



Indigenous
Institutes
Consortium

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Indigenous Institutes Consortium
Regional Model for First Nations
Post-Secondary Education:
Engagement Report and Proposal

Leaders in lifelong learning

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It is time for a renewed, nation-to-nation relationship with First Nations peoples, one that understands that the constitutionally guaranteed rights of First Nations in Canada are not an inconvenience but rather a sacred obligation... It's time for a new fiscal relationship with First Nations that gives your communities sufficient, predictable and sustained funding.

”

Justin Trudeau, 2015



Executive Summary

“Indigenous control of Indigenous education within a new nation-to-nation relationship, is a means to... ensuring culturally appropriate and quality education for Indigenous students.” — Justin Trudeau, 2016

Education is deeply connected to the strength and well-being of community. First Nations have an inherent and Treaty right to control their education systems. The Government of Canada has acknowledged its Treaty, constitutional and legal obligations to uphold and honour the authority of First Nations to exercise control over education, including post-secondary education (PSE).

The Government of Canada has passed legislation to support the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* (UNDRIP), which affirms the inherent jurisdiction of Indigenous people to exercise control over their own education systems. Canadian legislation now commits the Government of Canada to “take all measures necessary to ensure the laws of Canada are consistent with the Declaration.” The Government of Canada’s current approach to funding First Nations’ post-secondary education in Ontario falls well short of this obligation – a shortfall that it acknowledges and is now in a position to remedy.

In recognition of this need for change, the Government of Canada has taken important steps forward. In 2019-20, the Government announced funding for a three-year engagement process to define and cost regional Indigenous PSE models. This process has afforded Ontario Indigenous post-secondary institutions (specifically, member Institutes of the Indigenous Institutes Consortium) with an opportunity to articulate the kind of resources and support that are required to deliver post-secondary education in a manner that meets the needs of learners, communities and First Nations institutions.

While some regions in Canada are still at an early stage in the development of Indigenous PSE institutions,

Ontario Indigenous PSE has benefited from a sustained collaboration with the provincial government leading to a comprehensive legislative and regulatory structure, mature and growing institutions that are positioned to thrive, and an increasingly established culture of Nation-to-Nation dialogue between the Government of Ontario and First Nations – both of whom are ready to expand that table to include a federal partner in a meaningful way.

This report aims to articulate and build upon what was heard throughout the IIC’s Indigenous PSE engagement process about the support required to grow and expand upon Ontario’s First Nations regional post-secondary education model that:

- is consistent with self-government, Treaty rights and inherent rights;
- honours the Government of Canada’s constitutional obligations with respect to First Nations education as articulated in the Report of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples;
- fulfills the Government of Canada’s commitment to UNDRIP and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission’s (TRC) Calls to Action (CTAs), both of which commit the Government of Canada to supporting Indigenous-controlled post-secondary education models;
- realizes the Government of Canada’s existing commitment to fund First Nations’ regional models of post-secondary education in adequate, predictable and sustainable ways that achieve equity with non-Indigenous post-secondary institutions; and



- ensures Ontario First Nations exercise control over post-secondary education and that Indigenous post-secondary institutions, mandated by their Nations, can deliver holistic lifelong learning informed by Indigenous ways of knowing and being.

“Education is the key to reconciliation... Education got us into this mess, and education will get us out of this mess”

— Murray Sinclair, 2015

The Government of Ontario and First Nations formalized their successful model of Indigenous PSE with the passage of the *Indigenous Institutes Act* in 2017. The Act implements a strong regulatory framework, recognizes Indigenous Institutes as the Third Pillar of the Ontario PSE sector — along with Colleges and Universities — and provides core operating grants to Indigenous Institutes beginning in 2018-19.

This model is largely working well in meeting the needs of those it serves – learners, communities, First Nations and Ontario – though it remains significantly underfunded. As other regions in Canada build up their own Indigenous institutes and models of post-secondary education, Ontario’s mature, successful model is one that others can learn from, adapt, replicate or improve upon, based on their own needs and priorities. While the Government of now provides core operating grants to the Indigenous Institutes, we are a long way from achieving the level of equitable funding that Indigenous learners and communities need and deserve.

The Government of Canada now has an opportunity to redress this situation and discharge its as-yet unfulfilled constitutional and legal obligations to First Nations in Ontario. Canada can meet its obligations by supporting

First Nations’ economic, social and cultural development through a recognition of the success of the established and maturing Ontario model, and funding that model in a manner consistent with inherent and Treaty rights and in line with the TRC’s CTAs and UNDRIP. Moving forward in this way is an important step towards sustainable economic development for Indigenous communities and a meaningful step towards reconciliation.

The economic development benefits associated with successful post-secondary institutions and student success are significant and wellunderstood. With stable core operating funding, investments in Indigenous Institutes will deliver significant, positive, medium-term impacts and outcomes and a very strong social and economic return on investment. Improving post-secondary education participation and completion rates for Indigenous learners will deliver positive returns to learners, communities, Nations and the Canadian economy.

Seven of the nine Ontario Indigenous Institutes are members of the Indigenous Institutes Consortium (IIC) and choose to work in collaboration with one another on various matters relating to the regulatory and advocacy environment in which they operate. Through this collaboration, IIC members worked collectively on a three-year PSE engagement process (described in more detail below), which culminated in the development of this report. The primary inputs into this report come from the members of the IIC and represent their perspectives. This report attempts to address sector-wide issues and challenges with respect to Indigenous post-secondary education in Ontario. While we hope that the description, analysis and conclusions speak to many of the realities faced by all Indigenous Institutes in Ontario, this IIC report and its conclusions do not purport to speak for other institutions in Ontario.



Context

In response to calls from the Assembly of First Nations in 2017 and 2018, Indigenous Services Canada (ISC) expressed a willingness to pursue bilateral and/or regional approaches to funding Indigenous PSE. In 2019, ISC funded a three-year engagement process to support First Nations in developing and costing their regional models of PSE. On December 15, 2020, the Ontario Regional Chief elected to pursue the establishment of a regional, bilateral process between Ontario First Nations and the federal government. Canada agreed to this request, and a Joint Bilateral Committee consisting of representatives from ISC and the Chiefs of Ontario (the Ontario First Nations Education Coordination Unit), was established, meeting weekly starting in April, 2021.

The federally-funded Indigenous PSE engagement process, led by the IIC with its members, included interviews, literature reviews, international comparisons, a full-day workshop and digital town hall with key stakeholders and First Nations educators, administrators, researchers and students, as well as an additional engagement session with the Province of Ontario. The results of this engagement, along with the details of the existing Ontario regional model, are the basis of the model and approach proposed in this report.

We believe that this process is timely given the related progress that the Government of Canada has made in recent years. Importantly, Canada has:

- committed itself to the TRC's Calls to Action;
- passed legislation adopting UNDRIP and committing itself to developing an Action Plan to implement the arising obligations;
- advanced self-government with respect to K-12 education through the Regional Education Agreements;
- passed the *Indigenous Languages Act*, and
- passed *An Act Respecting First Nations, Inuit and Métis Children, Youth and Families*.

Fulfilling commitments to Indigenous control of Indigenous PSE is a necessary next step and will give life to the Government of Canada's commitments on self-government, education and Indigenous languages. These are important steps towards economic development, prosperity and meaningful labour market participation for Indigenous people. There is no doubt that successful Indigenous post-secondary institutions have a leading role to play in generating economic success for students, communities, Nations and Canada as a whole.

In Ontario, the Indigenous PSE sector is well developed, well governed and has a track record of success, despite insufficient resources and a lack of core institutional funding. Indigenous Institutes in Ontario know that through the regional model that they have designed, they are well placed to serve the needs of their communities and they eagerly await a federal partner.

First Nations have long asked for predictable and stable funding, rather than application-based funding. Ontario First Nations have underlined the need for core operating funding for their post-secondary institutions. The vulnerability of Ontario's Indigenous Institutes was underscored last year, when allocations to Ontario institutions through the Post-Secondary Partnership Program (PSP) were initially cut dramatically and reallocated to other provinces and territories. Although a temporary work-around was identified last year by the Government of Canada, the precarity of the current funding model was starkly revealed. First Nations learners and communities in Ontario suffer when their institutions cannot rely on stable funding that allows for medium-term planning, which, in turn, prevents them from fully exercising their rights to self-government with respect to education.

Elsewhere in Canada, notably in Saskatchewan, other established First Nations post-secondary institutions do not face the same year-to-year instability. A precedent has been established by the \$7 million core operating grant provided to First Nations University of Canada (FNUC). In recognition of its status as an established Indigenous PSE institution, it was treated differently



than other funding recipients in the sector and its allocation was protected prior to subsequent regional allocation decisions. Ontario Indigenous Institutes are also well-developed, mature post-secondary institutions, supported by the province and regulated by a distinct legislative and regulatory framework. These Institutes should similarly be protected and allowed to thrive, supporting the communities and learners that they serve.

Relying on unpredictable, unstable funding is not in keeping with the commitments that the Government of Canada has made to First Nations. As we have seen in other areas of public policy, notably child welfare and access to health services, the Government of Canada and First Nations communities are best served by moving forward in aspirational collaboration, rather than waiting for court or tribunal decisions to force the government's hand, producing outcomes crafted in courtrooms, rather than in classrooms and through collaborative negotiations.

There is broad consensus within Ontario First Nations about the strength of Ontario's existing regional approach to Indigenous PSE. The Government of Ontario has embraced its responsibilities and there is broad agreement that the regional model works for First Nations, learners, communities, the Government of Ontario, and the province as a whole. Still outstanding is an adequate recognition of Ontario's successful regional model by the Government of Canada, and an actualization of this recognition through core operating grants that align with the principles of self-government and that enable First Nations' control of Indigenous Education.

