cost, compensation is not currently accounting for the generations of ancestral knowledge and scholarship. Museums will need to show a financial commitment to recognize the time, labour, and knowledge that flows from engagement work.

A review of the CARFAC fee schedule, or regionally created honorarium payment guidelines, can be a starting point for budgeting purposes, but ultimately it will need to the community or individual that sets the rate.

For projects and activities that require longer partnership commitments, trading “one-off” honorariums in favour of creating positions for Indigenous experts is the new standard. Doing so formalizes these roles as part of museum operations, allowing for further professionalized recognition of Indigenous knowledge. This formally folds partnerships into the museum, gives access to human resources, administration, and other museum support. It also means the museum takes on legal responsibilities associated with labour and human resources.

*“It is important that Indigenous educators are paid staff because they can bring their history to the job, and they’re bringing representation to the history because they were not mentioned in textbooks.”*

Burnaby Village Roundtable



Lennox Island First Nation  
Listening Circle, April 5, 2022



### Indigenous Authority and Intellectual Property in Exhibits and Programming

*“In relation to exhibits and interpretation, the standard is the all-encompassing involvement of Indigenous Nations from start to completion, as guided and defined by the Nations themselves. Non-Indigenous museums play an important role in how Indigenous People are understood, history, present, and future. Showing Indigenous Peoples’ traditions with no sense of current vibrant culture and future can have some very specific impacts on perceptions as not part of the present fabric.”*

Métis Crossing Listening Circle

For outcomes of engagement and partnerships such as exhibits and programming, all representation must be Indigenous-developed, thoroughly reviewed and approved, and all authority attributed to the Indigenous partners with whom the outcomes are developed. This was also highlighted in the Task Force Report, which states *“Museums should ensure that First Peoples are involved in the processes of planning, research, implementation, presentation, and maintenance of all exhibitions, programs and/or other projects that include Aboriginal cultures.”*

By today’s standard, all knowledge and intellectual property must be properly credited, and all outcomes provided back to the Indigenous communities. Regarding intellectual property associated with exhibits, Indigenous communities ultimately own and control the depiction of their peoples and their stories, have authority over the creative process, and are best able to interpret the historical narrative to match their conceptual understandings and epistemologies.

Museums also need to plan for any ceremonies that are required as part of the exhibit opening or ongoing programming.

As part of this standard, exhibits, programming, and educational material must properly cite Indigenous knowledge and recognize community knowledge. For exhibits, this must be at the same level as curatorial staff.

*“Use Indigenous storytellers and our voices to tell those stories. Stories that have been translated lose their humour and spirituality.”*

Membertou First Nation Listening Circle

### Respectful Terminology and Language

The use of Indigenous languages must be done in consultation with the community and alongside full-scale initiatives, with sensitivity to local dialects and orthography. The new standard ensures the proper use of terminology, including names for Nations, communities, clans, families, and place names, throughout museum spaces, as well as archives and collections, as discussed in the Repatriation and Collections section.

## The Language of Reconciliation

## Anishinaabemowin

**Cree**

*Note that these translations are meant to illustrate a concept and are not authoritative. They are not reflective of region or dialect, and we acknowledge that different speakers may produce different translations.*

## Term

## Innu-Aimun

## Inuktitut

| Term                                                                                          | Meaning                                    |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------|
| Δb <sup>c</sup> bΠ <sup>b</sup> b <sup>a</sup> σ <sub>n</sub> Δ <sup>c</sup> σ <sup>c</sup> b | Have to support each other in a better way |

## SECTION 5: ENGAGEMENT AND PARTNERSHIP

### The Language of Reconciliation ctd.

#### Kanien'kehá:ka (Mohawk)

| Term                                 | Meaning                                       |
|--------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|
| Skén:nen ensewá:ton tsi na'tehóntere | Peace/tranquility will re-emerge between them |

#### Michif

| Term                | Meaning            |
|---------------------|--------------------|
| Kwayesh aytootamihk | Doing things right |

#### Tsilhqot'in

| Term                                                            | Meaning                                                            |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Guzun nagughultsilh qe/at'in or Guzun jid /elhts'en /anaghut'in | Let's work together in fairness / in a good way / in an honest way |

*Note that these translations are meant to illustrate a concept and are not authoritative. They are not reflective of region or dialect, and we acknowledge that different speakers may produce different translations.*



Yukon Historical & Museums Association Roundtable,  
April 21, 2022

## SECTION 5: ENGAGEMENT AND PARTNERSHIP

### Honouring Protocols and Ceremonies

Honour protocols for engagement, governance, and research, requests, meetings and gatherings, approvals, and permissions. As well, Indigenous Nations have their own ceremonies and protocols for the use and display of images, cultural belongings, or sound recordings. We heard examples where yearly traditional feasts were held in fulfillment of some of these protocols. Remove any culturally appropriative representations or any that are used without proper permissions.

Additionally, it is important to ensure that museum spaces have policies in place that support ceremonial activities.

*“Following protocols becomes intrinsic because there is a reason for everything that is done, and other cultures don’t need to understand.”*

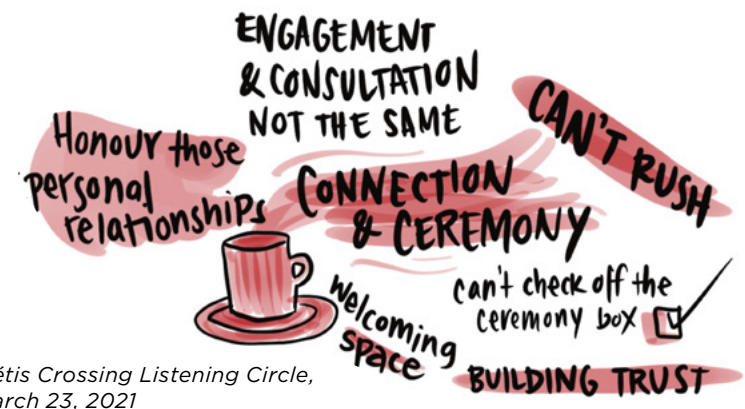
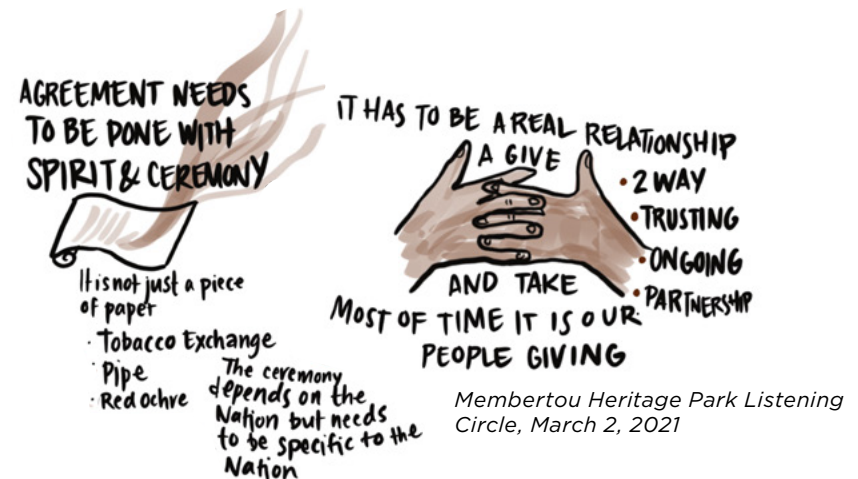
Burnaby Village Roundtable

#### **Moved to Action Resource** **Building an Engagement Strategy from the Inside Out**

*Building an Engagement Strategy from the Inside Out* is a specially developed, self-serve facilitated session that will help museum teams prepare, plan and carry out a community engagement strategy.

#### **Moved to Action Resource** **Small Museums Handbook**

This concise but comprehensive handbook considers small museum approaches, strengths and unique challenges in a scaled-down review of the report content.



### The Review

Since at least the 1990s, engagements and consultations with Indigenous communities have expanded across sectors, in many ways in line with the development of the duty to consult, which emerges from the recognition and affirmation of Indigenous and treaty rights in section 35(1) of the Constitution Act, 1982. The frameworks and methodologies related to the duty to consult developed largely in the environment and resource sectors, which focused more on free, prior and informed consent rather than taking community interests and priorities into account.

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission's focus around reconciliation turned up the temperature on community engagements. With the duty of consult model remaining as the dominant approach to community partnerships, requests for partnership remain largely extractive.

In our community engagements we heard reflection on the outcomes of this extractive consultation approach. Museums remain focused on consulting on museum-focused projects and activities. We heard that, often, communities only engaged for events or exhibit development rather than in areas that would create structural change, such as in operations or governance areas. In other instances, we heard that communities were approached to review pre-formulated materials and were not provided with adequate time, resources, or authoritative power to change or inform the project.

Specifically, we heard feedback on federal initiatives and related funding programs like the TRC Call to Action #68 and Canada 150 fund, which were formulated to recognize or commemorate Indigenous histories and cultures, but did not have any requirements that the communities themselves be meaningful partners in the formulation of events. We heard examples where communities were called in to perform pow wow dances at events or set-up a "tipi village"—tokenistic requests that did not consider the interests of the communities to whom the request was being made.

#### Call to Action #68

*"We call upon the federal government, in collaboration with Aboriginal Peoples, and the Canadian Museums Association to mark the 150th anniversary of Canadian Confederation in 2017 by establishing a dedicated national funding program for commemoration projects on the theme of reconciliation."*

*(Call to Action #68, Truth and Reconciliation Commission Report)*

Call to Action #68 is included alongside other Calls to Action that relate to cultural heritage.

Whether #68 has been delivered does not have consensus. Of the four main groups reporting on the completion of Calls to Action, affirmation is split.

The Canadian Federal Government and the not-for-profit, Indigenous-led group Indigenous Watchdog affirm that it is considered complete.

However, concerns around the delivery of funds related to Canada 150 draw into question whether this Call to Action truly met the intention set out by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. Both the CBC Beyond 94 project and the Yellowhead Institute consider #68 to be incomplete, citing that the funding project was "not in collaboration with Indigenous Peoples and not exclusively to fund projects on the theme of reconciliation." (CBC News, Beyond 94, Call to Action #68)

It should be noted that the Canadian Museums Association was not invited to collaborate on the project or the delivery of this Call to Action as was requested.

## SECTION 5: ENGAGEMENT AND PARTNERSHIP

From experts, we heard caution when approaching Indigenous nations to ensure culturally-specific approaches to partnerships and engagement are developed with time and care. For example, we heard of approaches within certain cultural groups where non-participation or reaction may not be a sign of agreement but is a sign of polite disagreement.

The CMA's 2019 survey data supports the quantitative information gathered through our engagements. "For which activities does your institution engage with Indigenous communities or entities?" and given a list of items to select, all items that received more than 30% support were activities like exhibit development, events, and educational programming—activities that support museum projects and not necessarily community goals.

This data is revealing the underlying approach of how museums begin engagement work. The 2019 survey indicated that 75% of institutions who responded were engaging Indigenous partners, while only 21% indicated they had Indigenous curators. When looking at the Key Performance Indicator (KPI) research of promising institutions, in the area of Indigenous-specific curriculum and programming, 73% of museums featured this content. However, only 32% had Indigenous staff. This suggests that exhibit-planning and program work is largely being done by the museum with Indigenous advisory, rather than by Indigenous staff.

### Key Performance Indicators

Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) are identified critical (key) measurable indicators of progress toward an intended result. KPIs are used to measure and analyze strategic and operational improvement. KPIs include setting targets (the desired level of performance) and tracking progress against that target.

For example, KPIs developed for the research and analysis of UNDRIP implementation for this report included the identification of measurable activities such as the existence of a repatriation policy as an indicator for the museum's intention to support repatriation requests from Indigenous communities. See the Methodology Section for more information.

From the 2019 survey comments, many non-Indigenous respondents indicated their apprehension related to approaching Indigenous experts and community members, including understanding cultural protocols. Several museums were cognizant of how the ripple effect of an increased demand for reconciliation initiatives and Indigenous knowledge and partnerships placed significant strain and challenges for Indigenous communities and cultural entities or centres to respond. This concern was shared by the Indigenous institution respondents, who offered similar comments, noting limited capacity to participate meaningfully.



## SECTION 5: ENGAGEMENT AND PARTNERSHIP

In addition to their participation concerns, Indigenous institutions also noted some additional barriers to progress, such as colonial mindsets and lack of linguistic considerations. Indigenous institutions observed that non-Indigenous museums often operate and approach partnerships using frameworks that are not inclusive or reflective of Indigenous world views, protocols, or ceremonies. Nevertheless, most of the 300+ institutions expressed the positive impact of meaningful community engagement.