The IIC Regional Model

We know that public institutions do not thrive by chasing grants on a yearly basis. For a variety of reasons rooted in ongoing colonialism, non-Indigenous institutions have core funding, large capital budgets and additional revenues derived from a variety of sources, including endowments and valuable real estate portfolios. Achieving equity and honouring the Government of Canada's commitments and responsibilities requires a

fundamental shift away from a program-based funding model towards core operating grants for institutions, providing stability for Indigenous Institutes.

The IIC's regional model for Indigenous post-secondary education is designed to achieve three goals: student success, community impact and building strong Indigenous institutions. The Indigenous model for PSE is a unique pillar of the Ontario PSE sector, different from non-Indigenous colleges and universities. In particular, it focuses on supporting learners throughout their lives and within their communities. To help learners succeed, many services, programs and curricula are delivered in community, through approaches informed by Indigenous ways of knowing, and in modes that provide trauma-informed services to individuals and their families even before they begin post-secondary education. The role that Indigenous institutions play in supporting learners is fundamentally more engaged, comprehensive and community empowered than in non-Indigenous colleges and universities. To that end, the IIC has built upon the work already done in Ontario to articulate a model for Indigenous post-secondary education as delivered by IIC member Institutes (the IIC Regional Model).

The Ontario regional model rests on four foundations:

- A lifelong, holistic, Indigenous approach to learning;
- Institutions that are mandated and led by First Nations;
- A sound and transparent legislative and regulatory framework; and
- Core funding to institutions for operations and capital.

The costing approach proposed in this report, to determine appropriate funding levels for Indigenous Institutes, rests on an application of the principles outlined in the Government of Canada's Collaborative Self-Government Fiscal Policy. Core to this approach is a commitment to the autonomy and flexibility of First Nations, and a recognition that First Nations have a diversity of needs.

The principles in the Collaborative Self-Government Fiscal Policy include sufficiency, equitable treatment,



collaborative self-government, stability, predictability, transparency and simplicity, amongst others. They have been at the heart of Crown-First Nations negotiations around self-government and fiscal transfer agreements, have guided many successful agreements, and have been applied in a manner that respects the diverse needs of individual First Nations.

These overarching principles serve as a guide for a principled approach to fiscal transfers in general. In addition to these overarching principles, we propose five specific principles that should be applied by the Government of Canada in the context of operationalizing funding for the Ontario regional model for Indigenous PSE.

- Achieving equity for First Nations with respect to PSE;
- Assessing First Nations actual needs as part of a PSE funding model;
- Providing core operating funds to institutions;
- Applying evidence-informed and transparent funding models; and
- Acknowledging the medium- and long-term positive impact and returns arising from Indigenous PSE.

In this report, these principles are applied by developing a costing approach (see Exhibits B and C), which begins with a benchmarking exercise and then identifies the revenues and expenditures of comparable institutions. The analysis then continues with an assessment of the unique needs of Indigenous Institutes, with a focus on the financial resources needed to deliver services equitably, in a manner consistent with the approach and model used by Indigenous post-secondary institutions, which includes more comprehensive, wrap-around and community services than those found in the other two pillars of the Ontario PSE system.

As a result of our analysis and the inputs and advice provided during the engagement process, the report recommends that the Government of Canada:

1. Provide secure, predictable, adequate funding to Indigenous post-secondary institutes in Ontario in the form of core operating grants that meet the

needs of First Nations, and that funding levels support the unique operating model of Indigenous institutions and achieve, at a minimum, equity when compared to non-Indigenous institutions;

2. Join IIs and the Province of Ontario at a tripartite Table to ensure that Ontario's regional model is properly understood, recognized and equitably funded; and, given that Ontario's Regional Model is well established, successful and supported by [a strong research foundation supporting operations and delivery](#), strive to conclude the Table's work on funding within one year;
3. Determine the size of operating grants in a transparent manner that is: periodically reviewed; includes base funding for all Institutes recognized in regulation through Ontario's *Indigenous Institutes Act*; includes needs-based and enrollment-based criteria; accounts for the higher cost of delivering trauma-informed services to Indigenous learners and through remote institutions; accounts for the unique model of Indigenous PSE recognized in Ontario's legislation; and invests in capacity to close historic gaps;
4. Ensure that new funding begins in 2022-23, building upon the Ontario Government's existing operating grants and is delivered in a manner consistent with self-government and First Nations Treaty and inherent rights to Indigenous education; and
5. Create a dedicated, application-based yearly capital budget, beginning in 2022-2023, to which any recognized Indigenous Institute in Ontario may apply, with an understanding that the Government of Canada will reimburse up to 100% of the costs of projects to begin to close the gaps in capital funding and infrastructure endowments between Indigenous and non-Indigenous post-secondary institutions.

Based on our application of these principles, and based on our current understanding of needs, costs, enrollments and projected growth, we believe the Government of Canada should work with the Province and relevant Indigenous Institutes to undertake more detailed technical work, which could result in annual



operating grants of about \$50 million, depending on actual costs and student numbers. These amounts do not include direct support for students, capital or adult education. These operating grants should be phased in over three years and should grow over time to accommodate evolution in the sector.

As stated by [Indigenous Services Canada's guidelines to the Post-Secondary Partnership Program](#):

"First Nations are seeking strengthened Government of Canada support for First Nations post-secondary education through treaty-based, self-government and/or regional models that enable First Nations control of First Nations education. Building on current best practices, the implementation of regional models will enable First Nations to holistically consider, design and implement a suite of integrated programs and services to comprehensively support post-secondary education attainment and success. Models must respect local control, honouring the autonomy of First Nations to dictate their own models that will not minimize flexibilities that First Nations communities currently have. These models, once created, must be First Nations directed and managed."

Ontario Indigenous Institutes agree with ISC's assessment and – having completed an engagement process and built out strong institutions and a strong regulatory framework over the past decade – have identified their needs and clarified how the Government of Canada can empower Ontario's approach and "comprehensively support post-secondary education attainment and success." Ontario Indigenous Institutes and their partners in the Ontario Ministry of Colleges and Universities welcome federal engagement and support.

In a 2011 essay published in the *Globe and Mail*, Mary Simon spoke about the need to ground our work on complex policy issues in our duties and obligations to the next generation. She reminded us that even in the face of the challenges and broken dreams of our shared history, we must look for sources of hope. Now serving as Canada's first Indigenous Governor General, Mary Simon's reminder could not be more timely: "the roots of hope must lie in education".

"...the roots of hope must lie in education." — Mary Simon, 2011



Background to the Report

The Indigenous Institutes Consortium (IIC)

Founded in 1994 to address the collective issues impacting post-secondary Indigenous education in Ontario, the Indigenous Institutes Consortium (formerly the Aboriginal Institutes Consortium) provides advocacy for seven Indigenous-owned and controlled education and training institutions in Ontario.

The IIC's member institutes are:

- Anishinabek Educational Institute (Nipissing)
- Iohahi:io Akwesasne Education & Training Institute (Akwesasne)
- Kenjgewin Teg (Manitoulin Island)
- Ogwehoweh Skills and Trades Training Centre (Six Nations of the Grand River)
- Oshki Pimache O Win: The Wenjack Education Institute (Thunder Bay)
- Six Nations Polytechnic (Six Nations of the Grand River)
- Shingwauk Kinooamaage Gamig (Garden River First Nation)

More information on these and other IIs can be found in Appendix A.

The IIC works to raise awareness, and elevate the profiles of Indigenous Institutes, learners and communities to advance recognition, growth and capacity of member IIs. The IIC conducts and shares research in order to strengthen the Indigenous PSE sector and improve the quality of education and services provided by IIs. Their work culminated in 2017 with the historic passage of Ontario's *Indigenous Institutes Act* which formally recognized the role of Indigenous post-secondary education.

Indigenous PSE in Ontario

There are three legislatively recognized pillars of post-secondary education in Ontario: universities, colleges and Indigenous Institutes, each of which plays a distinct role in the provincial PSE landscape. Universities and colleges have been longstanding institutions in Ontario while Indigenous Institutes gained formal recognition under the historic Ontario legislation, the *Indigenous Institutes Act, 2017 (the II Act)*. Indigenous Institutes are unique because their pedagogies are grounded in a holistic approach to the full continuum of life-long learning, embedded with Indigenous culture and language. The Indigenous Institutes offer the full gamut of credentialing – certificates, diplomas and degrees – and also offer learners the opportunity to prepare and move through the streams by offering pathways and transitions to PSE, upgrading, life skills, various social services and supports, and preparatory training.

Indigenous Institutes were created between 1985 and 2003 to advance Indigenous control over Indigenous education. The Institutes are mandated by First Nation communities throughout Ontario. Some IIs are mandated by as many as 49 First Nations while others are mandated by one Nation.

The university pillar in Ontario has existed for almost two centuries. The college pillar was provided with significant and historic funding over 50 years ago to allow it to plan, grow, prosper and serve the community. The Indigenous pillar, on the other hand, is relatively new. Investments in the "Third Pillar" will be required to ameliorate some of the historic gaps that have built up over decades as a result of colonial practices and systemic racism.



Recent background and rationale for Ontario's Regional Approach

In response to calls from the Assembly of First Nations (AFN), the Government of Canada made a commitment to negotiate the development and funding of regional post-secondary education models ("Regional Models") that are responsive to First Nations' needs and local priorities.¹ In Budget 2019-20, Canada advanced this commitment by funding a three-year engagement process with First Nations to enable the development and costing of these Regional Models, and to co-develop final proposals.

In 2020-21, the Government of Canada, with the support of the AFN, dramatically cut Ontario First Nations' allocations under the PSPP, reallocating those funds to First Nations in other provinces and territories.²

On December 15, 2020 the Ontario Regional Chief sent a letter to the Minister of Indigenous Services, requesting establishment of a bilateral process between Ontario First Nations and the federal government. The Chiefs of Ontario requested a bilateral process that would respect the Treaty right to education and ensure that First Nations receive adequate, predictable and sustained funding reflective of the unique needs of First Nations students and communities. A Joint Bilateral Committee, consisting of representatives from the First Nations Education Committee and Indigenous Services Canada, began meeting weekly on April 23, 2021.

A clear rationale for a unique Ontario bilateral process lies in Ontario's mature sector and governance. Ontario's model of Indigenous post-secondary education is unique in Canada. Through *The Indigenous Institutes Act 2017*, the Ontario Government has recognized Indigenous post-secondary institutes as a Third Pillar of the Ontario PSE system, along with universities and colleges.

These IIs are operated and governed by, and receive their mandates from, their respective First Nations. Altogether, they currently receive about \$22 million in on-going operating grants from the Province of Ontario, with established escalators to facilitate and

accommodate growth, and serve over 3500 students (2686 of whom attend IIs that are members of the IIC). About 75% of these learners are full time students.

The II Act creates a mechanism for independent quality assurance through the creation of the Indigenous Advanced Education and Skills Council (IAESC). IAESC provides this by overseeing accreditation and certification. IAESC assesses the institutional capacity and program quality of Indigenous institutes using appropriate standards and benchmarks to ensure the interest of students and funders (e.g. the Ontario Government) are adequately protected.

Nine Ontario IIs have been recognized in regulation through this framework, and all nine have been mandated by their Nations. The process through which institutes are recognized provides accountability and assurance to funders.³

Post-secondary education provided by IIs in Ontario is holistic, Indigenous-centred, focused on lifelong learning, and framed by Indigenous knowledge systems to meet the educational ambitions and aspirations of Indigenous communities and learners. The IIs' approach to PSE is fundamentally different than that offered at other PSE institutions in that it addresses the full range of wholistic student needs, including academic, cultural, emotional, social, psychological and spiritual. The IIs play important roles in their communities, delivering multiple community benefits, supports and services, and contributing to economic success and community well-being.

Created by their Nations, the IIs have each developed over time without the benefit of sustained or predictable funding from the Government of Canada, which has constitutional responsibility with respect to First Nations' education. Each II delivers a range of educational programming, student services, and community programs consistent with Indigenous ways of learning and teaching, including support for Indigenous languages. Each has its own track record of success.

Some of the II curriculum is delivered in partnership with non-Indigenous institutes (e.g. nursing, ECE, PSW, social work, skilled trades etc.) but adapted



for Indigenous learners, while maintaining academic standards. Other offerings are uniquely Indigenous, such as language degrees and traditional healing. Support for developing and delivering these programs is often secured through time-consuming and unstable application-based granting processes with narrow terms and conditions, limited program flexibility and onerous administrative burdens, subject to reductions without the consent of Ontario First Nations.

For well-known reasons rooted in colonialism and colonial structures, First Nations and their PSE institutes have not been able to build the same stream of ongoing funding or capital assets as other post-secondary institutes in Ontario. The Government of Canada's PSPP, which funds some II programming, explicitly states that it is not a source of core operational funds. It is not delivered in a way that advances inherent and Treaty rights, nor self-government and Indigenous authority over post-secondary education.

Relationship with the Province

For a number of years, the IIs have had a strong and productive relationship with the Province of Ontario through the Ministry of Colleges and Universities' Indigenous Education Branch.

As discussed above, Ontario has created Canada's leading legislative model for fully-realized self-governance of Indigenous post-secondary institutions. The II Act creates a distinct regulatory and oversight framework for the sector, including local community control, engagement and accountability; comprehensive accreditation standards to ensure cultural relevance and academic quality assurance; financial and operational responsibility; and core operating funding from the Ministry of Colleges and Universities.⁴

Before the II Act was introduced, First Nations post-secondary programs had to be offered in partnership with other PSE institutions to be able to grant degrees.⁵ Now, Indigenous Institutes can obtain the authority to independently confer degrees, diplomas and certificates. A recognized Indigenous-led accreditation system

enhances the accountability of IIs to their students and communities, funding agencies, partner institutions and the general public.

The II Act provides the legislative framework that realizes self-government over post-secondary education in Ontario. It affirms the rights of Indigenous peoples under UNDRIP to establish and control their educational systems, to provide education in their own languages and in a manner consistent with traditional Indigenous ways of teaching and learning. Indigenous Institutes are defined as "Indigenous governed and operated community-based education institutions that are mandated by and accountable to Indigenous communities" which "primarily provide accessible post-secondary education and training, and pathways to further learning primarily to Indigenous students in a culturally safe environment."⁶

The II Act further recognizes the central role of education framed by Indigenous knowledge and languages, worldviews and Indigenous ways of knowing and being. It commits the Government of Ontario to work together with Indigenous Institutes in the spirit of reconciliation, mutual respect and mutual accountability to enhance educational opportunities for Indigenous students and to promote the revitalization of Indigenous knowledge, cultures and languages.

The II Act establishes IAESC as the accreditation council to provide independent, Indigenous-controlled quality assurance for the Ontario Indigenous PSE sector.⁷ This council has the authority to recommend institutes for recognition; approve IIs to grant diplomas, certificates and degrees; and regulate the designation of university status. It is tasked with establishing its own standards to assess institutional capacity and program quality, and to protect student interests.⁸ In March 2021, IAESC released program standards for degree programs and is currently working on program standards for accreditation of diploma and certificate programs. Both the Council and every prescribed institute are subject to annual audits by a public accountant reporting to the Minister.⁹



The Ontario Student Assistance Program (OSAP) regulations have recently been amended to provide coverage for students attending Indigenous Institutes.¹⁰

Through the II Act, the IIs and IAESC, with the support of the provincial government, have established all the building blocks to successfully grow an Indigenous-led post-secondary sector, consistent with First Nations Treaty and inherent rights.

No other province has a comparable, sector-wide framework for independent governance and accreditation of Indigenous post-secondary institutions. Across the country, most self-government agreements, legislation and funding agreements only address First Nations' management of post-secondary student funding and upgrading or bridging programs, rather than providing direct support to institutions.¹¹ Some agreements explicitly exclude post-secondary education,¹² while others speak generally to jurisdiction over education without further specification.¹³

When the Ontario Government began providing core grants to the IIs in 2017-18, the initial allocation was determined by a rough estimate of actual operating costs. Although escalators have been included to accommodate growth, the basic funding models remain unchanged. Because IIs were delivering services at a funding level below non-Indigenous PSE institutions, current financial support levels do not achieve equity. The Government of Canada must now step in to fulfill its responsibilities.

Current Federal Supports

Currently, the Government of Canada provides some direct cash support to students for a portion of tuition, living expenses, childcare, books and other direct expenses through the Post-Secondary Student Support Program (PSSSP). Based on current census projections the program will require replenishment to cover an anticipated increase in the number of eligible learners. While not the focus of this report, the PSSSP remains underfunded and cannot meet current or expected demand and fails to cover the full cost of PSE for Indigenous students.

The other programs and services delivered by IIs are funded through a complex maze of programs, particularly the PSPP. The services and programs delivered by IIs are also, in part, funded by a core operating grant from the Government of Ontario. As discussed earlier, the authorities that allow for the delivery of PSPP programming are overly restrictive and funds are not delivered in a manner consistent with Treaty and inherent rights or self-government. Also, as discussed, they are unpredictable and allocations can be threatened without the consent of Ontario First Nations.

A new federal funding model, consistent with inherent and Treaty rights, is clearly needed. That model should build on the commitments and operating grants of the Ontario Government, support the successful operating model of IIs, and achieve equity.

The PSE Engagement Process

The ISC-funded PSE engagement process included interviews, literature reviews, international comparisons and a one-day workshop and digital town hall with key stakeholders and First Nations educators, administrators, researchers and students. It also included stakeholder meetings with the Province of Ontario and representatives from the Indigenous PSE sector. The IIC was provided with a contribution from the federal government of \$37,333 to conduct this engagement process.

The engagement and research built on previous work in this area. In particular, we are grateful for the background in:

- [*Indigenous Adult and Higher Learning Association*](#) in 2010 by Juniper Consulting;
- [*First Nations Post-Secondary Education Review*](#), prepared for the AFN in 2018 by Medow Consulting; and
- [*Funding Framework: Summary Report of Member Consultation/Site Visits*](#) (Report 1); and [*Funding Strategy: A Recommended Funding Strategy for Indigenous Institutes*](#) (Report 2), both of which were prepared for the IIC.

Other research is widely supportive of building Indigenous institutions and supporting efforts that increase PSE attainment and labour market attachment for Indigenous learners. To cite just one study, the [OECD has recommended](#) that the Government of Canada should: “Continue building the governance capacities of First Nations, Inuit and Métis communities, and facilitate the exchange of information about successful approaches to employment and job creation.” The positive impact and social and economic returns on Indigenous PSE investments are well known. The Chiefs of Ontario have recently commissioned a study to more clearly estimate these benefits

During the engagement and interview process, a wide consensus emerged on a number of key elements of the IIC Regional Model of Indigenous post-secondary education and the role that the Government of Canada can play to fulfill its constitutional responsibilities and honour its commitments, as articulated through its agreement to UNDRIP and the TRC’s Calls to Action.

A more complete summary of what was heard during consultations and interviews can be found in Appendix B. The most important messages reflecting the widest consensus included:

- Indigenous institutes occupy an important space within the PSE landscape in Ontario, facilitating self-determination of Indigenous peoples over post-secondary education, the advancement of Indigenous ways of knowing and learning, and the space for educational objectives that might otherwise not be prioritized in mainstream PSE institutes.
- IIs meet learners where they are and provide the services they need. They provide access to post-secondary education for many students who otherwise would not attend PSE, provide community-based supports of various kinds to facilitate the transition of Indigenous learners into PSE and comprehensive wrap-around services that help learners succeed.
- A lack of predictability and stability in core funding means IIs cannot properly plan or resource curriculum delivery, wrap-around student services,

and community support programs. Likewise, IIs cannot properly plan for and deliver a whole range of core management and executive activities expected of any public-facing institutions, including support for strategic planning, partnership negotiation, data analysis, advancement, community engagement practices, public reporting, recruitment, and program evaluation, amongst others.