Based on respondents' comments to the 2019 survey, in many cases exhibits and events were prioritized because they required the smallest amount of structural change. Some respondents reflected that lack of board knowledge and support hindered broader structural shifts. This said, many respondents reflected on the positive approaches and changes collaboration brought, including the dynamic relationship building and partnerships with local communities, which necessitated innovative and novel ways of doing. Several shared stories of how their interactions made them more aware of what could be considered silenced history and how this knowledge and understanding would be carried forward into strategic planning and internal reviews on policies and procedures. Indigenous respondents noted their wish that they did not have to provide this education, but that institutions take it upon themselves to be informed.

Turning back to our engagements, from the side of museums, we learned about strategies by smaller institutions to reduce the onus on Indigenous partners through engagement including building cross-community connections to stratify engagement work. For example, a small museum worked with their municipal government, Chamber of Commerce, and other local groups to formulate engagement plans and then proceeded with community engagement as a group to reduce duplication of their efforts and minimize requests from the local Indigenous Nation.

While we did not hear debate on compensation for engagement activities, many institutions noted in their survey that lack of access to funding hinders their abilities to partner as meaningfully as they would like. These honorariums and translation fees are often low, especially when compared to amounts paid to other types of knowledge experts in related fields, such as academia or linguistics. Elders or community members are not properly compensated for their work, leaving the generations of ancestral knowledge in communities unrecognized in a way that is parallel to recognizing academic credentials.

We heard critical reflection on compensation for Indigenous knowledge keepers and consultations through honorarium payments, rather than creating positions in the museum for those who are consulted regularly, either for projects or for broader advisory roles.

As well, we heard many instances where additional labour taken on by Indigenous staff to build and maintain community connections or activities apart from regular duties directed by museum staff to build relationships was not properly compensated and accommodated.

Regarding exhibit development, some museums indicated movement from curator-controlled to collaboratively developed exhibits. We heard examples of co-created exhibits acknowledging key Elder advisors as co-curators and co-authors on publications and programming. From Indigenous partners, we heard that their impulse for exhibit partnerships often comes from the focus on educating the youth and on supporting community well-being and wellness.



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# Governance

## Sharing Authority

*“Indigenous Peoples have the right to maintain, control, protect and develop their cultural heritage, traditional knowledge and traditional cultural expressions, as well as the manifestations of their sciences, technologies and cultures, including human and genetic resources, seeds, medicines, knowledge of the properties of fauna and flora, oral traditions, literatures, designs, sports and traditional games, and visual and performing arts. They also have the right to maintain, control, protect, and develop their intellectual property over such cultural heritage traditional knowledge, and traditional cultural expressions.”*

UNDRIP Article 31.1

Incorporating UNDRIP into your museum's governance structure will increase the likelihood that your museum's operations and resources are working effectively together. This will reduce the likelihood that your organization is taking a tokenistic approach to decolonization. For our purposes here, the governance of the institution includes all of the individuals and systems that direct the institution and its decision-making. Having a thorough handle on a museum's governance structures and decision-making procedures and oversight is essential when applying UNDRIP.

Several articles of UNDRIP relate to governance. While most of the articles identified as affiliated with this section refer specifically to Indigenous Nation-state relationships, all assert an Indigenous right to self-determination. How do museum governance structures play a role in supporting and not harming Indigenous self-determination?

UNDRIP does not simply call for equality regarding decisions over the manifestation and management of intellectual property and cultural heritage. It is very clear that Indigenous people must have control over these things and so museums will need to make space within their governance structures to ensure this.

Museums, as presenters and educators of cultural heritage and expression, will need to adapt their governance systems in order to make space and give authoritative control to Indigenous communities where their intellectual property is being utilized and manifested.

### The Standard

Broadly, the standard is to develop meaningful Indigenous governance with decision-making authority, not simply advisory bodies. Make space for and involve Indigenous leadership in a manner that is appropriate for the institution. Advocate to reduce structural barriers that extend beyond their institution.

*“Non-Indigenous museums don’t even understand the background work that needs to be done.”*

Haida Gwaii Listening Circle

The 1992 Task Force Report recommendations do advocate for “the participation of Aboriginal People as members of governing structures and on boards of directors.” (Section IV, Item 2a) However, no provisions are made for Indigenous People to control matters that relate to them, or to participate as a community, which leaves out self-determination.

The new standard is for executive, governing and advisory boards of cultural institutions in Canada to be restructured to include Indigenous people and communities roles of authoritative guidance in museums and to have a significant number of heritage governing bodies and cultural institutions that are Indigenous-controlled.

*“The ideal would be to have Indigenous organizations that have the same profile and support as non-Indigenous organizations.”*

John G. Hampton

#### Authoritative Guidance

Authoritative guidance is a term that is utilized in accounting practice, namely the *Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP)*. It is used in reference to statements and laws at the top of the GAAP hierarchy, and therefore must be considered first and foremost.

In the context of museum advisory, those who are providing authoritative guidance on a project have the final control over processes and outcomes for any policy or project over which they are presiding.

### Undoing Systemic Barriers

*“Working down instead of being at the bottom and working up is important.”*

Métis Crossing Listening Circle



Yukon Historical & Museums Association Roundtable, April 21, 2022

## SECTION 6: GOVERNANCE

To begin, the new standard is for museums to understand the different decision-making processes and authoritative structures present within their institutions that perpetuate systemic institutional barriers. Items identified that inform decision-making include strategic plans, museum boards and advisory as regulated under Canada's and other provincial not-for-profit acts, various levels of government oversight, executive leadership and hierarchical management systems (including unions), donors, as well as funders and grants.

Museums that are compliant with UNDRIP will deeply understand how decisions are made at a systemic level and will have methods in place, either through by-laws or internal policies that center Indigenous authority, particularly regarding the representation of their culture and require their approval on items that relate to their intellectual property and representation.

Museums also need to be aware of and respond to the larger systemic barriers faced by Indigenous People in society, work to empower Indigenous labour through respectful treatment, responsive and culturally sensitive accommodations, and have strong mechanisms to address racism in the workplace.

Read the Operations section for more information.

### Decolonizing Museum Governance

Decolonizing museum governance must be supported by planning and policy. This new standard means reconsidering where and how colonial authority is reinforced through governance. As defined in the Operations section, all policies and operational policies and practices related to governance must support the recognition of Indigenous Peoples' human rights and self-determination. Without a robust system of oversight and leadership, this is simply surface-level.

It is also important to recognize the museum as a ceremonial space, and to support operations and policies that acknowledge and support that.

*"In a ceremonial space you're building lifelong connections so that's an important step and ...it's good to know that, yes you can do policy, but also you need to have an organizational understanding of why."*

Métis Crossing Listening Circle

Museum administrators should work closely with departmental representatives and those substantially engaged in the work when developing new governance plans and supporting procedures and policies to ensure they are supported and actionable. We have seen examples where strategic plans are core tools for laying the path for this work.

## The Work of Individuals, Together

*“...it can’t be done in isolation, but by setting examples and organizational standards if you’re working with Indigenous People, [Indigenous] People need to have that buy-in, and organizations have to have that buy-in.”*

Métis Crossing Listening Circle

Implementing UNDRIP will require participation from every role at every level. Individuals within museum hierarchies will be empowered if supported by empathetic individuals who prioritize listening as a key part of their work and make space within museum structures for changes.

Museums also need to strengthen their peer networks as a means of holding each other accountable. Open and transparent communication needs to be prioritized and advocated for internally to ensure equitable decision-making.



Musée amérindien de Mashteuiatsh Listening Circle, March 18, 2021

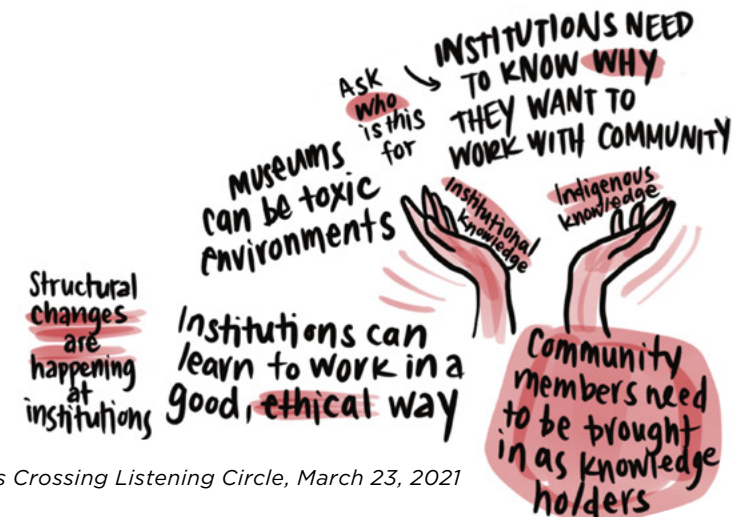
## Commit to Humility

*“We are working toward a future of humbleness and restraint.”*

John G. Hampton

Today’s standard requires museum executives and board members to take a leadership role in self-educating on Indigenous matters while recognizing the limits of their contribution. It will be important for museum leadership to guide their staff through this process with humility and openness.

This humility means sharing authority. Leadership in this case is not about taking charge but requires setting an example and making space for those with authority and expertise in Indigenous governance to be heard. It requires taking cultural safety and allegations of harm seriously. It means not broadcasting or showcasing reconciliation and UNDRIP implementation work as “achievements,” but understanding that this is work that requires long-term commitment.



Métis Crossing Listening Circle, March 23, 2021



## The Language of Governance

Understanding the importance of terminology and language across languages is an important part of the decolonization process. Below you will find the term “**seeking wise council**” translated into several Indigenous languages, and then translated back. What do you learn about cultural understanding underlying each term?

## Anishinaabemowin

| Term           | Meaning                         |
|----------------|---------------------------------|
| Zagaswe'idiwin | A Council Meeting with the Pipe |

**Cree**

| Term                           | Meaning                     |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| kakwecukemo / kiskinotahiwewin | Asking to be given guidance |
| kiskinwahasimôwêwin            | accepting guidance          |

*Note that these translations are meant to illustrate a concept and are not authoritative. They are not reflective of region or dialect, and we acknowledge that different speakers may produce different translations.*

## Denesuline

| Term             | Meaning                           |
|------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Yatí něžų horėké | Asking for good story or guidance |

## Innu-Aimun

| Term         | Meaning                    |
|--------------|----------------------------|
| Uaiiapunanun | Sitting circle for talking |

## Inuktitut

| <b>Term</b>                        | <b>Meaning</b>                  |
|------------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| ཤྲི་བྱོལ་སྐྱོད་པར་གློག་པའི་མཁན་པོ་ | Being observative to an advisor |



The Language of Governance ctd.

Kanien’kehá:ka (Mohawk)

| Term               | Meaning                                                    |
|--------------------|------------------------------------------------------------|
| Ka’nikonhrisáksera | Concept of consulting, asking for advice, seeking guidance |

Michif

| Term        | Meaning              |
|-------------|----------------------|
| Li kalimaen | They smoked the pipe |

Tsilhqot’in

| Term                                         | Meaning                                   |
|----------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------|
| Su/ech’a egwijiyeni^en /iyen gut’ayenughutan | We will depend on the knowledgeable ones. |

*Note that these translations are meant to illustrate a concept and are not authoritative. They are not reflective of region or dialect, and we acknowledge that different speakers may produce different translations.*

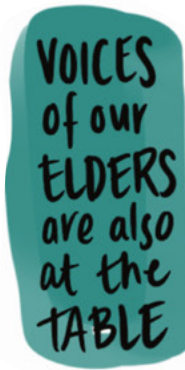
## Sharing Authority: Meaningful Indigenous Advisory

*“Recognizing Indigenous Peoples as rights holders—as sovereign with their own governance systems and laws—is often not applied or looked to in a museum context. This requires moving toward shared authority, stewardship, and co-development.”*

Karine Duhamel

Establishing the new standard for Indigenous advisory for your museum means weaving together systems of governance and giving advisors clear and decisive decision-making power.

It is no longer considered acceptable to establish a completely external advisory group that has no means of exerting their influence over the institution. Any Indigenous advisory body must be given authoritative guidance, including through by-law and policy changes, strategic planning, and memorandums of understanding, to name a few examples. National, provincial, and municipal museums must have the legislation governing them modified and adapted to this new reality.



Saahlinda Naay (Haida Gwaii Museum) Listening Circle, February 8, 2021

Moved to Action: Activating UNDRIP in Canadian Museums

Supported by the Canadian Museums Association

## Making Space

*“All Indigenous advisory circles are important to have voices heard; can be composed of a diversity of Indigenous Nations; needs to have real power to make decisions and give direction on programs and projects, at every stage, from content to design.”*

Mashteuiatsh Listening Circle

In areas of decision-making that have a direct impact on Indigenous cultural sovereignty and representation, decision-making should be ceded to Indigenous individuals directly affected by the work.

Make space for multiple Indigenous People in any decision-making. This will reduce tokenization by giving opportunities to show a diversity of approaches from Indigenous People.