- Indigenous Institutions are vulnerable to arbitrary decisions made at non-Indigenous institutions or by governments. Amidst Laurentian University’s on-going financial problems, for example, it closed down its midwifery program, which was used by many Indigenous students and which was a priority for many northern Indigenous communities in Ontario. Following discussions with Laurentian’s Department of Indigenous Studies some of this programming will be provided by IIC member, Kenjgewin Teg, but this example highlights the vulnerability of some programs that are crucial to First Nations but are delivered in partnership with other institutions.
- Investments in increasing post-secondary education participation and success for Indigenous learners pay for themselves over the medium term with a very high return on investment. Although studies differ on the precise quantum, some estimates suggest that eliminating the educational attainment gap between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people would increase Canada’s GDP by as much as \$28 billion. IIs are playing an important role in economic and community development, with high graduation rates.
- IIs are increasingly playing key roles in their communities to ensure that their programming and services are aligned with community needs. IIs work with local employers to meet the labour market needs of their communities and are embedded in the knowledge-based economy in First Nations communities, in ways that are culturally informed. After attending IIs, graduates are more likely to stay in their communities, which helps stop the trend of trained professionals leaving



First Nations communities, which can have a whole series of deleterious impacts on communities' capacity to deliver services.

- The IIs play a role as 'anchor institutions' in their communities. Much like hospitals, colleges, military bases or government offices in non-Indigenous communities, IIs are important to economic development. IIs provide good employment opportunities, social infrastructure, and serve as hubs for community services and engagement. Indigenous Institutes serve these crucial community-building roles. With equitable core support, IIs will play an even more important role in delivering widespread community benefits, beyond their direct learning and teaching mission.
- IIs are playing a key role in language revitalization. In addition to language instruction and translation, providing services and resources in multiple languages costs comes with financial costs, as is well-known in Canada and which is accommodated for in the *Official Languages Act* and other measures to promote and support minority language education. We advance the goals of the *Indigenous Languages Act* every day. But their role in language revitalization goes beyond instruction and services. IIs undertake language documentation, language recording, language archive development, language resource development and community services in Indigenous languages.
- IIs are committed to rigorously assessing and reporting on outcomes. IIs will continue to develop comprehensive outcomes frameworks that are relevant to our communities and Nations and speak to our immediate and longer-term impact. Better capacity around data collection and analysis, as well as support for new investments in data infrastructure, are necessary to fully realize their goals.
- Building successful institutions that advance inherent and Treaty rights contributes to economic success for Indigenous students and First Nations communities. Pursuing government grants through application-based competitive processes designed

for narrow program purposes ties our hands, distracts us from the core mission, prevents IIs from exercising their right to control their education system, and is not an appropriate way to fund public economic and social institutions or build a sustainable sector.

- IIs are committed to continuing to explore how to partner with each other. Curriculum innovation, program delivery, data infrastructure, and mutual recognition of credentials are areas where IIs continue to explore collaboration, although a lack of resources inhibits their ability to strategically develop, plan, negotiate and implement partnerships.
- COVID has forced IIs to adapt and pivot quickly in ways not anticipated by PSPP programs and authorities. IIs have developed new, virtual and hybrid delivery models to respond to the needs of their learners and communities. While non-Indigenous institutions can adapt and move resources to higher priorities in response to changing circumstances, IIs do not have that flexibility through PSPP terms and conditions. Program authorities do not allow IIs to invest and innovate in initiatives like microcredentials that are in demand in our communities and respond to our local labour market needs. This is an extension of colonialism and does not fulfill commitments on self-government.
- IIs have an important role to play in reconciliation through education. Non-Indigenous PSE institutions generate ancillary revenues in a variety of ways from professional and executive education, which they have built up over decades. IIs look forward to having the capacity to invest in developing and offering resources to school boards, private sector firms and community and professional organizations in ways that advance truth, knowledge and reconciliation.
- Unlike in other areas, including child welfare and the provision of health services, the Government of Canada should not wait for unfavourable court or tribunal decisions to move towards equity. As the ISC funded three-year engagement and co-creation



process comes to an end in February 2022, Ontario First Nations are asking the Government of Canada to fund the path forward, outlined in the IIC Regional Model.

How we collectively act on this consensus is now in the hands of Ontario First Nations, the Indigenous Institutions that they have mandated, and, ultimately, the Government of Canada. As the national conversation advances with the Government of Canada and First Nations across the country, it is important that Ontario First Nations not be forced to wait. They are ready and prepared. They have built a successful model – the kind of model that the Government of Canada is hoping to support in other regions from which others can learn as they develop their own models, based on their own priorities and in exercising their own rights.

There is a broad consensus on the value, structure, success and needs of Ontario's regional model. Ontario IIs have a strong partner in the Government of Ontario and all the pieces are in place to move forward and engage the Government of Canada on a funding model that works for Indigenous learners and communities.

Legal Framework

Indigenous Control of Indigenous Education – exercising inherent rights

Almost 50 years ago, the National Indian Brotherhood issued a call for Indigenous control of Indigenous education (ICIE) from preschool through post-secondary.¹⁴ This call for local governance and culturally relevant programming continues to resonate today following the establishment of numerous independent Indigenous institutes and the enactment of the II Act in Ontario.

Successive reports on Indigenous education have grounded the importance of ICIE in an Indigenous worldview of lifelong learning and generational exchange.¹⁵ As explained in *Our Children, Our Future, Our Vision: First Nation Jurisdiction Over First Nation Education in Ontario*:¹⁶

“Indigenous Nations in what is now Canada have had their own educational and knowledge systems for millennia. Since time immemorial, Indigenous peoples have engaged in life-long learning exchanges between the generations that constantly evolved over time to reflect local realities”.

Control of education is intrinsically linked to decolonization and self-government. In 1988, the Assembly of First Nations declared that “Education, as a force in human development, lies at the base of achieving effective self-government. Self-knowledge, self-confidence, self-respect, and self-sufficiency must be developed in order for any people to attain a health society, a stable culture and self-government.”¹⁷ The Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples (RCAP) similarly concluded that educational reforms and self-government go hand-in-hand.¹⁸ RCAP recommended that Indigenous educational institutions at all levels be placed under the control of Indigenous peoples. It made the following recommendations specific to post-secondary:

- [Recommendation 3.5.26](#): Federal, provincial and territorial governments collaborate with Aboriginal governments and organizations to establish and support post-secondary educational institutions controlled by Aboriginal people, including core funding, planning and capital costs, and facilities improvements.
- [Recommendation 3.5.27](#): Aboriginally controlled post-secondary educational institutions collaborate to create regional and/or a Canada-wide accreditation board.
- [Recommendation 3.5.52](#): Establish an Aboriginal Peoples' International University under Aboriginal control to function in all provinces and territories.

The Government of Canada has moved on K-12 education. Although the three year engagement process launched in 2019 is a tangible step that indicates its intention to move forward on PSE as well, it has yet to do so.



Self-Determination in International and Canadian Law

Indigenous control of Indigenous education is a necessary corollary to the right of Indigenous peoples to self-determination, as recognized under international and Canadian law.

The *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* (UNDRIP or Declaration) affirms the inherent jurisdiction and self-determination of Indigenous Peoples worldwide.¹⁹ The Preamble explains that Indigenous rights are inherent rights that derive from their own political, economic and social structures. It further affirms that Indigenous peoples' control over developments affecting them is necessary to maintain and strengthen their institutions, cultures, and traditions.

UNDRIP recognizes numerous specific rights related to education, including:

- Article 5: Indigenous Peoples have the right to maintain and strengthen their distinct political, legal, economic, social and cultural institutions, while retaining the right to participate fully, if they so choose, in the political, economic, social and cultural life of the State.
- Article 13(1): Indigenous peoples have the right to revitalize, use, develop and transmit to future generations their histories, languages, oral traditions, philosophies, writing systems and literatures, and to designate and retain their own names for communities, places and persons.
- Article 14(1): Indigenous peoples have the right to establish and control their educational systems and institutions providing education in their own languages, in a manner appropriate to their cultural methods of teaching and learning.
- Article 14(2): Indigenous individuals, particularly children, have the right to all levels and forms of education of the State without discrimination.
- Article 14(3): States shall, in conjunction with Indigenous Peoples, take effective measures, in order for Indigenous Individuals, particularly

children, including those living outside their communities, to have access, when possible, to an education in their own culture and provided in their own language.

- Article 21(1): Indigenous Peoples have the right, without discrimination, to the improvement of their economic and social conditions, including, inter alia, in the areas of education, employment, vocational training and retraining, housing, sanitation, health and social security.
- Article 31(1): 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.

The Government of Canada has repeatedly recognized that all relations with Indigenous peoples must be based on recognition and implementation of their right to self-determination, including the inherent right of self-government.²⁰ Recently, Canada enacted the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act*, which received Royal Assent and immediately came into force on June 21, 2021.²¹ This legislation affirms the Declaration's application in Canadian law and advances its implementation as a key step in renewing the Government of Canada's relationship with Indigenous peoples. The UNDRIP legislation requires the federal government, in consultation and cooperation with Indigenous peoples, to:

- i. take all measures necessary to ensure the laws of Canada are consistent with the Declaration;
- ii. prepare and implement an action plan to achieve the Declaration's objectives; and
- iii. table an annual report on progress to align the laws of Canada and on the action plan.



To state the point most clearly: how the Government of Canada manages, funds and governs its contributions to First Nations PSE in Ontario is not consistent with these commitments, with its own legislation and with its political commitments to the Calls to Action. The three-year engagement process on new models is an acknowledgement of these legal and political realities.

Canada has also enacted the *Indigenous Languages Act*, which received Royal Assent on June 21, 2019.²² The *Indigenous Languages Act* recognizes that “Indigenous peoples are best placed to take the leading role in reclaiming, revitalizing, maintaining and strengthening Indigenous languages” and “Indigenous-language media and lifelong learning of Indigenous languages, including education systems for Indigenous people, are essential to restoring and maintaining fluency in those languages.” It further commits the Government of Canada to providing adequate, sustainable, and long-term funding for the reclamation, revitalization, maintenance and strengthening of Indigenous languages. This includes establishing measures for long-term, sustainable funding of Indigenous languages.

Having regional program officers from Indigenous Services Canada approve reallocations by an IIC of small amounts of money to related program lines is an extension of colonial policy frameworks and is in violation of the Government of Canada’s commitments and legislation.

Providing adequate funding for Indigenous post-secondary institutions (as with other services, including policing and child welfare) is also a matter of achieving substantive equality under the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*, federal and provincial human rights legislation, and international law.²³

The Treaty Right to Education

The right to educate current and future generations is a key element of self-determination.²⁴ Where Indigenous peoples have entered into treaties with the Crown, they consistently view this relationship as obligating the Crown to provide for formal education.²⁵

The written text of all the numbered treaties refers to the Crown providing for education, teachers, or schooling in some form. However, Treaty promises also include the oral promises exchanged at the time the Treaty was made and can evolve over time to adapt to the modern context.²⁶ For the Indigenous representatives who negotiated the numbered treaties, this included an understanding and expectation of formal education for their community members and for future generations, which now necessarily includes post-secondary education.²⁷ This is consistent with a traditional understanding of Indigenous education as lifelong learning.

Developing an Indigenous-governed post-secondary education system represents a realization of the Crown’s Treaty obligations to support to First Nations so they can continue to exercise their traditional ways of life in a contemporary context. As summarized in *Our Children, Our Future, Our Vision: First Nation Jurisdiction Over First Nation Education in Ontario*:²⁸

“When looking at the totality of the Crown-First Nation relationship, including the recognition of sovereignty and self-determination inherent in the two-row wampum, Treaty at Niagara, the Royal Proclamation of 1763, the specific Treaty provisions and how the Treaty relationship with regard to education has expanded in the subsequent years, there can be no doubt that there is a Treaty right to education in all its modern forms - from early childhood education to post-secondary and beyond. These Treaty promises were not time limited, but instead were meant to be carried out ‘as long as the sun shines above and the water flows in the ocean’. These Treaty rights have evolved into federal policy to fund these systems and thus form part of the Treaty commitment.”

In addition, Canada has entered into multiple self-government agreements (modern treaties) that provide for First Nations control of education, as discussed further below. Realizing and building upon these numerous Treaty promises requires a sustainable framework for Indigenous governance of post-secondary education.



Policy Context & Objectives

The Government of Canada is committed to an inclusive and sustainable approach to the economy. Central to that approach is an understanding of economic growth that raises the prospects of all people - including First Nations. In fact, many of the government's actions over the past six years have been focused on improving economic and social outcomes for Indigenous peoples.

The Government of Canada recognizes that building sustainable and strong institutions provides economic, social and community benefits far superior to those offered by a cycle of yearly applications to narrowly prescribed granting programs. Well-funded, well-governed institutions have many positive long-term benefits within the broader community. They play an important role in community economic development and community well-being and are an important part of the social, economic and cultural infrastructure of healthy communities.

Investments in post-secondary education have enormous positive medium-term economic and social returns. Boosting Indigenous participation and completion of post-secondary education delivers positive outcomes for learners, communities, First Nations and the Canadian economy overall.

Post-secondary education and adult learning are in the midst of significant evolutions of their structure and delivery model, with more part-time learners, adult learners, micro-credentials and work-integrated learning. More flexible funding relationships are necessary that allow IIs to evolve, grow and respond to the needs of their communities, labour markets and changes in the PSE learning system.

These kinds of innovative approaches to learning and program delivery also provide short-term benefits to employers and communities, responding quickly to local market needs and gaps. IIs have developed strong partnerships with eCampusOntario to innovate new methods of curriculum delivery. These approaches are

responsive to the needs of learners and employers. But the lack of capacity and nimble funding streams severely constrains the ability of IIs to innovate in response to change needs.

Ontario's model of Indigenous PSE is a success story and an example of local and regional innovation. Although Indigenous peoples in other regions of Canada will choose their own model based on their own priorities and needs, Ontario's model is a well-functioning, existing PSE system for Indigenous education. Regions that are early in the process of developing their own models can learn from the successes and challenges of the Ontario IIs. The mainstream media is beginning to [take note](#) of the success of the IIs as a model of self-government that leads to economic development and positive community impact.

Although Ontario's PSE model is unique in Canada, current approaches to funding do not acknowledge that leadership. This limitation can result in discrimination against Ontario institutions. Current funding arrangements provide core operating funding to the FNUC but not Ontario IIs, despite their many similarities. The research conducted in support of this report did not yield any principled reason

The existing approach to funding Indigenous PSE stands in stark contrast to the funding models employed for non-Indigenous PSE institutions. Other universities and colleges can rely on a base of funding that allows them to undertake curriculum development, program innovation, medium-term strategic planning, and recruitment, and perform core governance and administrative functions necessary to run a public-facing institution.

Non-Indigenous institutions have built up their core funding for operations, capital budgets and infrastructure over time through established funding formulae, donor bases and endowments that have their roots in ongoing colonial structures.



Achieving equity will require investments in the core capacity of Indigenous post-secondary institutes. Achieving equity between Indigenous and non-Indigenous institutions is a core federal responsibility.

ISC has stated that the expected result of the current PSPP program is for First Nations students to achieve levels of post-secondary education comparable to non-Indigenous students in Canada. Given what we know about the unique needs of many Indigenous learners and the unique challenges faced by IIs, this result cannot be realistically expected if IIs do not have access to core operational funding from the federal government.

Currently, Indigenous Institutes are required to rely on *ad hoc*, unpredictable funding from the Government of Canada. In such a circumstance, setting up a situation that the Government of Canada has confronted previously in areas like child welfare or provision of health services. Courts and the Canadian Human Rights Tribunal have found that Canada has failed to live up to its legal obligations to provide sufficient funding to deliver equitable services and that the Government is in violation of its own laws.

The unpredictable nature of current application-based programs does not fulfill the Government of Canada's commitments. First Nations in Ontario are asking the Government of Canada to move away from one-off application-based grant funding and provide core operational funding for the IIC Regional Model. Such a recognition would mirror the Ontario government's decision in 2017 which: 1) recognized Indigenous institutes as a Third Pillar in the PSE system; 2) provided core operational funding to build out the capacity of Indigenous institutes and achieve equity with non-Indigenous institutions and other FN institutions like FNUC; and 3) accommodated ongoing growth of the IIs by providing formulae-driven escalators and capital funding.

The Government of Canada invested an additional \$2.6 billion over 5 years, beginning in 2019-20, in K-12 education on reserve. The Government of Canada and First Nations co-developed a new policy and funding approach to better support the needs of First Nations K-12 students on reserve. Put in place on April 1, 2019, the new approach addresses the funding and attainment gap and keeps pace with cost growth over the medium term. Key features include:

- The replacement of outdated proposal-based and application-based programs with access to predictable core funding;
- base funding comparable to provincial systems across the country while working towards additional funding agreements based on need to better account for factors such as remoteness, school size, language, and socio-economic conditions;
- annual per student funding of \$1500 to support language and culture programming.

The key features of this new program model and funding approach – core funding, equity with non-Indigenous institutes that considers Indigenous needs, and per student funding for language and cultural programming – can all be replicated for Indigenous post-secondary education institutions. The Government of Canada will not be able to conclude that it has met its obligation to implement CTA #7 without operational funding to Indigenous PSE institutions.



The IIC Regional Model of Indigenous PSE

Ontario's regional model of Indigenous post-secondary education is defined in the *Indigenous Institutes Act*, is lived, delivered and improved every day by the Indigenous Institutes; and has been further described during the current engagement and research process. The Government of Ontario provides core funding to Ontario IIs under the model, while the Government of Canada provides unpredictable, application-based project funding.

An overview of the IIC Regional Model is depicted in Exhibit A. More specific ways of operationalizing the IIC Regional Model in a principles-based way are depicted in Exhibit B, while the details of how to achieve equity are depicted in Exhibit C.

The IIC Regional Model is designed to achieve the mutually reinforcing goals of student success, community impact and strong institutions, all of which contribute to economic development and prosperity for Indigenous communities. Four foundations inform all aspects of the IIC Regional Model.

Foundations

INDIGENOUS WAYS OF KNOWING AND LEARNING

At its core, the model is an Indigenous approach to life-long, holistic learning. This is the foundation on which all other elements of the model stand. The model approaches learners as whole persons and as members of their communities, and serves their academic, emotional, cultural, psychological and spiritual needs. Many of those who pursue PSE through an Indigenous Institute would be unlikely to achieve success in any other form of post-secondary education.

FIRST NATIONS LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE

Indigenous Institutes receive their mandate from their Nations. IIs are expressions of self-government and a fulfillment of inherent and Treaty rights. First Nations governance and operational control of the IIs ensures that communities can make decisions about their post-secondary education system in ways consistent with Indigenous ways of knowing and learning.