*“We’re not asking to take a place at the table, we’re saying we need to make space at the table.”*

Haida Gwaii Listening Circle

## SECTION 6: GOVERNANCE

### Assessment and Evaluation

The new standard uses Indigenous-driven frameworks of evaluation and assessment to measure success of this work. While these evaluation and assessment measures should be developed by the specific Indigenous advisors and communities with whom the museums partners, in general, this framework is relational. It considers how responsibilities to, and expectations of, the community are best measured and assessed. This includes thinking of project success and partnerships from the perspective of Indigenous governance models and traditions.



WHAT  
ACTIONS  
HAVE MUSEUMS  
TAKEN  
↓ since 1992?  
We as Indigenous  
People should  
get to analyze  
these actions.  
Especially when  
we ask to make  
things right.

*Membertou Heritage Park  
Listening Circle, March 2, 2021*

#### **Moved to Action Resource** **Reassessing Your Governance**

This self-serve facilitated discussion will help museum executives and board members build their awareness of UNDRIP and its relationship to museum governance and help build UNDRIP into your strategic planning process.

#### **Moved to Action Resource** **Small Museums Handbook**

This concise but comprehensive handbook considers small museum approaches, strengths, and unique challenges in a scaled-down review of the report content.

### Community Building

*"It's not institution vs community, it's a co-led, blended approach."*

Burnaby Village Roundtable

Outside of the museum, museums should proactively support Indigenous-led cultural heritage organizations, cultural centres, and museums and avoid practices that undermine their development and success by today's standard.

# The Review

In our engagements, we heard critical reflections and hard questions about meaningfully decolonizing boards and Indigenous advisory committees so these can be more reflective of Indigenous approaches to governance. From the perspective of some of the Indigenous museum professionals with whom we consulted, it was made clear that even meaningfully conducted efforts at decolonizing museum practices and operations can be derailed if these initiatives are not meaningfully led by leadership, including board directors and executive directors. We did hear of examples of museums like the Royal British Columbia Museum having their institutions assessed for cultural safety.

A survey of individuals involved in the governance of charities and non-profit organizations conducted by Statistics Canada from December 2020, to January 2021, entitled “Diversity of charity and non-profit boards of directors: Overview of the Canadian non-profit sector,” sheds some light on policies related to board diversity. The objectives of the survey were to collect timely information on the activities of these organizations and the individuals they serve and to learn more about the diversity of those who serve on their boards of directors. Approximately 28.5% of Arts and Culture non-profit organizations reported having such policies. According to the survey results, organizations with a written policy on board diversity had more diverse boards compared to organizations with no such policy. These differences generally ranged from 2 to 4 percentage points. While the information collected does not relate specifically to Indigenous Advisory Boards, it does provide some indication of the effectiveness of policies of this kind.

We also heard of many instances where members of the Board of Directors stifled the efforts of museum leadership and staff to implement TRC and UNDRIP, both at governance and operational levels. Approximately 5% of respondents to our 2019 survey shared instances where staff efforts at building partnerships with Indigenous communities, implementing TRC Calls to Action, or retention of Indigenous staff members was hindered by the museum Board of Directors. In some cases, this came in the form of roadblocks from Board Directors or from their administrative leaders who do not properly understand the historical impetus behind museum initiatives. In our Small Museums workshops, we heard of many similar scenarios where not having “the board on board” has stalled the work of TRC and UNDRIP implementation. We also heard of instances where the language of reconciliation and UNDRIP has been co-opted by directors and administrators, either in grant applications or strategic plans, but where implementation was not activated in full to reflect and facilitate new policies at all levels.

From museum leaders, we also heard well-meaning efforts can be stifled by foundational structural and institutional factors that entrench Western governance frameworks. This includes governance oversight bodies such as municipal governments or by legislation, such as the Not-for-profit Act, which pre-defines the board governance of museums. Those consulted cited examples of ways these Western frameworks have made it difficult to adopt Indigenous models of governance as part of their museum oversight bodies.

## SECTION 6: GOVERNANCE

From the perspective of museum directors who are trying to action TRC and implement UNDRIP at a structural level, we heard that the strategic planning processes are often the starting point. One of the promising practices cited by experts is the University of British Columbia 2020 Indigenous Strategic Plan, which outlines 8 goals and 43 actions the university will collectively take to advance its vision of UBC as a leading university globally in the implementation of Indigenous Peoples' human rights. The Canadian Museum of History (CMH) has developed a Framework for Indigenous Relations (2020). It is premised on pillars comprising principles of Access, Engagement, and Knowledge. Building on work undertaken at CMH and its predecessors for decades, it is part of the Museum's response to the TRC Calls to Action and implementation UNDRIP, and it underpins the work underway across the Museum. Its associated implementation plan includes over 50 action items, most of which are in progress. The Framework activities include policies, programs, and initiatives across the Museum, and the Museum has committed to report on progress by 2023.

While 73% of the museums surveyed for our Key Performance Indicator (KPI) research showcase Indigenous programming, a much smaller number—approximately 10%—have mandated or operationalized Indigenous initiatives either through strategic plans or reconciliation policies. As well, approximately 10% of these institutions publicly indicate that these operations are guided by Indigenous advisory bodies or the presence of Indigenous board directors.

We also heard examples where museums are developing alternative frameworks for evaluation and assessment for UNDRIP implementation to balance Western approaches, which tend to focus on objectively assessing the outcomes identified during the design of the program. Specifically, the MacKenzie Art Gallery has developed Key Performance Indicators to measure UNDRIP implementation throughout museum operations, including staffing requirements, programming evaluation, training, and the use and promotion of Indigenous languages. The performance of the Executive Director is attached to KPIs developed by and evaluated through the gallery's Indigenous Advisory Circle.

### Key Performance Indicators

Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) are identified critical (key) measurable indicators of progress toward an intended result. KPIs are used to measure and analyze strategic and operational improvement. KPIs include setting targets (the desired level of performance) and tracking progress against that target.

For example, KPIs developed for the research and analysis of UNDRIP implementation for this report included the identification of measurable activities such as the existence of a repatriation policy as an indicator for the museum's intention to support repatriation requests from Indigenous communities. See the Methodology Section for more information.



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# Operations

## Everything Depends on Everything Else

*“Indigenous Peoples and individuals are free and equal to all other peoples and individuals and have the right to be free from any kind of discrimination, in the exercise of their rights, in particular that based on their ildigenous origin or identity.”*

UNDRIP, Article 2

*“Indigenous individuals have the right not to be subjected to any discriminatory conditions of labour and, inter alia, employment or salary.”*

UNDRIP, Article 17.3

Decolonizing operations is at its core about creating spaces for Indigenous employees, collaborators, partners, and visitors. UNDRIP is clear that Indigenous People, whether museum employees or visitors, have a right to be free from discrimination, see their cultures represented in accurate and respectful ways in their own voices, and to have spaces to practice cultural protocols and traditions.

Operational and development work, including finance, human resources, admissions, marketing and communications, donor relations and fundraising, security, food and beverage, and the museum store are often not prioritized as roles that have a fundamental relationship with UNDRIP. However, if these roles are essential to the experience of employees, visitors and the general public, we therefore must also consider how museum operations must shift to accommodate Indigenous self-determination.



Yukon Historical & Museums  
Association Roundtable,  
April 21, 2022



# The Standard

The standard is to ensure that UNDRIP compliance is the responsibility of all museum departments and reflected in all museum experiences. Where appropriate, this work should be Indigenous-led in a manner that respects and prioritizes the community's needs and values, and meaningfully implements community input in a way that properly values and compensates the knowledge and work of Indigenous Peoples.

## Implementing UNDRIP is Everyone's Job

In order to achieve the standards defined by UNDRIP, compliance with these principles must be integrated into the whole of museum operations and not siloed into a department, staff position, or policy.

The 1992 Task Force Report insisted on the need for more Indigenous participation within all areas of the museum operations, highlighting the requirement for core partnerships in policy development, exhibitions, interpretation, and access to collections as well as "legitimate opportunities and encouragement for the employment of Aboriginal Peoples at all levels of [museum] operations." (Section IV, Item 2b).

What the Task Force report failed to highlight were considerations for administration, labour, and hiring practices associated with the work required to make this a reality or acknowledging that it is not often possible for smaller organizations. One of the 1992 Task Force recommendations placed the onus on Indigenous professionals to instruct non-Indigenous institutions on Indigenous perspectives for the whole of museum operations, citing: "Having First Peoples on staff would help to instruct other museum personnel with regard to valuable Aboriginal perspectives and philosophies and would imbue a greater sensitivity to community needs and interests in non-Aboriginal museum personnel." (Section III, Item C) This is now considered outdated advice in that it disproportionately places the onus on Indigenous staff to decolonize the museum.

In our engagements, we heard of the results that this disproportionate onus places on Indigenous professionals to instruct non-Indigenous professionals, both internally and externally, on their Indigenous philosophies and to create and maintain relationships. By today's standard, UNDRIP compliance must be integrated into all staff positions and all job descriptions, not simply those that target Indigenous candidates.

*"Really, the crux of it is until you start having people on staff who reflect Indigeneity, it is all just still talk. [...] And when you look at these organizations, every level right from the Board of Governors to the administrators, right down to the janitors, you have to have everybody you can, who wants to be there, be included."*

Adrian Stimson



## The Language of Equity and Inclusion

Understanding the importance of terminology and language across languages is an important part of the decolonization process. Below you will find the terms **Equity and Inclusion** translated into several Indigenous languages, and then translated back. What do you learn about cultural understanding underlying each term?

## Anishinaabemowin

| Term             | Meaning                        |
|------------------|--------------------------------|
| Gwayakwenindiwin | Being straight with each other |

**Cree**

| Term                   | Meaning                  |
|------------------------|--------------------------|
| ka tawiekamawat awenak | Making room for everyone |

*Note that these translations are meant to illustrate a concept and are not authoritative. They are not reflective of region or dialect, and we acknowledge that different speakers may produce different translations.*

## Denesuline

| Term             | Meaning               |
|------------------|-----------------------|
| Ėtk'ësë Ėtáldhën | All together the same |

## Innu-Aimun

| Term                      | Meaning                        |
|---------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Tapishkut e tutuakan auen | Treat somebody in the same way |

## Inuktitut

| Term                                   | Meaning     |
|----------------------------------------|-------------|
| $\Delta \subsetneq \sigma^{\text{sb}}$ | Being equal |
| $\Delta \subseteq \sigma^{\text{sb}}$  | Inclusive   |

The Language of Equity and Inclusion ctd.

Kanien'kehá:ka (Mohawk)

| Term                  | Meaning                          |
|-----------------------|----------------------------------|
| Tetewatatenaktotá:nis | Making space/time for each other |

Michif

| Term       | Meaning     |
|------------|-------------|
| Miyoutoota | Fair-minded |

Tsilhqot'in

| Term                        | Meaning                                   |
|-----------------------------|-------------------------------------------|
| Tš'idaneš jid denilh /at'in | We work with people in fairness / honesty |

*Note that these translations are meant to illustrate a concept and are not authoritative. They are not reflective of region or dialect, and we acknowledge that different speakers may produce different translations.*

### Applying UNDRIP to Labour and Hiring Practices

Implementing UNDRIP into labour and hiring practices means UNDRIP principles and competencies must be integrated into all staff positions and all job descriptions, not simply those that target Indigenous candidates.

To improve representation in museums is to support UNDRIP Article 11, “...the right to maintain, protect and develop the past, present and future manifestations of their cultures...” The development of hiring policies and practices that take Indigenous knowledge, experience, scholarship, and community relationships into account in areas of recruitment, evaluation, and compensation are essential pieces to decolonizing museum operations.

#### **Recommended Resource: UNDRIP and Indigenous Heritage**

For an assessment of UNDRIP’s application to museums operations, review Catherine Bell and Melissa Erickson’s UNDRIP and Indigenous Heritage Report, developed as a companion resource.

*See 5.1 Welcoming & Culturally Safe Spaces*

*5.4 Indigenous-led Representation*

*5.5 Employment, Leadership Strategies, & Opportunities*

This includes acknowledging and compensating the ancestral knowledge, community connections, responsibilities, and accountabilities taken on by Indigenous staff as well as time to participate in important ceremonies and community protocols. Indigenous staff cannot bear the sole responsibility for maintaining community partnership and implementing decolonization measures.

*“There should be more Indigenous people on staff, at every level to ensure cultural competency.”*

Wanuskewin Listening Circle

Hiring and recruitment practices within most museums also prioritize Western education models, which can exclude potential Indigenous applicants with cultural knowledge that far outweighs academic credentials. Today’s standard is to incorporate into the job description relevant ways that Indigenous knowledge, skills and perspectives are important for success in the role.

*“Museums need to hire more Indigenous Peoples; not necessarily people with BAs, MAs, or PhDs but rather people with cultural knowledge; museums need to value this type of knowledge.”*

Mashteuiatsh Listening Circle

### Addressing Racism in the Workplace

Within the last few years, a number of high-profile incidents of racism against Indigenous People in museum workplaces have garnered attention in the media. We heard that these specific and high-profile cases are not limited to institutions in the news, but instead that institutional racism is an issue in numerous museum environments and across departments.