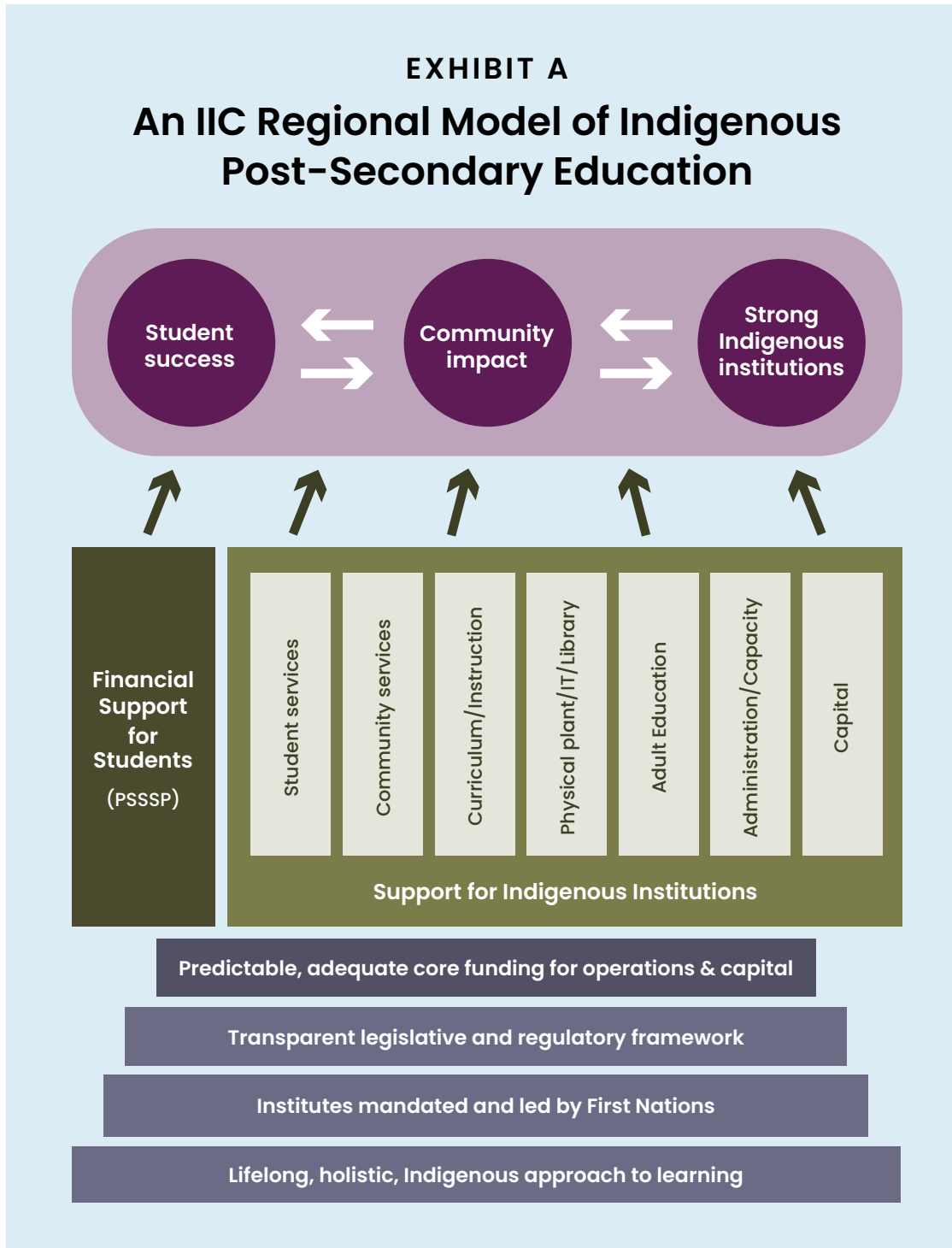
LEGISLATIVE SUPPORT AND REGULATORY OVERSIGHT

Ontario IIs benefit from the sound and transparent regulatory and legislative structures described above. The regulation-making authority in provincial legislation, coupled with the accreditation and certification process independently provided by IASEC, provides governments, communities and students with assurances about the quality of education being provided and the competencies acquired through degree, diploma and certificate programs. The legislation and accompanying framework realize the recognition by the Crown, through the Ontario government, of Indigenous post-secondary education as the Third Pillar of the Ontario system.

SECURE, PREDICTABLE, ADEQUATE CORE FUNDING FOR OPERATIONS AND CAPITAL

This final foundation of the model as expressed in the work of IIC member institutes is currently the least mature. The Ontario government began providing a core operating grant to the IIs in 2017-18. Core funding allows IIs to plan, innovate, recruit and deliver programs with some level of predictability, just as non-Indigenous PSE institutions can do. Current funding levels are insufficient to ensure that IIs can fully exercise Indigenous control of Indigenous education as envisioned in the TRC Calls to Action that pertain to

Exhibit A



education. A key step to realizing the IIC Regional Model is federal core funding of institutions. Capital funding is likewise required to accommodate growth and to begin to close gaps with mainstream institutions in infrastructure gaps — which are rooted in colonialism.

A Principled Basis for Federal Funding

Collaborative Self Government Fiscal Policy

The federal government has made previous commitments to use a principles-based approach to fiscal transfers. Most relevantly, the principles outlined in the Government of Canada’s Collaborative Self-Government Fiscal Policy are a foundation for arriving at the appropriate funding level to fund Indigenous Institutes. These principles include sufficiency, equitable

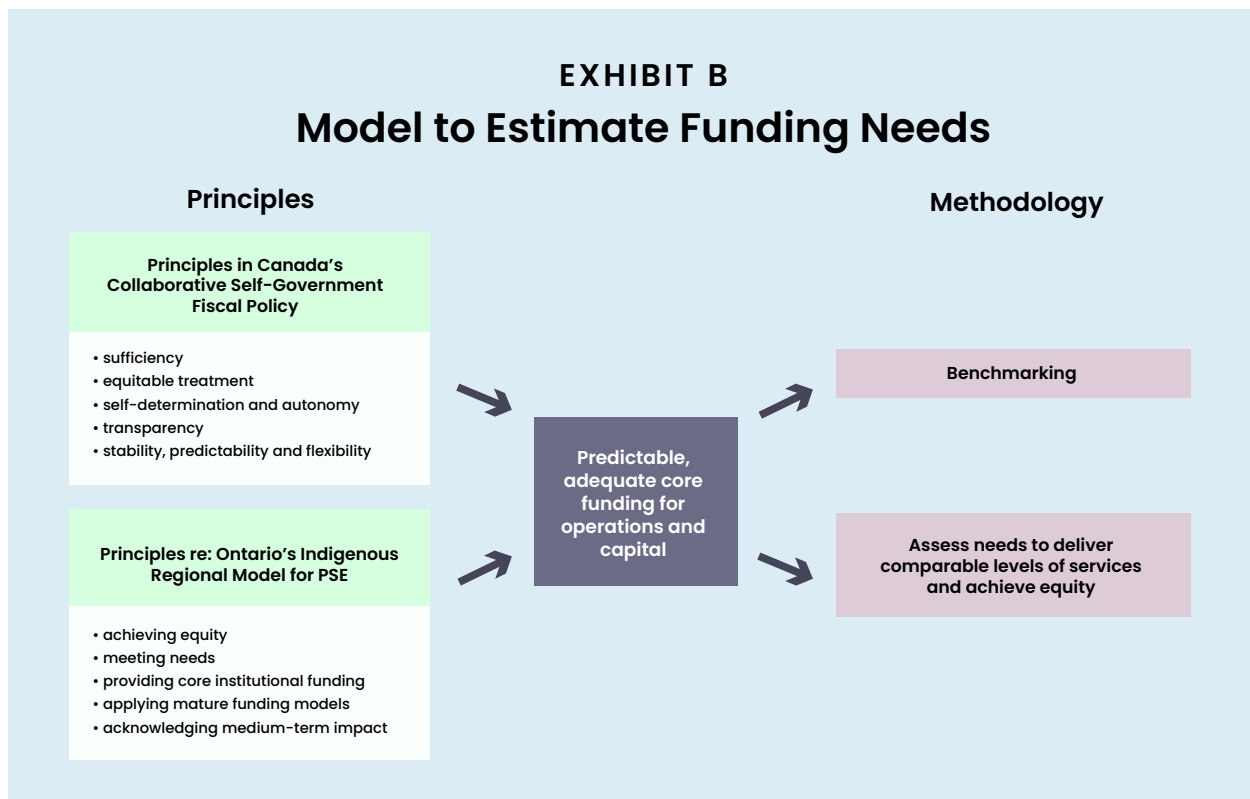
treatment, autonomy, stability, predictability, flexibility, transparency and simplicity.

These principles have been at the heart of Crown-First Nations negotiations around self-government and fiscal transfer agreements, have guided many successful agreements in recent years, and have been applied in a manner that respects the diverse needs of individual First Nations. They are also at the heart of recent historic progress on K-12 and the child welfare system.

Five additional principles should also be used in the context of the IIC Regional Model for PSE and honouring the Government of Canada’s obligations to First Nations in Ontario.

Exhibit B outlines how these principles can be used in a process to deliver predictable, adequate core funding.

Exhibit B





ACHIEVING EQUITY FOR FIRST NATIONS

First Nations post-secondary institutions, students and educators experience chronic under-funding and significant funding gaps when compared to their non-Indigenous counterparts, and lack the level of predictability in funding that non-Indigenous institutions enjoy. These funding gaps are well-documented in analyses undertaken for the AFN and exist across the suite of spending lines: student supports, curriculum development, staff and faculty recruitment, capital budgets, student services, technology, and more.

In Ontario today, Indigenous learners and IIs are not equitably funded, let alone funded in a manner that provides them with adequate resources to deliver comparable levels of services or respond to real funding needs. The IIs deliver a more comprehensive range of community services and achieving equity requires acknowledgment of the different model inherent to the IIs and the third pillar of Ontario's PSE system.

MEETING FIRST NATIONS NEEDS

Adequate funding for an Indigenous regional model requires additional resources to address needs and achieve equity in an Indigenous context. Indigenous institutes face additional costs to meet the unique learning needs of many Indigenous learners. As the Government of Canada acknowledges in its policy document on a renewed fiscal relationship with Indigenous peoples, equitable treatment requires the Government of Canada to consider the unique circumstances of Indigenous peoples.