Museums should be requiring or providing training for all museum staff and establishing permanent and sustained programs that provide cultural and historical competency learning, anti-racism or bystander training, inter-cultural thinking, and communication strategies, for all museum staff and board to ensure an environment free of discrimination and built on understanding, dignity and respect.

As well, the current approaches to cultural awareness training, wherein museums staff receive training on their individual biases and behaviors, do not go far enough to address systemic issues and colonial structures within institutions themselves. We have heard that Indigenous people are often harmed in these workshops by being retraumatized or exposed to racism and stereotyping. With this in mind, Indigenous Peoples should be exempt from participating.

We also heard that employers need to make space and accept that Indigenous staff will likely have to hold community priorities above those of the institution and that museums should not expect their staff to act in a manner that could be harmful to their community. This includes taking time away to attend and participate in ceremonies.

It is also important to have clear paths of accountability for staff at all levels, and for Indigenous staff to have safe methods of exploring their concerns and making complaints. Some museums create opportunities for Indigenous staff to come together in dedicated spaces to discuss workplace concerns or have sponsored their staff to join Indigenous-led heritage organizations where they can find support from other Indigenous heritage workers.

Human resources professionals and managers should have additional training and support to resolve workplace tension and conflict in a way that is culturally appropriate and acknowledges the difficulties Indigenous people face while working in non-Indigenous environments.

### Decolonizing Museum Policies

Organizational decolonization must be supported through institutional systems and policy. Without systematic and policy enforcement, this is simply surface-level. With regards to policy development, the standard is that all policies and operational practices must support the recognition of Indigenous Peoples' human rights and self-determination. This means reconsidering where and how colonial authority is reinforced through policy. For example, in not recognizing the credentials, scholarship, and training acquired through cultural learning.

It is important when changing museum systems to always consider how UNDRIP might apply in any work that is being done. Policies where UNDRIP can have the greatest impact might include HR, Collections (including accessioning/deaccessioning), and governance documents.

### Brave and Ethical Spaces

Museums as public spaces also have a duty to provide Indigenous visitors with spaces that are not only free from discrimination but are also brave and ethical.

Interaction with museum staff is one of the primary ways that visitors will engage your museum. As mentioned in the Addressing Racism section, ALL staff should be included in cultural awareness training, which is inclusive of front-line staff in admissions, security, and the museum's retail operations. This should also include unpaid or temporary staff like volunteers and interns.

Museum spaces should centre community needs and be inclusive of children, youth and Elders and allow for the acknowledgment, honour, and appreciation of Indigenous cultural practices like smudging, without complex and burdensome processes.

*"Can't even do a simple ceremony like smudging in museums or a lot of buildings [because of] 'fire code' but can light birthday candles."*

Membertou Heritage Park Listening Circle



Membertou Heritage Park  
Listening Circle, March 2, 2021

#### Safe vs. brave spaces

The term "brave spaces" was popularized as a more accurate way to describe an environment whose first priority is to facilitate discussion in a respectful way. Brave spaces clearly centre themselves around the concepts of civility, owning intention, choice to participate, respect, and absence of intentional harm.

While a very worthy goal, within public spaces, safety is not something that can be guaranteed and doesn't speak explicitly to the primary goal of educational spaces, like universities and museums, which is to encourage discussion and debate.

In their 2017 publication, ***Safe Spaces and Brave Spaces***, the National (American) Association of Student Personnel Administrators (NASPA), give a thorough review of the history of the use of safe and brave spaces as terms to describe learning environments in higher education.

NASPA encourages educational environments to use the term brave space: "[A] safe space is never actually safe. The concept of a brave space encompasses all of what the sectors discussed in this work regard as safe spaces, but clarifies that these environments are challenging and that students are expected to participate within them. Administrators, faculty, and staff can replace use of the term safe space, as it pertains to class-based dialogues, with that of brave space. By using the term brave space, faculty are able to distinguish an inclusive classroom discussion from programming on campus that commonly provides respite space for traditionally marginalized communities.



### Indigenizing the Museum

Sometimes conflated with creating a safe and welcoming space is the idea of “Indigenizing” a space by incorporating Indigenous languages, exhibitions and programming.

*“Everyone needs to see themselves when they come to a museum.”*

Burnaby Village Roundtable

Prioritized in the Task Force Report, *Interpretation* was listed as the first recommendation, “*Museums should ensure that First Peoples are involved in the processes of planning, research, implementation, presentation and maintenance of all exhibitions, programs and/or other projects that include Aboriginal cultures.*” (Section IV, Item 1)

This is an approach that is still consistent with what we heard. Many Indigenous individuals consulted shared the slogan, “Nothing about us, without us.” It’s important to understand that this applies to all means of representing Indigenous culture, including Indigenous languages being used on welcome signs and Institutional land acknowledgements.

#### **Moved to Action Resource** **Implementing UNDRIP is Everyone’s Job**

This self-serve facilitated discussion will help inter-departmental groups of museum professionals share, relate and frame their work within the context of UNDRIP.

Without consent, any use of Indigenous intellectual property is counter to UNDRIP and should not be used or presented.

*“One of the challenges behind Indigenization is the difficulty in capturing the multiplicity of Indigenous cultures and histories—otherwise, we are contributing to the pan-Indigenous representation and not capturing histories that are distinct.”*

Karine Duhamel

Read the Engagement section for more information.



*Kanaweyimik, Battlefords Tribal Council, Whitecap Dakota First Nations, Western Development Museum Roundtable, March 14, 2022*

### Access to Collections

Regarding access to collections, the standard is to recognize Indigenous Peoples as rights holders when it comes to accessing and stewarding their belongings, which requires co-development of methods of access and care of belongings that are defined by the Indigenous communities themselves. This may mean repatriation or stewardship.

Within our engagements on access to collections, we heard this includes all institutions in cultural memory institutions working together to address epistemicide, or the disassociation of material cultures from their complex cultural knowledge systems. This means providing access to cultural belongings as well as documenting known connections to existing archival material, cultural knowledge material or information associated with the community, such as maps, recordings, photographs, and more. Put another way, this means coming together to assess and record who has what, where it is, how the information relates, and how to best tell people about it.

For museum operations, this may include knowing how to support or connect visiting Indigenous Elders with curatorial or collections staff.

More detail can be found in the Repatriation and Collections section.

#### Epistemicide

Epistemicide refers to the killing of knowledge systems and is often referenced in the context of colonialism. The European conquest of the Americas is considered by scholars to be one of the four epistemicides of the long sixteenth century which was the beginning of a wave of domination of Western knowledge systems.



*Lennox Island First Nation  
Listening Circle, April 5, 2022*

### Funding and Revenue Sharing

Some museums have offered free admission as a means of providing community access. We heard that while free admissions can provide access to exhibits for communities, thought must also be given to how the museum has monetarily benefitted over time from Indigenous knowledge.

Funding models and operational budgets need to be reformulated in relation to what they reflect of the expectations and relationships between the museum and Indigenous communities. Revenue-sharing models that financially compensate the communities whose traditional knowledge, cultural belongings, and community input is in the museum should be put into place. Formal agreements such as Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) are one method through which these can be operationalized.

Museum staff working in revenue generating roles including donations, grant writing, etc., should also be aware of any impact funds may have on the ability of the museum to align with the principles of UNDRIP. Agreements that will limit the museum from fulfilling the principles of UNDRIP should be avoided.

Finally, museums should not take funding for Indigenous projects without a consenting Indigenous partner.

### Marketing and Communications

When communicating with members, stakeholders and the general public about museum activities, it is also important to consider UNDRIP Article 31 which reminds that “[Indigenous Peoples] have the right to maintain, control, protect and develop their intellectual property over such cultural heritage, traditional knowledge, and traditional cultural expressions.”

Museums and their contractors must take care to present the fullness of diversity as appropriate for museum collections or projects and to not tokenize or to use Indigenous intellectual property without context or consent. It means not broadcasting or showcasing reconciliation and UNDRIP implementation work as “achievements,” but understanding that this is work that requires long-term commitment.

Teams also need to take care in obtaining clear and ongoing permissions from event and program participants and foster a process of meaningful consent when it comes to image use or use of other forms of Intellectual Property.

#### **Recommended Resource: Elements of Indigenous Style**

Gregory Younging

This resource is essential reading for anyone writing about, editing or publishing works involving Indigenous people and communities. *This is not a free resource. Please respect copyright and do not copy, scan or distribute any part of this without permission.*

#### **Recommended Resource: Indigenous Protocols dot Art**

CARFAC

This resource provides practical guidelines for respectful engagement with Indigenous People, particularly in the field of visual art.



Saahlinda Naay (Haida Gwaii Museum)  
Listening Circle, February 8, 2021

# The Review

Our survey data and Key Performance Indicator (KPI) research show that most museums, while on their way to take steps to implement TRC & UNDRIP, are doing so in a manner that leaves operations and governance as last steps. This approach contrasts with our engagements, where we heard that UNDRIP needs to be implemented through a “whole-of museum” approach via structural changes in operations.

### Key Performance Indicators

Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) are identified critical (key) measurable indicators of progress toward an intended result. KPIs are used to measure and analyze strategic and operational improvement. KPIs include setting targets (the desired level of performance) and tracking progress against that target

For example, KPIs developed for the research and analysis of UNDRIP implementation for this report included the identification of measurable activities such as the existence of a repatriation policy as an indicator for the museum’s intention to support repatriation requests from Indigenous communities. See the Methodology Section for more information.

### **Moved to Action Resource** **Small Museums Handbook**

This concise but comprehensive handbook considers small museum approaches, strengths and unique challenges in a scaled-down review of the report content.

Implementing reconciliation, decolonization or UNDRIP in museum operations is often siloed to the single Indigenous staff member. We heard many accounts where additional responsibilities for maintaining Indigenous partnerships, “Indigenizing” or “decolonizing” the institution places an unfair, uncompensated burden on Indigenous staff. Indigenous museum professionals were hired into short term or precarious positions, often through grants and other short-term funding solutions rather than from the core museum operational budget.

These perspectives are echoed in the Yellowhead Institute’s 2020 special report on the culture of exploitation being fostered at Canadian arts institutions (***A Culture of Exploitation: “Reconciliation” and the Institutions of Canadian Arts***), which details the experiences of 15 Indigenous cultural workers. The report outlines instances of tokenism and marginalization of Indigenous hires, citing examples of being placed into temporary and precarious positions, leveraged for access to specific grant funding opportunities, and treated as disposable to the institution. It also describes situations where Indigenous staff are dismissed or not taken seriously by colleagues or senior staff, in some cases being excluded from staff functions.

## SECTION 7: OPERATIONS

*“There have been grants written by and for the institution [I work for], divulging (in great detail) aspects of my career both within and outside of the institution that I have not had access to. I know for certain that my identity, position, and overall network has been engaged to benefit the institution and its access to grants without my expressed consent. My personal achievements have been used to make it appear as though the institution has fostered me through my emerging career and that is very much not the case.”*

Anonymous interviewee, A Culture of Exploitation, Yellowhead Institute, 10

The testimony collected by the Yellowhead Institute alongside experiences heard in our engagements suggests museums have a long way to go to create culturally safe or brave spaces and promote anti-racism. This might speak to issues we heard regarding retention of Indigenous professionals. We heard instances where Indigenous professionals left the museum sector due to lack of meaningful structural support.

The 2017 Government of Canada Survey of Heritage Institutions provides evidence that Indigenous People make a small number of staff within Canadian cultural heritage institutions. Data capturing workforce demographics indicated that the percentage of visible minorities (which might include but not be limited to Indigenous staff) was at 4%. When broken down by province, this rate fluctuated from 2% to over 13%. For zoos and botanical gardens, the rate is as low as 0.2%. This does not align with Canada’s population, as approximately 23% of the total population are visible minorities according to the 2016 census.

### **Moved to Action Resource** **Becoming Better Employers**

This quick reference guide provides additional information and resources for museum administrators and HR professionals.

While there remains a low number of Indigenous professionals in the museum sector in permanent positions, our KPI research provides insight into how this varies among institutional types. Of the promising museums surveyed, 31% had curators who identified as Indigenous. For each institutional type, the breakdown was as follows: art galleries, 43%; national museums, 33%; small history museums, 26%; medium history, 67%, provincial/territorial museums, 67%; and natural history museums, 22%.

Our KPI research indicated that 73% of museums have some type of Indigenous-related programming. This breakdown of institutions surveyed are as follows: national museums (1), art Galleries (11), heritage sites (8), medium history museums (9), natural history museums (5), provincial/Territorial museums (9), science centres (9), small history museums (9).

As also noted in the Governance section, of the 73% of the museums surveyed for our KPI research showcase Indigenous programming, only a small number—approximately 10%—have mandated or operationalized Indigenous initiatives either through strategic plans or reconciliation policies. As well, 10.5% of these institutions publicly indicate that these operations are guided by Indigenous advisory bodies or the presence of Indigenous board directors.

The notable hiring of John G. Hampton at the MacKenzie Art Gallery in 2021 as the first Indigenous person to lead a non-Indigenous public art gallery further indicates the lack of Indigenous people in positions of leadership in Canadian museums. This is the first occurrence of an appointment of this type.



## SECTION 7: OPERATIONS

Our engagements also pointed to the role that other levels of governance play in hindering the ability for museums to change their administrative approaches, such as hiring policies and practices that might make these positions more open or attractive to Indigenous candidates. For museums that are governed by unions or municipal governments, we heard that this could hinder the ability to adapt job descriptions, competencies, and prioritizing Indigenous applicants. We also heard that official language requirements hinder the hiring of Indigenous professionals in positions of leadership, particularly in national museums. We heard calls to expand the recognition of language competency to include Indigenous languages.

From the side of museums, we also heard of the efforts some institutions are making to transform their operations. This includes additional compensation to remunerate additional labour taken on by Indigenous staff to maintain community responsibilities, ceremonial leave, and reflecting alternative competencies in job description. Again, we must highlight that in spite of these changes we have heard from Indigenous museum professionals that institutional racism remains largely unchallenged in many museums.

There are some national examples of these efforts to accommodate leave required to conduct traditional activities on the part of Indigenous workers. For example, the Canada Labour Code designates that, *“Every employee who is an Aboriginal person and who has completed three consecutive months of continuous employment with an employer is entitled to and shall be granted a leave of absence from employment of up to five days in every calendar year, in order to enable the employee to engage in traditional Aboriginal practices...”* (206.8). Unfortunately, due to the structure of Canadian Labour Laws, most museums will fall under provincial codes, which do not consistently provide this type of support for Indigenous employees.

Regarding creating brave and ethical museum spaces, our engagements pointed to a gap between the baseline approach to meaningful incorporation and acknowledgment of Indigenous knowledge, science, scholarship, and perspectives for promising practices nearing the standard. At the UBC Museum of Anthropology architectural elements include a Culturally-Sensitive Research Room and a Community Lounge—allowing the museum to accommodate traditional care practices such as burning tobacco and providing food offerings. The Red Deer Gallery likewise allows for smudging before entering the gallery space. Conversely, we heard examples where smudging was not allowed on museum premises or treated in a disrespectful manner.

Steps towards accessibility are being made in the form of free admissions programs for Indigenous visitors. When looking at our KPI research, only 10 of the 84 museums sponsored free admission, with 5 coming from Western provinces, 3 from Ontario and 2 from Quebec. Of note, museums from Western provinces with sponsored free admissions are largely national, provincial and territorial museums. As mentioned in The Standard section above, revenue-sharing agreements above free admissions must also be considered. In our research, we are aware of a number of these arrangements, including Memorandums of Understanding between the Canadian Museum of History and the Haida Nation, as well as between the UBC Museum of Anthropology and the Haida Nation.



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Our 2019 survey data indicated that many museums signaled their intentions to develop decolonizing or reconciliation policies. As well, few indicated intentions to review their collections policies, indicating the siloing of operational policies regarding decolonization and UNDRIP rather than implementing these principles throughout all of museum operational policies. Our recent KPI Research further indicates that only a handful of institutions had any policies fully developed at the time of this report release.

Regarding marketing and communications for museums, Dr. Gregory Younging's *Elements of Indigenous Style* discusses the role of UNDRIP as it relates to the portrayal of Indigenous Peoples in literature and outlines appropriate and respectful writing practices. This includes following Indigenous protocols surrounding information sharing and extending the right to review to Indigenous people involved in the project being promoted.

More recently, the *Indigenous Protocols dot Art* project from CARFAC details respectful processes for non-Indigenous organizations to follow when utilizing Indigenous art. The section titled *Considerations Related to Integrity and Authenticity* details how consent must be part of the entire publishing process:

*"When reproducing Indigenous works, discuss the context of reproduction and any proposed material alterations first with the artist. Be prepared to change your proposed use if the Indigenous artist, Nation, or community do not agree with the proposed alteration or use."*

Indigenous Protocols dot Art, 29

While considered personal, information collected through marketing activities, the use of meaningful consent as determined by the Office of the Privacy Commissioner of Canada should be used as a base when using imagery or other intellectual property. This allows those you are requesting information from with clear parameters and ongoing control around the use of their information.

There are also culturally specific ceremonies and protocols when using images of Indigenous Peoples, especially those who are deceased, as well as ceremonial belongings and some cultural belongings. Care must be taken to abide by these practices and protocols.



Wanuskewin Heritage Park Listening Circle, March 22, 2021



# Methodology

Following the mandate set out by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada's Call to Action #67, the Canadian Museums Association (CMA)'s Reconciliation Program launched formally in 2018.

The research, engagement, consultation, and analysis for this report was conducted from September 2019 to June 2022. The composition of the Report, Standards, and Recommendations occurred from June to September 2022.

## Reconciliation Council

In 2018 the CMA established a Reconciliation Council, a cohesive and influential body of experts in Indigenous culture and museum practices, who provided guidance and advice to address Call to Action #67.

As the advisory body to the CMA, the Council guided the research and engagement processes for the CMA Reconciliation Program. The Council also provided guidance and leadership on the content of the report in its early development stage, assisted in reviewing and revising the draft report, and were consulted for the final analysis and composition of the Standards, Report, and Recommendations. The members of the Reconciliation Council are listed in the Acknowledgements section of this report.

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## National Survey

A national survey was launched on 27 November 2019 and closed on 10 January 2020 to better understand how museums are addressing reconciliation and Indigenous heritage within their institutions. The survey and related communications were developed and disseminated in both official languages.

The survey was sent to 1,548 institutions, of which 1,499 were non-Indigenous and 49 self-identified as Indigenous. A total of 291 non-Indigenous institutions and 13 self-identified Indigenous institutions responded to the survey, for a total of 304 surveys collected with at least one response completed.

The survey comprised six questions, with all but one being qualitative, giving survey participants a high degree of flexibility and nuance in responding to sensitive and challenging subject matters. Approximately 1,500 pages of narrative responses were reviewed, manually coded and quantified, and then analysed. Where possible, data were coded into mutually exclusive categories; otherwise, data were grouped according to commonly occurring themes or relevant prompts found in the survey questions. These responses are reflected throughout the analysis of the report.

# Consultation and Engagement

The consultation and engagement process for the program was launched in 2021. The CMA conducted engagement and information collection via a series of avenues: formal engagement sessions (Roundtables, Listening Circles); workshops; a call for written submissions; and individual interviews with professionals in the sector.

## Listening Circles and Roundtables

A series of roundtables and listening circles involving Indigenous communities, Indigenous museums professionals, and partner institutions were completed from February 2021 to June 2022. Participating Indigenous Nations and institutions were selected using a series of criteria, including regional representation of Indigenous identities (First Nations, Métis, and Inuit), as well as experience and expertise in cultural heritage. Listening Circles were classified as engagement sessions with Indigenous communities or Indigenous-led institutions, while Roundtables combined non-Indigenous institutions and Indigenous partners.

All sessions were held online, in part due to COVID-19 restrictions. All engagement session participants were provided with a standard list of questions as discussion prompts, but the discussions themselves were conducted using a semi-structured interview approach.

Notes were taken at each of the engagement sessions, but the decision was made to keep individual quotes from each of the sessions to maintain personal anonymity. This is reflected in the quotations of the sessions throughout the report, which identify the session and not the individual speaker. More on the recording of these sessions for public record can be found below in the Graphic Recording section.

**The engagement sessions held by the CMA were as follows:**

- Saahlinda Naay (Haida Gwaii Museum) Listening Circle, 8 February 2021
- Membertou Heritage Park Listening Circle, 2 March 2021
- Burnaby Village Museum Roundtable, 12 March 2021
- Musée amérindien de Mashteuiatsh Listening Circle, 18 March 2021
- Wanuskewin Heritage Park Listening Circle, 22 March 2021
- Métis Crossing Listening Circle, 23 March 2021
- Kanaweyimik, Battlefords Tribal Council, Whitecap Dakota First Nations, Western Development Museum Roundtable, 14 March 2022
- Lennox Island First Nation Listening Circle, 5 April 2022
- Yukon Historical & Museums Association Roundtable, 21 April 2022
- Avataq Institute Roundtable, 20 June 2022

### Workshops

Workshops with museum professionals were held to collect input and information from those in the sector on implementing TRC Calls to Action and UNDRIP in Museums. These are listed below, along with a brief description.

#### **Ontario Museum Association (OMA) Indigenous Collections Symposium, ON, 25 March 2021**

A workshop was held as part of OMA's Symposium to inform the report, recommendations, and toolkits. Specifically, participants discussed questions museum professionals ask when starting the reconciliation process, and what types of networks, tools, and factors are essential to ensure that this work is sustainable and long-lasting. Participants discussed these questions in breakout rooms, and discussion points were captured on google jamboard.

#### **Reconciliation and UNDRIP for Small Museums CMA National Conference, 27 April 2022**

The first of a series of workshops with representatives from small museums across the country was held as part of the CMA conference to inform the small museums toolkit accompanying this report. Participants discussed the challenges and opportunities small museums encounter when implementing TRC and UNDRIP. This discussion was captured in a graphic recording.

#### **Reconciliation and UNDRIP for Small Museums Workshops, 1 June 2022**

The second of the series of workshops for small museum representatives, this workshop built on the previous session. Using UNDRIP areas as specific discussion points, participants discussed opportunities and challenges for small museums to implement UNDRIP in small museums in breakout rooms. Discussion points were captured on google jamboard.

### Graphic Recordings

To capture and anonymize the engagement session discussions for the public record, these sessions were graphically recorded. The graphic recorders (Tiaré Jung & Kara Sieviewright) translated real-time discussions of the engagement session conversations into text and pictures. These graphic recordings have been incorporated into this report.

### Written Submissions

The CMA launched a call for Written Submissions with a deadline of 30 April 2022. These submissions were meant to complement the formal engagement of the CMA to incorporate the work that has been done by museums regarding reconciliation and UNDRIP. In total, twelve submissions were received. These are summarized as follows:

#### **Barkerville Historic Town and Park, (Mandy Kilsby, Curator)**

An overview of the work Barkerville Historic Town and Park has been doing towards Reconciliation in conjunction with Indigenous partners. This includes consultations on Barkerville's pre-existing programs and the language with which the interpreters tell the colonial story; development of a traditional territory and land acknowledgement (the wording of which came directly from Barkerville's Indigenous interpreters) and incorporation of aspects of Indigenous history and Indigenous voice and perspectives. In 2021, Barkerville's Indigenous interpreters took on a more permanent, year-round advisory role to the National Historic Site's management team and are in the process of consulting on all the site's program development going forward.

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### **Canadian Museum of History (CMH), (John Moses, Director, Repatriation & Indigenous Relations)**

The CMH's Framework for Indigenous Relations (2020). It is premised on pillars comprising principles of Access, Engagement, and Knowledge. Building on work undertaken at CMH and its predecessors for decades, it is part of the Museum's response to the TRC Calls-to-Action [sic] and implementation of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP), and it underpins the work underway across the Museum. Its associated implementation plan includes over fifty action items, most of which are in progress. The Framework activities include policies, programs, and initiatives across the Museum, and the Museum has committed to report on progress by 2023.

### **Canadian Museum of Nature, (Meg Beckel, President & CEO)**

Indigenous Engagement Framework developed over the years and more recently with the guidance of an Indigenous Advisor, which maps the framework that guides the approach based on past practices and learnings and current discussions with Indigenous leaders and collaborators.

### **EOAS Pacific Museum of Earth (PME), (Daniel Gowryluk, Education Outreach Coordinator, Assistant Curator)**

An overview of PME's reconciliation approach as a natural history centre. It is a framework for respecting the rights & historical abuses of Indigenous Peoples [sic] around the world, including Indigenous Peoples [sic] within Canada. PME has identified specimens that likely have an ethically mottled past within their mineral collection (30,000 specimens), including stones which were mined under colonial regimes, or military dictatorships can carry the same ethical load as Blood Diamonds. They have drawn lines between colonialism to question the ethics of mining practices and assert principles of UNDRIP.

### **Fort Calgary, (Naomi Grattan, President & CEO)**

A brief selection of materials to demonstrate the collaborative and working nature of the relationships between the Society and the Nations of Treaty 7, including Indigenous Advisory Council (IAC) 2015 overview, including current membership and brief biographies; Indigenous Consultation for New Museum Architecture 2018; Strategic Plan – approved March 2020, which formalizes reconciliation as one of our six core values and adopts the TRC's guiding principles as the framework; Collections Policies for Indigenous Belongings 2020, Indigenous Consultation for Exhibitions 2020; and a summary of ongoing activities involving Indigenous partners.