Unique cost elements for IIs include:

- support for language and cultural education;
- student support in an Indigenous context, which includes more intensive and specific resources for some Indigenous learners;
- building institutional capacity to make up for historic under-funding;
- community engagement, delivery, and supports; and supporting pathways to post-secondary education; and

- reframing all program types (e.g. health, business, trades, etc.) through a culturally relevant lens, which presents curricula in holistic, appropriate ways.

In addition to the delivery of education in a manner that supports the preservation of language, culture, history and Indigenous ways of knowing, and also accounts for the high needs of some Indigenous learners, any funding formulae will also need to account for the exceptional circumstances associated with northern, remote communities.

CORE FUNDING FOR OPERATIONS FOR INSTITUTIONS

Mainstream post-secondary institutions in Canada do not thrive by pursuing grants on a yearly basis. For a variety of historical reasons embedded in colonialism, mainstream institutions have ongoing core funding, large capital budgets, endowments and sophisticated advancement operations. Indigenous institutes do not have these.

Time, space and resources to think, reflect, experiment and plan are core to the PSE mission. Perhaps more than in any other area of public programming, there is an appreciation that research, knowledge creation and knowledge transmission require time and resources. Non-Indigenous institutions have had centuries to build and fund the processes that provide time to their researchers, instructors and staff to develop new ideas, experiment with their teaching models, and formulate new curriculum and programming.

There are also a variety of well-known, intellectually demanding and labour-intensive requirements to successfully deliver PSE programming, including many indirect costs like program review, performance evaluation, reporting to funders, partnership negotiation, program innovation, recruitment. Building institutional and leadership capacity is necessary to achieve equity and meet the academic, spiritual, psychological, social and emotional needs of learners.



To expect Indigenous post-secondary institutions to now simply start from scratch, using the same funding formulae that mainstream institutions use, is clearly not in keeping with the principles that the federal government has articulated and accepted on multiple occasions, including in UNDRIP, commitments to the TRC's Calls to Action and commitments to reconciliation.

EVIDENCE-INFORMED FUNDING MODELS AND FORMULAE

While the precise level of funding is invariably open to debate, there is widespread agreement that *ad hoc* unpredictable funding does not facilitate long-term planning and growth and is not part of a mature funding model. In the context of IIs, this means agreed to, transparent funding formulae that are evidence-based and include escalator clauses to accommodate growth.

The Ontario Government and IIs have already undertaken some of this work. The overall allocation from the Ontario Government is, in part, informed by the real costs of delivering PSE in an Indigenous context, and allocation funding formulae provide base funding to each institution, a per-student allocation, a top up for Indigenous language education and a northern/remote top up.

Capital funding is also part of a mature funding relationship, which should include on-going capital maintenance and pools of capital available for new projects and growth-oriented investments and expansion. Mainstream PSE institutions in Canada have deep and varied programs and networks, which have allowed for significant capital investments over centuries. The capital needs of IIs are significant and a lack of capital prevents them from fully enacting their community-building mission. These capital needs include both physical and data/digital infrastructure.

ACKNOWLEDGING MEDIUM- AND LONG-TERM IMPACTS AND RETURNS

Investments in Indigenous post-secondary education are investments that deliver long-term positive benefits. Although public accounts measure yearly expenditures, there is strong evidence that investments in some kinds of public goods deliver significant economic and social

returns. Post-secondary education, much like early learning and childcare, is one of these areas. Programs that increase labour market participation amongst Indigenous peoples deliver great public value, positive societal outcomes and long-term economic returns.

Medium-term social and economic returns and financial savings are not easily addressed in public accounting, but the Government of Canada should acknowledge that investments in Indigenous PSE pay for themselves many times over in terms of labour market participation, economic growth and other social benefits.

Non-Indigenous institutions make enormous contributions to their communities in myriad ways because they have reliable, predictable core funding that allows them to innovate, experiment and engage with the communities they serve in multiple ways that do not fit neatly into the terms and conditions of a particular funding envelope. IIs have the potential to do the same, but to expect Indigenous PSE institutions to rely exclusively on narrowly-defined application processes is an extension of Canada's colonial policy framework. We know that providing support to students or for programs is not enough to sustain a viable model and that investments in stable institutions is an essential element of a healthy system.

As anchor institutions, Ontario's IIs also provide significant indirect community benefits. They act as community hubs and many of their activities and programs – like libraries, homework space, computers, Indigenous cultural education and mental health supports – deliver difficult-to-quantify community benefits that have significant economic returns over the medium-term. As mentioned, the Chiefs of Ontario have commissioned a report to quantify these impacts with more precision.

As discussed by members of the IIC during the engagement process, IIs are committed to developing an Outcomes Framework and reporting to their Nations on the impact of their work. Some of the results on which they already report include: enrolment growth, participation rates, retention rates, graduation rates, community engagement, preservation of Indigenous



culture and language, employment outcomes and student satisfaction.

Building Towards Equity

Unique Funding Considerations for Indigenous Institutions

The Government of Canada has supported a three-year engagement process to develop regional Indigenous PSE models. Ontario already has an existing regional model that is supported by First Nations, embraced by the Ontario Government and delivering positive outcomes for learners and communities. First Nations in Ontario look to the Government of Canada to join others in supporting the IIC Regional Model in a way that fulfills its constitutional responsibilities and its commitments.

The federally-funded three-year engagement process has afforded Ontario IIs with an opportunity to more closely consider the kind of resource supports that are required from the Government of Canada to properly develop the Indigenous post-secondary education sector in Ontario - and to meet it in a manner that further addresses the needs of learners, communities and First Nations-mandated institutions.

Although many budget categories correspond to seemingly similar categories of non-Indigenous post-secondary education models generally, the reality is that IIs face a number of obstacles and dynamics that non-Indigenous institutions do not. Through the PSE engagement sessions, sector leader interviews, and literature reviews, some important insights about the operating model and cost structure of Indigenous Institutes emerge. These findings reinforce earlier conclusions outlined in previous studies, notably by Juniper Consulting, Medow Consulting, and the IIC itself.

It needs to be stated clearly at the outset: IIs have different cost structures than non-Indigenous post-secondary institutions. Fundamentally, they engage with learners throughout their lives, not for a short number of years of formal PSE. This makes strict comparisons of the 'cost-per-student' between Indigenous and non-Indigenous institutions less relevant and ultimately

less helpful in the process of developing an accurate and constructive funding model.

IIs deliver their programming in a different operating environment with a focus on community empowerment. A whole series of costs are integral to the II model and the Third Pillar, including more intensive trauma-informed services for students and more comprehensive, in-community transition supports delivered to learners before they attend post-secondary education. In ISC's own recent evaluation of their programs to support PSE, there is a strong recommendation that IIs develop and deliver more wrap-around services for students to support their success.²⁹

Other approaches to the delivery of curriculum, such as land-based programs and modifying standard curriculum with Indigenous content, are also more cost-intensive. Extra resources are devoted to providing cultural, spiritual and linguistic support services to students. Virtual learning, travel and hybrid models are particularly important to learners from remote communities.

All of these elements represent additional costs, some of which are difficult to estimate based on current inputs or expenditures. Many of the services described in this report are currently being provided informally, on a volunteer basis or without proper compensation. Staff at IIs often fulfill roles that are not part of their job descriptions and are not properly compensated. The fact that this continues to take place is an extension of colonial structures and would not be tolerated in a non-Indigenous institution. The realities faced by IIs in program delivery are a clear reminder that the existing funding arrangements are a long way from equitable.

Some of the costs unique to IIs might be stand-alone, while others permeate multiple budget lines, services or programs. Integration of Elders, providing education to students dealing with multi-generational trauma, adapting curriculum for Indigenous learners, or any of a number of other key activities cannot simply be identified in one program line. For example, FNUC's 2016-17 [annual report](#) describes Elders as "integral to every part of our university... supporting students,



and helping staff to incorporate traditional knowledge, teachings, and concepts into their classrooms and online course development,” while an Elders’ Council informs all the activities and teachings at First Nations University of Canada.

These and other approaches add incremental costs across the enterprise. They also contribute to positive outcomes, are necessary for student success and crucial to the mission of IIs. Ultimately, they contribute to community and economic development.

There is no one right answer to the question of how much funding is required to fund IIC’s proposed PSE model, nor is the answer a static one. As stated in the *First Nations Post-Secondary Education Review* commissioned by the AFN: “The concept of ‘cost’ is itself challenging to define. In practice, post-secondary institutions around the world are engaged in working with available budgets and designing their institutions to do the most with whatever resources are available.” This is no less true of IIs in Ontario.

In practice, this means that current costs are not an accurate reflection of ‘need.’ For any PSE institution, any increase in resources would lead to a variety of additional investments in program delivery, student services or other areas that improve quality. These strategic choices are based on an institution’s assessments of their most immediate pressing needs, their growth plans and their vision. What is clear is that the resources currently available to IIs do not allow them to equitably fund services and programs when compared to non-Indigenous institutions.

It needs to be re-stated clearly: there is no one right methodology to assess funding needs. As stated in the report commissioned for the AFN: there is “no simple, reliable, accurate and nationally consistent per-student cost for post-secondary institutions.” IIs deliver a range of programs and services, with varying degrees of complexity, with whatever resources are available. Equitable core funding from the Government of Canada will allow IIs to make choices based on their own priorities and improve quality and outcomes.

It must also be stated clearly that achieving equity in a principled and evidence-informed manner requires time and resources. IIs deserve to be treated equitably and the Government of Canada must have a defensible process methodology for determining the size of operating grants. In other areas, such as Ontario’s K-12 funding formulae for school boards – the [Grants for Student Needs \(GSN\)](#) – funding approaches and expertise have built up over decades. The technical paper outlining the methodological basis for the K-12 education funding formula, which the Ontario Government updates and publishes every year, describes allocations that include:

- a base amount per institution;
- a per student allocation; and
- 15 supplemental grants and adjustments that increase grants to accommodate a variety of needs, such as remoteness, special education and percent of students who are Indigenous.