### **Gabrielle Desgagné, Coordonnatrice de la collection, MBAS, Junior Fellow, Centre for Sensory Studies, Concordia University.**

Case study of a Quebec regional museum in support of Indigenous Peoples in the Ndakina territory.

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### **Mennonite Heritage Village (MHV), (Gary Dyck, Executive Director)**

A summary of Indigenous outreach, relationship building and consultation initiatives, including relationship-building with the Treaty Relations Commission of Manitoba (TRCM); MHV's 'All My Relations' initiative to help our staff and constituency to learn together about our shared history with the Indigenous people of Canada; anti-racism training; consultations with stakeholders to build consensus among the Mennonite Historical Society of Canada; with the Indigenous relations coordinator of our local school division; and plans for reciprocal relationship building with other local Indigenous communities.

### **Musée McCord-Stewart, (Martine Couillard, Chef, relations gouvernementales et institutionnelles)**

The McCord Stewart Museum has embarked on a major undertaking in response to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's call to action, in all functions of the institution: programming, museum mediation operations and governance, in a significant, thoughtful and necessary decolonization effort. By deploying action plan within the institution and its practices, first, with its governance and the presence of Indigenous members on its Board of Directors, public recognition of the territory, educational, citizen and cultural and cultural programs with Indigenous organizations, recruitment of Indigenous resources, decolonized collections management, provision of resources, offering free access to First Nations, Métis or Inuit members or to Indigenous community organizations, creating a or Indigenous community organizations, the creation of permanent positions reserved for Indigenous representatives, and more recently the initiation of an outreach approach to communities throughout the territory.

### **Museum Management and Curatorship Journal (Robert Janes, Editor-in-Chief Emeritus)**

A series of documents related to the 1992 Task Group report, a series of summaries of reconciliation and repatriation initiatives at the Glenbow and Prince of Wales Heritage Centre, and a copy Janes' "Humanizing Museum Repatriation" book chapter.

### **Peterborough Museum & Archives, (Susan Neale, Museum Director)**

A summary of initiatives by the Peterborough Museum & Archives regarding Truth and Reconciliation, including past repatriation initiatives, including "Peterborough Precedent": the PMA was the first community museum in Canada to repatriate Indigenous human remains (1991). The newly created Corporate position: Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Officer, City of Peterborough. Inclusive exhibition development, policy development, staff training, as well as Archival resource support for academic research, land claim-related research, and assisting with research regarding the Indigenous-non-Indigenous relationships in Peterborough.

### **Remai Art Gallery, (Aileen Burns & Johan Lundh, CEOs)**

An overview of the Strategic Plan (2021-2025), which highlights UNDRIP and TRC Calls to Action as one of the four goals, as follows: Work with Indigenous communities to create a plan for foregrounding Indigenous perspectives and self-determination throughout the organization.



### Interviews

CMA conducted a series of 1:1 interviews with Indigenous museum professionals as part of a process to incorporate more depth of perspectives in specific areas. In total, 10 interviews were conducted with 15 participants. Interviewees were selected based upon a series of criteria, including regional representation of Indigenous identities (First Nations, Métis, and Inuit), and specialization or expertise related to the implementation of UNDRIP in museums and cultural memory institutions. Interviews were conducted by phone or videoconference from March 2022 to May 2022.

Interviews used a semi-structured approach, with a discussion guide provided ahead of each interview that was tailored to the expertise of each interviewee. Responses were analyzed and reflected in the Standards, Recommendations, and analysis of this report. Wherever possible, we included direct quotes from interviewees. These participants and a summary of the interview content is listed below in alphabetical order as follows:

- **Aileen Burns, Johan Lundh, and Tarah Hogue, Rемаi Art Gallery, Saskatoon, SK, 14 April 2022.**

Overview of initiatives related to implementing UNDRIP and TRC, most notably through the gallery's strategic plan and at the Board of Directors level, including future plans for decolonizing museum governance. Difficulties encountered where initiatives come into conflict with existing acts, policies, or other departmental procedures.

- **Karine Duhamel, Educator, Curator & Consultant, Winnipeg, MB, 31 March 2022.**

Common and ongoing ethical challenges to meaningfully create Indigenous-led museum spaces. Recommendations to meaningfully integrate UNDRIP into collections management, operations, governance, and engagement in a way that is culturally specific and community responsive.

- **John G. Hampton, McKenzie Art Gallery, Regina, SK, 4 May 2022.**

Overview of activities and initiatives to implement UNDRIP and support Indigenous self-determination at the MacKenzie Art Gallery, including through the use of KPIs measurements. Recommendations for governance, operations, repatriation initiatives and collections management.

- **Heather Igloliorte, Concordia University, Montreal, QC, 13 April 2022.**

Structural, operational, and financial changes required to recognize and support Indigenous self-determination in museums and heritage institutions. Recommendations for improving engagement, consultation, and meaningful collaboration with Indigenous communities.

- **Jessie Loyer, Mount Royal University, Calgary, AB, 12 April 2022.**

Indigenous relationality and worldviews in relation to collections management and repatriation and the role of cultural memory institutions to centre this knowledge, create welcoming spaces, and implement Indigenous assessment in relation to museum practices.

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- **Celina Loyer, Musée Héritage Museum, St. Albert, AB, 11 May 2022.**  
Experience working in a small museum as a Métis museum professional and educator. Opportunities and challenges of designing, developing and implementing Indigenous educational content and programming at a small museum.
- **Val Napoleon, University of British Columbia, Vancouver, BC, 31 March 2022.**  
Recognition of Indigenous laws and principles and recommendations for museums to mirror these laws and principles in a way that is culturally specific. Importance of recognizing Indigenous intellectual property.
- **Jodi Simkin, Director, Cultural Affairs and Heritage, Klahoose First Nation.**  
TRC Compliance research and development of KPI framework to quantify initiatives in museums. Overview of recently developed initiatives to support repatriation efforts.
- **Adrian Stimson, Artist, Siksika Nation, AB**  
Experience as an Indigenous artist, curator, Councillor and advisory board member working in and with museums, and encounters with colonial structures in this context. Recommendations for governance and operations to meaningfully make space for Indigenous leadership and to create Indigenous-led spaces.
- **Kate Wolforth, The Rooms, St. Johns, NL, 7 April 2022.**  
Overview of museum's work with Indigenous Nations to support community-led initiatives, including exhibit development, programming, access to cultural belongings and repatriation. Commitments to implementing UNDRIP. Specific historical circumstances related to jurisdictional overlap between governments and how this affects recognition of Indigenous Nations in a Newfoundland-specific context.

# UNDRIP Key Performance Indicator (KPI) Research

To assess the current state of policies and practices in relation to UNDRIP implementation, the CMA devised and directed quantitative research to provide a nation-wide assessment of UNDRIP compliance. The study identified a series of UNDRIP key performance indicators (KPIs) based on the framework developed by Jodi Simkin to assess museums. See the full reference to Simkin's work in the *Resources Consulted* section.

The objective of this review was to use a small sample set to assess the adherence of the Canadian museum sector to the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP).

Given that policies related to TRC and UNDRIP implementation were largely unavailable or inaccessible, this research provided an understanding of the baseline of TRC and UNDRIP implementation regionally, by museum size, and by museum type.

To conduct this review, a list of 84 Canadian institutions who have been recently recognized for their Indigenous initiatives or indicated promising practices through their 2019 survey response. Each institution was manually scored using a check-list-based rubric based on UNDRIP compliance. Sources for the analysis included publicly available resources, materials and communications available through the institutions' websites to score each institution across the check-list.

Types of museums included in this research:

- National museums (e.g., Canadian Immigration Museum at Pier 21, Canadian Museum of History)
- Provincial / Territorial museums (e.g., ROM, Royal BC Museum, Manitoba Museum)
- Art Galleries (e.g., National Art Gallery, Art Gallery of Winnipeg, Montreal Museum of Fine Arts)
- Small History museums (e.g., BC Aviation Museum, Niagara Falls History Museum, Humboldt and District Museum)
- Medium History museums (e.g., Western Development Museum, Glenbow Museum, Labrador Interpretation Centre)
- Natural History museums (e.g., Canadian Museum of Nature, Shaw Centre for the Salish Sea, Canadian Fossil Discovery Centre)
- Science Centres (e.g., Science North, Science East, Saskatchewan Science Centre)
- Historical Sites (e.g., Fort William Historical Park, Colony of Avalon, Upper Canada Village)

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From there, each museum was manually scored using a checklist-based rubric based on Truth and Reconciliation Call to Action #67 (TRC #67). Researchers analysed publicly available resources, materials, and communications available through the museums' websites to score each institution across the checklist.

The checklist included several key performance indicators utilized to garner a sense of each museum's progress on a variety of UNDRIP-related initiatives. For each of the categories, the research team explored the websites of each museum to assess if the museum indicated performance of activities within the category. If compliant, the research team assessed the level of accessibility and navigability (i.e., how easy it is to find the information on the museum website or within other communications). Below are the categories identified as KPIs for the purposes of this report:

- **Reconciliation Policy/Strategic Plan** – This KPI sought the existence of Reconciliation, Indigenous Initiatives, or UNDRIP Policy at the museum (or commitment to Reconciliation, UNDRIP, etc. in a Strategic Plan). The research team looked for actual governance policies that were written, adopted by the museum, and publicized on their website or through other means. Where museums did not have a policy but had Reconciliation-based practices this was noted in the additional comments. If a museum did have a policy, or commitment to reconciliation or UNDRIP in a strategic plan, the museum was then categorized by accessibility (i.e., was the policy easy to find, was it promoted on the homepage, or was it challenging to locate).
- **Indigenous Advisory Committee** – This KPI sought to identify museum-led Indigenous Advisory Committees. Museums that were scored in the affirmative had committees that were organized by the museum, existed within the museum's governance structure, and provided overarching direction over the work of the museum. Museums that did not score in this category may still have ongoing engagement practices with local Indigenous communities, but do not have a committee within their governance structure. If a museum did have an Indigenous Advisory Committee, the website was then categorized by "pride of place" (i.e., was information about the committee readily available on the museum website, is there a dedicated page for the committee, or is the committee simply referenced somewhere else like a webpage about museum governance).
- **Indigenous-Specific Curriculum or Programming** – This KPI examined whether museums featured Indigenous-specific curriculum or programming, including Indigenous-specific galleries or exhibits, Indigenous-focused educational programs, or Indigenous-specific events. If a museum did have Indigenous-specific curricula or programming, the museum was then categorized by navigability and accessibility.
- **Sponsored Free Admission** – This KPI sought to identify museums that publicly promote free admission for Indigenous Peoples. Museums that scored in the affirmative promoted free admission for Indigenous Peoples on their website, while those that did not score in the affirmative either do not offer or do not promote free admission for Indigenous Peoples. If a museum does offer free admission, the museum was then categorized by navigability and accessibility (i.e., is the offer of free admission promoted somewhere that is easy to notice, or did it take some thorough searching to identify the offering).

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- **Online Access to Collections and Archives** – This KPI evaluated online access to museum collections and archives and examined whether there are Indigenous-specific collections available through the museum’s online portal. Museums that were not scored in the affirmative have either no online collections, do have online collections but the link is broken, or do not have any Indigenous-specific collections on the online portal. If a museum does have an online portal, the navigability and accessibility around finding the online portal was categorized. The research team did not consider the accessibility or navigability of the online portal itself.
- **Indigenous Curators** – This KPI sought to identify which museums had Indigenous curators on their staff. This included only those museums who have identified Indigenous curators and does not include museums who have other Indigenous staff or those that have engaged in partnerships with Indigenous communities on curatorial initiatives.
- **Land Acknowledgement** – This KPI sought to identify which museums had a land acknowledgement on their website. The research team did not review if land acknowledgments are done at museum events or are publicized in museum documents.
- **National Indigenous People’s Day Celebrations** – This KPI sought to identify museums that have a National Indigenous Peoples’ Day (June 21) event or celebration. This did not include museums that are observing National Day for Truth and Reconciliation (September 30), but those museums were noted in the additional comments.

- **Relationships** – The research team then took a comprehensive view of all the information available on the website, and the scores for each of the previous KPIs and explored whether the museum appeared to have strong relationships with neighbouring Indigenous communities. This includes ongoing collaboration, entrenched partnerships, and continued conversation with those communities. Museums that scored in the affirmative demonstrated that they have relationships with nearby communities, and that those relationships are ongoing.
- **Direction** – The research team took a comprehensive view of all the information available on the website, the scores for each of the previous KPIs, and the strength of the relationships that the museum appears to have with Indigenous communities to see if the work of the museum appears to be directed by local Indigenous communities. This includes an active demonstration of how their relationship or engagement with Indigenous Peoples has either changed or influenced the work that they are doing, in what ways does the museum report back to communities, and what, if any, structures exist within the museum’s governance structure that demonstrate that the museum’s direction is influenced by Indigenous Peoples.

Once the data was gathered, researchers undertook an analysis of the results, comparing and sorting museums based on their individual scores and pulling out key, valuable insights with respect to UNDRIP adherence.

### Findings across KPI criteria

Findings from the KPI research are presented below. Findings include general observations across each of the research criteria, as well as findings across museum type, size, and geography. More in-depth analysis of these findings can be found in the main sections of this report.

#### Reconciliation Policy

- Approximately 10% of museums included in this research have a Reconciliation policy or strategic plan related to reconciliation or UNDRIP in place.
- Several museums have ongoing Reconciliation efforts, but no written (or public) policies or plans.

#### Repatriation Policy

- Approximately 10% of museums researched have a publicly-available formal Repatriation policy in place.
- However, there are many instances where museums mention repatriation, or have repatriated Indigenous artifacts to their home territories but do not have a publicly accessible Repatriation policy.

#### Indigenous Advisory Committee

- When looking at museums with an Indigenous Advisory Committee as part of their overall governance structure, 10.5% of museums meet the criteria.
- Many other institutions do not have committees but have policies or practices to engage with external committees.

#### Indigenous-Specific Curriculum

- When looking at Indigenous-specific curriculum and programming, 73% of museums meet the criteria.

#### Sponsored Free Admission

- When looking at sponsored free admission, only 12% of museums meet this criterion.
- Several museums are working towards Reconciliation efforts but do not offer (or publicly mention) Indigenous admission policies. Even when it is offered, it is not often highlighted.

#### Online access to collections and archives

- When looking at museums with online access to collections and archives, 36% of museums meet this criterion.
- There is a challenge with several museums offering online access, but technical issues or bad links prevent access. Others have challenging navigation platforms.



## SECTION 8: METHODOLOGY

### Land acknowledgement

- When looking at museums with a land acknowledgement, 48% of museums meet this criterion.

### National Indigenous Peoples Day

- When looking at museums with National Indigenous People's Day Celebrations, 18% meet this criterion.
- Several museums highlight events in September for National Day of Truth and Reconciliation / Orange Shirt Day.

### Indigenous curators

- 32% of museums included in this research have Indigenous curators.
- Indigenous curators sit across all museum types. Of the 32% of museums that have Indigenous curators, these include: history museums (6), provincial/territorial museums (6), small history museums (4), art galleries (6), natural history museums (2), science centres (2), national museums (1).
- Several museums are actively seeking Indigenous curators.
- There are several museums that have Indigenous collaborators—either as guest curators, or community-led projects – but do not have Indigenous curators on staff. It must be noted that there is often a challenge of identifying 'curator' as opposed to 'collaborators'.

### Relationships

- When it comes to building relationships with Indigenous Peoples and communities, according to the criterion, 37% of museums are engaged in a meaningful manner.

### Direction

- 26% of museums take operational or governance direction from local Indigenous Peoples and communities.
- There is often a challenge connecting relationships to the direction of the museum's work.

### Reconciliation Program Working Groups

Working Groups to support the work of the Council and the Reconciliation Program were established to provide additional guidance and oversight in the following areas: Indigenous-led spaces; Repatriation and Collections; and Small Museums. Additionally, a series of small museums workshops were held based on the guidance of the Small Museums working group. These technical working groups assisted in content development for the report and toolkits. The members of each working group are listed in the Acknowledgements section of this report.

### Limitations

In addition to recognizing the limitations of the above project initiatives, the Canadian Museums Association (CMA) would like to additionally acknowledge the following factors.

#### COVID-19 Pandemic

The delivery of this report, like many activities carried out from March 2020 onward, was subject to limitations directly or indirectly related to the COVID-19 Pandemic. Travel and in-person meeting restrictions led to major setbacks within the engagement schedule, as a full suite of in-person nationwide consultations had been scheduled to begin in April 2020 and were subsequently canceled or postponed. This affected the quantity, but also the quality of the connection of these engagements, as the CMA was not able to participate fully in-person as it would have liked to, and is advised to in this report.

The pandemic also had operational impacts. For the CMA, the transition to a virtual method of working took time and energy from staff. For Indigenous advisors, including members of the Reconciliation Council and communities identified for engagement sessions, a focus of community health interests along with a transition to digital impeded, and in some cases prevented, their ability to participate.

As the impacts of COVID lessened, very little time or will was left to carry out engagement in a manner that was initially planned, and other methods were utilized to reduce impact on the final outcome.

### Shifting Leadership

In the spring of 2021, the CMA faced a complete turnover of its board and executive team. While the departures were for numerous reasons, it took the organization over 6 months to comprehend budgets and rebuild our capacity.

To address this gap in capacity, a Reconciliation Program Manager was hired, and a project extension request was granted by the Department of Canadian Heritage. Additional human resources were also provided to the project using CMA funds during this period.

### Underdeveloped Decolonized Approaches

From the outset, the CMA did not clearly define and plan for how its own colonial approaches would impact program delivery.

As a result, brave and talented Reconciliation Program leadership has come, and for a variety of reasons, gone, not the least of which relate to the tension that develops when doing decolonial work for a non- Indigenous-led organization. Additionally, the Reconciliation Council struggled to gain access to information and were not always provided adequate time to have their concerns heard and reflected.

Following a change of board and leadership in May 2021, the CMA was able to address these issues within a new environment, leading to a shift in project relationships and a more collaborative way of doing things.

Additionally, as CMA staff were able to learn about and report the standards set out in this report, organizational transformation began and continues based on the outcomes of this work.



# Acknowledgements

The opportunity to review and recalibrate museum support for Indigenous self-determination was an honour for the Canadian Museums Association (CMA) to undertake. The work underlying this report was guided by the CMA Reconciliation Council and informed by Indigenous partners through working groups, interviews, roundtables, listening circles, surveys and written submissions. The CMA also recognizes the contribution of the 1992 Task Force, who laid the groundwork for this report. We hope this report amplifies the voices of the Indigenous Peoples consulted and reflects expectations for the future of the intersection of Indigenous heritage with museums.

We also want to thank the representatives from museums who participated in our consultations through working groups, interviews, roundtables, surveys, workshops, and written submissions. Your participation assisted in formulating an understanding of the baseline, gaps and resources required to achieve the standards identified by Indigenous Peoples consulted for this report.

In particular, the CMA wishes to acknowledge the following for their contributions to the CMA Reconciliation Program in completion of TRC Call to Action #67.

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Canada

## SECTION 9: ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

### CMA Reconciliation Council

The CMA recognizes and thanks the following Reconciliation Council Members for their time, support, and leadership.

#### Current Members

- Grant Anderson, Manitoba Métis Federation
- Nika Collison, Haida Gwaii Museum, Skidegate, BC
- Jonathan Lainey, McCord Stewart Museum, Montreal QC
- Lou-Ann Neel, Creative BC, Victoria, BC
- Sharon McLeod, University College of the North, The Pas, MB
- John Moses, Canadian Museum of History, Gatineau, QC
- Sarah Pashagumskum, Aanischaaukamikw Cree Cultural Institute, Oujé-Bougoumou, QC
- Marie-Paule Robitaille, Musée de la civilisation (retired), Québec, QC
- Theresie Tungilik, Government of Nunavut, Rankin Inlet, NU
- Jeff Ward Membertou, Heritage Park, Membertou First Nation, NS

#### Past Members

Please note that the positions attributed to each past member reflect their affiliation at the time of serving on the Council.

- Stephen Augustine, Mi'kmaq Grand Council, Unama'ki College, Cape Breton University, NS
- Catherine Bell, University of Alberta, AB
- Morgan Baillargeon, Métis artist, MB
- Jean-Marc Blais, Canadian Museum of History, QC
- Stephen Borys, Winnipeg Art Gallery, MB
- Alan Elder, Canadian Museum of History, QC
- Jane Fullerton, New Brunswick Museum, NB
- Pamela Gross, Kitikmeot Heritage Society, NU
- Lauréat Moreau, Shaputuan Museum, QC
- Anthony Shelton, Museum of Anthropology at the University of British Columbia, BC

### CMA Reconciliation Program Working Groups

The CMA recognizes and thanks the following Working Group Members for their time, support, and guidance.

#### Indigenous-Led Spaces Working Group

- Heather George, Woodland Cultural Centre, ON
- Amber Schilling, Glenbow Museum, AB
- Damara Jacobs-Petersen, Museum of Anthropology, BC
- Sue Parsons, Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in Heritage Department, YK
- Sarah Pashagumskum, Aanischaaukamikw Cree Cultural Institute, Oujé-Bougoumou, QC

#### Repatriation Working Group

- Jodi Ashini, Innu Nation, NU
- Nika Collison, Haida Gwaii Museum, Skidegate, BC
- Deidre Elliot, Nunatsiavut Government, NL
- Sharon Fortney, Vancouver Museum, BC
- Juanita Johnston, U'mista Cultural Centre, BC
- Lou-Ann Neel, Creative BC, Victoria, BC
- John Moses, Canadian Museum of History, Gatineau, QC

#### Small Museums Working Group

- Allissa Dullemond, Peace River Museum, Archives and Mackenzie Centre, AB
- Jennifer Fitzpatrick, Humboldt Museum, SK
- Alanna Horejda, Transcona Museum, MB
- Kayleigh Speirs, Fort Frances Museum, ON
- Angharad Wenz, Dawson City Museum, YT



## SECTION 9: ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

### Interview Participants

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- Val Napoleon, University of British Columbia, Vancouver, BC
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- Tiaré Jung, Vancouver, BC
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- Barkerville Historic Town and Park (Mandy Kilsby, Curator)
- Canadian Museum of History (John Moses, Director, Repatriation & Indigenous Relations)
- Canadian Museum of Nature (Meg Beckel, President & CEO)
- EOAS Pacific Museum of Earth (Daniel Gowryluk, Education Outreach Coordinator, Assistant Curator)
- Fort Calgary (Naomi Grattan, President & CEO)
- Mennonite Heritage Village (Gary Dyck, Executive Director)
- Musée McCord-Stewart (Martine Couillard, Chef, relations gouvernementales et institutionnelles)
- Museum Management and Curatorship Journal (Robert Janes, Editor-in-Chief Emeritus)
- Peterborough Museum & Archives (Susan Neale, Museum Director)
- Remail Art Gallery (Aileen Burns & Johan Lundh, CEOs)

### Resource Contributions

#### UNDRIP and Indigenous Heritage Report

The CMA recognizes and thanks the following authors for their contribution of the UNDRIP companion resource, the *UNDRIP and Indigenous Heritage Report*.

- Catherine Bell
- Melissa Erickson

#### Key Performance Indicator Framework

The CMA thanks Jodi Simkin for the use of her Key Performance Indicator framework to measure Reconciliation and UNDRIP compliance.

### Other Resources

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- Assembly of First Nations Quebec and Labrador, *The First Nations in Quebec and Labrador's Research Protocol*
- CARFAC, *Indigenous Protocols dot Art*
- Elwood Jimmy, Vanessa Andreotti, and Sharon Stein, *Towards Braiding*
- Miriam Clavir and John Moses, *Caring for sacred and culturally sensitive objects*
- Royal BC Museum and Haida Gwaii Museum, *Indigenous Repatriation Handbook*
- Gregory Younging, *Elements of Style*

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- Christian Bergeron, Troubadour Communications
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- Jameson Brant
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- Stephanie Danyluk

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### Authors

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#### Stephanie Danyluk

*“Contributing to this project was an honour and the learning experience of a lifetime. Sincerest thanks to all those who contributed to this work for their generosity in sharing their knowledge and experience. To Colin, Ellis, Ruth—all my love.”*

#### Rebecca MacKenzie

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# Glossary of Terms

## Authoritative Guidance

Authoritative guidance is a term that is utilized in accounting practice, namely the *Generally Accepted Accounting Principles* (GAAP). It is used in reference to statements and laws at the top of the GAAP hierarchy, and therefore must be considered first and foremost.

In the context of museum advisory, those who are providing authoritative guidance on a project have the final control over processes and outcomes for any policy or project over which they are presiding.

## Belongings

Of central importance is the difference in meaning attached to “artefacts” or objects, terms used formerly by Western institutions, versus cultural belongings by Indigenous communities.

Some non-Indigenous cultural heritage workers may incorrectly determine that artefacts are simply objects of significance for learning about the past. In contrast, many Indigenous communities regard their belongings as kin, which includes not only cultural objects, but all intangible heritage and Indigenous intellectual property, including maps, photographs, archival documents, and songs, plants, seeds, and language recordings. These belongings are living parts of Indigenous traditional knowledge systems, cultural expressions, and Indigenous intellectual property.

It should be noted that not all Indigenous communities make use of the term belongings, and that care should be taken to determine what terms are in use in a community context.

The use of the term *cultural belongings* is already a standard for museums in Quebec. Defined in the first iteration of the provincial Cultural Property Act [*Loi sur les biens culturels*], it defines *biens culturels*, which translates to cultural belongings or cultural property, as all items of cultural heritage including artworks, historic sites, multimedia etc. regardless of their affiliation to an Indigenous community. An Indigenous specific term is yet to be defined.

*“Many objects in museums are meant to be used, they are also living in the sense that in communities, families, and homes, they have a role, they belong and are utilized. And when they leave a family, they are no longer passed on as they are meant to be and the stories and teachings that go with the object are also not transmitted.”*

Mashteuiatsh Listening Circle

## SECTION 10: GLOSSARY OF TERMS

### Call to Action #68

*“We all upon the federal government, in collaboration with Aboriginal Peoples, and the Canadian Museums Association to mark the 150th anniversary of Canadian Confederation in 2017 by establishing a dedicated national funding program for commemoration projects on the theme of reconciliation.”*

Call to Action #68, Truth and Reconciliation  
Commission Report

Call to Action #68 is included alongside other Calls to Action that relate to cultural heritage.

Whether #68 has been delivered does not have consensus. Of the four main groups reporting on the completion of Calls to Action, affirmation is split.

The Canadian Federal Government and the not-for-profit, Indigenous-led group Indigenous Watchdog affirm that it is considered complete.

However, concerns around the delivery of funds related to Canada 150 draw into question whether this Call to Action truly met the intention set out by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. Both the CBC Beyond 94 project and the Yellowhead Institute consider #68 to be incomplete, citing that the funding project was “not in collaboration with Indigenous Peoples and not exclusively to fund projects on the theme of reconciliation.” (CBC News, Beyond 94, Call to Action #68)

It should be noted that the Canadian Museums Association was not invited to collaborate on the project or the delivery of this Call to Action as was requested.

### Epistemicide

Epistemicide refers to the killing of knowledge systems and is often referenced in the context of colonialism. The European conquest of the Americas is considered by scholars to be one of the four epistemicides of the long sixteenth century which was the beginning of a wave of domination of Western knowledge systems.

### Duress and Repatriation

The presence of duress calls into question the voluntariness of an acquisition. Defined by one of the participating parties of any trade of goods or intellectual property being forced to act against their will or better judgement due to threat, violence or societal constraint.

Indigenous peoples seeking the return of their cultural belongings and ancestral remains and have long asserted that these were removed under duress due to political or religious coercion, dire economic circumstances, and other circumstances that meet the definition of duress. Any acquisitions taken from Indigenous communities at under duress are considered unethical.

Moreover, acquisitions acquired under duress are not merely unethical. The presence of duress also impedes Indigenous rights as defined in UNDRIP. Their continued use, display, and ownership by museums violates the rights of Indigenous peoples to free, prior and informed consent.

Some museums have developed policies and procedure that consider items acquired under duress qualify the item for deaccession or return. For example, the Smithsonian’s Collections Management policy as of April 29, 2022, authorizes Smithsonian museums to return collections, in appropriate circumstances, based on ethical considerations, including those taken under duress.

## SECTION 10: GLOSSARY OF TERMS

In 2019, the Royal BC Museum announced that anything it acquired from Indigenous Peoples during the anti-potlatch years, from 1885 to 1951, will be considered eligible for repatriation because it was obtained at a time of duress.

However, as stated in this report, many consider the period of duress to extend far before and beyond the application of the *Indian Act* in Canada.

### Indigenous Nations, Communities, and Peoples

*Indigenous Peoples* is a collective name for the original peoples of North America and their descendants, who include First Nations, Metis, and Inuit. It is the primary term used in UNDRIP

*Indigenous communities* are distinct social, linguistic and cultural groups who share collective ancestral ties to the lands and natural resources where they live, occupy or from which they have been displaced.

*Indigenous Nations* refer to the larger governance structure of a collective of Indigenous Peoples as recognized by the community or non-Indigenous government.

In some instances, these may be the Indigenous Nations who occupied territories and exercised jurisdiction at the time of colonization. As these Nations do not necessarily all exist today as they existed at the time of European colonization, for example as a result of displacement or due to the Indian Act, we do not simply refer to a “frozen-in-time” definition of Indigenous Nations, but one that is defined by Indigenous Peoples themselves.

For the purposes of this report, this term is used to refer to a governing body made up of Indigenous Peoples in a manner determined appropriate by Indigenous Peoples themselves. The term Indigenous community is used in reference to distinct groups of Indigenous Peoples outside of formal governance activities of the Nation.

### Indigenous Rights Holders

Indigenous rights refer to practices, traditions and customs that distinguish the unique culture of First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Nations. Indigenous rights holders are Indigenous peoples who hold title to Indigenous rights.

Indigenous rights are inherent, collective rights that have been held since time immemorial and flow and from legal and social orders created by each Indigenous Nation. These rights are maintained and protected in many ways, including in Section 35 of the Canadian *Constitution Act*.

### Not Stakeholders

‘Stakeholder’ is a common corporate term for partners. It is more appropriate to refer to Indigenous Peoples as rights holders rather than stakeholders.

### Indigenous Self-Determination

Self-determination is defined by Indigenous groups obtaining control over the full set of rights to govern themselves in all aspects of their political, social, economic, and cultural lives.

This means that Indigenous Peoples have the right to define for themselves how best to build capacity and guide interactions within their communities. This applies to engagement and consultation activities, which require consent.



## SECTION 10: GLOSSARY OF TERMS

### Key Performance Indicators

Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) are identified critical (key) measurable indicators of progress toward an intended result. KPIs are used to measure and analyze strategic and operational improvement. KPIs include setting targets (the desired level of performance) and tracking progress against that target.

For example, KPIs developed for the research and analysis of UNDRIP implementation for this report included the identification of measurable activities such as the existence of a repatriation policy as an indicator for the museum's intention to support repatriation requests from Indigenous communities. See the Methodology Section for more information.

### “Nothing about us without us”

“Nothing about us without us” is a slogan that has long stood for calls for self-governance, with origins going back to the development of Central European democracy in the 16th century. It was popularized by disability rights activists in the 1990s.

The term is meant to assert the right of people to be directly involved in decision making processes that represent them. This term has been adopted by Indigenous people often in reference to asserting their right to authority and control over their cultural heritage, including cultural objects, intangible heritage, intellectual property, and representations and interpretations of their history, culture, and traditional knowledge. It was frequently shared throughout engagement sessions for the CMA Reconciliation Program.

### Rematriation

There is growing usage of the term rematriation as an alternative to repatriation. Indigenous cultural workers may choose to use this term for many reasons, including an acknowledgement of matrilineal heritage systems, and an acknowledgement of patriarchy and colonialism.

Given the legal context of this report, we use the narrower term of repatriate but encourage museums to ask which term is preferred when working with Indigenous nations.

*“By ‘rematriate’ we mean ‘give back,’ but unlike the legal term ‘repatriate,’ which signifies a simple transfer of ownership, ‘rematriate’ means something more profound: a restoration of right relationships and a true action of decolonization, aimed not just at righting a past wrong but transforming our collective future.”*

Thunder Bay Library Rematriation Project

### Safe vs. brave spaces

The term “brave spaces” was popularized as a more accurate way to describe an environment whose first priority is to facilitate discussion in a respectful way. Brave spaces clearly centre themselves around the concepts of civility, owning intention, choice to participate, respect and absence of intentional harm.

While a very worthy goal, within public spaces, safety is not something that can be guaranteed and doesn't speak explicitly to the primary goal of educational spaces, like universities and museums, which is to encourage discussion and debate.

## SECTION 10: GLOSSARY OF TERMS

In their 2017 publication, **Safe Spaces and Brave Spaces**, the National (American) Association of Student Personnel Administrators (NASPA), give a thorough review of the history of the use of safe and brave spaces as terms to describe learning environments in higher education.

NASPA encourages educational environments to use the term brave space: “[A] safe space is never actually safe. The concept of a brave space encompasses all of what the sectors discussed in this work regard as safe spaces, but clarifies that these environments are challenging and that students are expected to participate within them. Administrators, faculty, and staff can replace use of the term safe space, as it pertains to class-based dialogues, with that of brave space. By using the term brave space, faculty are able to distinguish an inclusive classroom discussion from programming on campus that commonly provides respite space for traditionally marginalized communities.

### Truth and Reconciliation Commission

Funded by the Indian Residential Schools Settlement Agreement (2006), the Truth and Reconciliation Commission was established to acknowledge and provide a witness to Residential School experiences.

The Commission heard from over 6,500 witnesses and survivors, creating a historical record now housed by the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation in Manitoba. As part of its comprehensive final report, 94 Calls to Action were issued to further the aims of reconciliation.

To date, definitive consensus between four reporting organizations indicates that only five are complete. Individual organizational assessments range with 11 considered completed by the Yellowhead Institute and Indigenous Watchdog, 13 considered completed by CBC Beyond 94 and 17 considered complete by the Federal Government.

### United Nations Declaration of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP)

The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) is a comprehensive international instrument on the rights of Indigenous Peoples. It establishes a universal framework of minimum standards for the survival, dignity and well-being of the Indigenous Peoples of the world. It also elaborates on existing human rights standards and fundamental freedoms as they apply to the specific situation of Indigenous Peoples.

UNDRIP is the principal framework upon which the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) Calls to Action are based. The Calls to Action by the TRC are aimed at a range of institutions, laws and programs affecting Indigenous Peoples; and legislation aimed at its implementation. UNDRIP is an expansive declaration consisting of 46 Articles. Because it is a declaration and not an international treaty or convention, it is viewed by State signatories as aspirational until implemented through national law, although some scholars debate this.

The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) was adopted by the General Assembly on Thursday, 13 September 2007, by a majority of 144 states in favour, 4 votes against, including Canada. Canada’s stated reason for opposing the declaration was that it lacked clear guidance for implementation and conflicted with the existing Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, which the government believed already protected the rights of Indigenous people.

In the intermediary period, UNDRIP received increasing support at the federal level, and was adopted by one province, British Columbia, in 2019, through the *Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act*.

In December 2020, the federal government introduced Bill C-15, The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act, which received Royal Assent in June, 2021. Bill C-15 requires the federal government to prepare an action plan to achieve the objectives of UNDRIP by June 21, 2023.

## Recommended Resources

### **Caring for sacred and culturally sensitive objects**

*Miriam Clavir and John Moses*

Caring for sacred and culturally sensitive objects is part of CCI's Preventive conservation guidelines for collections online resource. This section presents key considerations related to sacred and culturally sensitive objects in heritage collections.

### **Elements of Indigenous Style**

*Gregory Younging*

This resource is essential reading for anyone writing about, editing or publishing works involving Indigenous people and communities. *This is not a free resource. Please respect copyright and do not copy, scan or distribute any part of this without permission.*

### **The First Nations in Quebec and Labrador's Research Protocol**

*Assembly of First Nations Quebec-Labrador*

The First Nations in Quebec and Labrador's Research Protocol is guide for First Nations communities and regional organizations and research communities to establish rules for research activities performed with First Nations in their territory.

The protocol highlights three fundamental values to implement a collaborative research project between a First Nations community and researchers. The protocol addresses self determination for Quebec First Nations and it facilitates development of programmes and services designed by and for First Nations according to the realities of each community. The protocol also has been adopted in all contexts concerning the Inuit of Nunavik.

The AFNQL is attached to the Assembly of First Nations (AFN) and is the meeting point for the Chiefs of 43 communities of the First Nations of Quebec and Labrador.

## SECTION 10: GLOSSARY OF TERMS

### **Indigenous Protocols dot Art**

*CARFAC*

This resource provides practical guidelines for respectful engagement with Indigenous People, particularly in the field of visual art.

### **Indigenous Repatriation Handbook**

*Royal BC Museum and Haida Gwaii Museum*

This comprehensive resource presents a comprehensive review of the repatriation process that is helpful to both community and museum and includes relevant tools that will assist with the process.

### ***Towards Braiding***

*Elwood Jimmy and Vanessa Andreotti with Sharon Stein*

*Towards Braiding* is an on-going collaborative process between Elwood Jimmy and Vanessa Andreotti hosted and funded by the Musagetes Arts Foundation.

This collaboration involves several modes of relational engagement with Indigenous and non-Indigenous artists, scholars, and communities, including visits, gatherings and consultations.

- **Towards Braiding** (download the book)
- **Towards Braiding handout 1:** For organizations starting the journey [of engagement with Indigenous Peoples, knowledges, communities)
- **Towards Braiding handout 2:** Mis-steps on the path to braiding: opening conversations about inappropriate and appropriative engagements

### **UNDRIP and Indigenous Heritage**

*Catherine Bell and Melissa Erickson*

This resource is essential reading to gain a general understanding of UNDRIP and understand the application of UNDRIP to Indigenous Heritage and museums.

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