Beginning the journey towards equity cannot wait for the perfect methodology. The expertise required to develop a technical framework at that level of detail does not yet exist anywhere in the country for Indigenous PSE. However, the lack of a perfect formula or methodology should not prevent us from moving forward. Ontario has a successful model that is working on the ground, and institutions awaiting a federal partner. Processes, methodologies, evidence and formulae can build up and be refined over time. The approach suggested here is a starting point that can be steadily improved upon, on the basis of evolving and emerging evidence and experience.

Funding Partnership Considerations

In many areas of public policy, governments develop complex funding formulae in an attempt to achieve horizontal equity, but we know these methodologies can be (and often are) contested and challenged. They are not static but ought to be the subject of ongoing dialogue and evolution.

In 2007, for example, the Government of Canada provided two alternative Equalization formulae from



which provinces could choose in order to allow them to maximize their revenues. This was in part a political choice, but it was also grounded in an acknowledgement that different methodologies to achieve horizontal equity can be equally valid, and choosing one at the expense of another may unfairly disadvantage some communities.

Despite imperfect inputs or contested methodologies, governments should be unwavering in their commitment to use evidence to inform a principles-based and transparent approach to difficult allocation questions. What should also remain unwavering is the Government of Canada's commitment to fund IIs and the IIC Regional Model at a level that allows First Nations to exercise their right to self-government with respect to post-secondary education.

The Government of Canada has made a commitment to equitable funding for Indigenous post-secondary education and regional models of delivery. This commitment has been made through a variety of Treaty, legislative and political processes. The Government of Canada's decision to fund the three-year engagement process, which is coming to an end, was undertaken to ensure that the IIs and their Nations have the opportunity to assess the current and anticipated needs for the sector. This is a prerequisite for their participation in a meaningful process, and for allowing the Government to move forward and address these unfulfilled commitments in a principled way.

To our knowledge, the Government of Canada has not undertaken or shared any conceptual or empirical work to estimate the dollar amount necessary to meet its commitment to First Nations in Ontario and achieve equity in Indigenous PSE. If that work has been undertaken, the Government of Canada should share its analysis transparently with First Nations in Ontario and their mandated PSE institutions.

It is inconsistent with the commitments from the Government of Canada to arbitrarily select an amount to provide to support Indigenous PSE in Ontario. Clearly, \$1 per year in core institutional funding would be insufficient; \$100 billion would obviously be too much. A transparent, empirically grounded methodology should

be used to estimate the amount required to fund the IIC Regional Model model in a way that achieves equity for Indigenous learners, Nations and institutions.

Research conducted in British Columbia over a decade ago estimated that the true 'cost' of providing comparable PSE to Indigenous learners was about [double the cost](#) compared to non-Indigenous institutions. Ongoing work in BC by the Indigenous Adult and Higher Learning Association is currently seeking to refine these estimates and we look forward to learning from this work.

Methodology

There are several well-established methodologies for undertaking empirical analysis of the comparability of public services and the funding required to achieve equity. Two main approaches to costing should be used in parallel to estimate the funding needs of the IIC's Regional Model: (i) a benchmarking approach; and (ii) a needs-based approach. A properly costed needs-based allocation will require additional data and collaborative discussions. This report provides some considerations for that collaborative work.

When the Ontario Government began providing core funding to the Ontario IIs in 2017-18, neither of these methods was undertaken. The initial allocation was determined by a rough estimate of actual operating costs, not need, with aggressive escalators to accommodate and facilitate anticipated growth. Practically speaking, because IIs were delivering services at a level funded well below non-Indigenous PSE institutions, this would mean that the operating grants provided by the Government of Ontario on their own, cannot achieve equity.

In Ontario, the provincial government provides a base amount which provides some level of stability to each II, a per student allocation, a northern supplement, and a commitment to accommodate ongoing growth. These operating grants cover a portion of the fixed costs that come with running a PSE institution. As the Government of Canada prepares to take up its responsibilities and provide core funding for the IIC's Regional Model, more



rigorous methodologies should be applied, to build upon and enhance existing funding arrangements.

An integral part of IIC Regional Model, regardless of the methodologies used to arrive at allocation levels and distributions, is that First Nations have the capacity to adjust the model over time as their priorities and needs change or as additional First Nations establish their own institutions. Further, any model must advance self-government, be agreed to by First Nations and IIs, and meet the Government of Canada's commitment to UNDRIP and the TRC's Calls to Action.

As a starting point for discussions, we suggest a model below, based on existing Ontario approaches to funding education and principles and approaches used in previously-negotiated fiscal transfer agreements between the Government of Canada and First Nations. One key element is that, at this stage, all learners will be counted equally, regardless of whether they are full-time, continuing education or taking skills upgrading that would not lead to a recognized degree. All of these learners have needs and the model of PSE provided by the IIs in Ontario provides a variety of supports and services to all learner types.

BENCHMARKING

The benchmarking approach compares IIs to other institutions in order to generate a range of realistic funding scenarios, using general categories of both expenditures and revenues. This approach has the advantage of building on readily-available costing.

The utility of this approach depends on how closely the comparators resemble the reality of Indigenous Institutes. Given that Ontario's Third Pillar is unique and works through a different operating model, the comparators are useful at highlighting considerations for dialogue rather than firm numbers.

We compared revenues and expenditures of Ontario IIs (IIC members) to a number of different post-secondary institutions in Canada. It is important to note that, given the important differences between the IIs and other post-secondary institutions, this benchmarking is illustrative only and does not purport to dictate a specific numeric outcome. The number of differences between institutions and IIs themselves makes comparisons strained.³⁰ This exercise should be used as a foundation for a conversation and a source of insights about the appropriate approach to developing a funding model.

Initial benchmarking against other Canadian PSE institutions shows that Ontario IIs, even with the core operating grant provided by the Government of Ontario, do not have access to equal levels of funding for their learners. However, as noted, non-Indigenous PSE institutions undertake student counts differently.

Table 1 shows total income from available annual financial reports in 2019-20. We also report student numbers and the size of the core operating grant provided by the Government of Ontario.

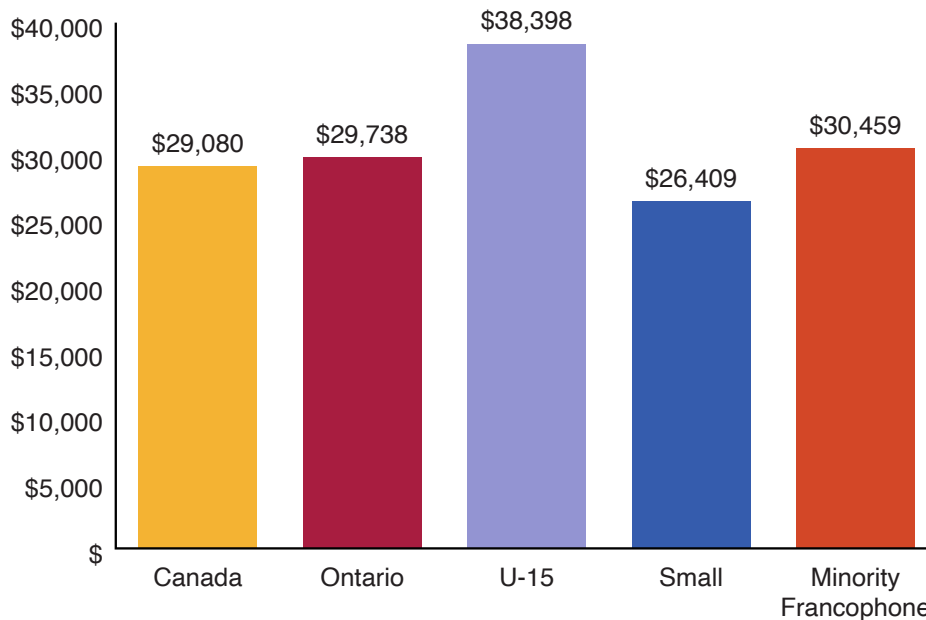


Table 1: Enrolment and Income at Ontario’s Indigenous Institutions, IIC Members (2019-20)

| Institution | Enrolment | ON Core Grant | Total Income |
|---|-----------|---------------|--------------|
| Kenjwin Teg | 263 | \$1,804,172 | \$9,059,312 |
| Oshki-Wenjack | 500 | \$2,427,724 | \$7,564,311 |
| Six Nations Polytechnic | 431 | \$3,704,533 | \$12,773,566 |
| Iohahi:io Akwesasne Education & Training Institute | 197 | \$1,074,981 | \$1,507,124 |
| Ogwehoweh Employment & Training | 930 | \$1,447,622 | \$3,097,668 |
| Anishnabek Educational Institute | 362 | \$2,055,268 | \$4,248,006 |
| Shingwauk Kinooamaage Gamig | 288 | \$1,206,143 | \$1,344,116 |
| TOTAL | 2971 | \$13,720,443 | \$39,594,103 |

The variation here across institutions in per-student funding is considerable, as outlined in Figure 1. And, as discussed earlier, how student numbers are counted varies to some extent between institutions. However, on average, the IIs have revenues of about \$13,326 per student.

Figure 1: Per-student revenue at Canadian universities, different categories





If we consider the \$13.7 million which the Government of Ontario contributes annually to Indigenous institutions as 'core funding', then the proportion of Indigenous Institutes' funding which can be considered as core would be about 35%.

Figure 1 presents average total per-student revenues for different categories of universities.³¹ Across the country as a whole, stand-alone universities have total revenues of \$29,080 per student. Small (under 3000 students) institutions³² are slightly lower than this at \$26,409 per student, while the largest universities, mainly concentrated among the members of the U-15 group of research-intensive universities,³³ are much higher, at \$38,398. These universities generate more research revenues as well as ancillary income from diverse sources (e.g. merchandise, donations, residence fees, etc.). Minority francophone universities (i.e. Laurentian, Moncton, Ste. Anne, Université Saint-Boniface and Ottawa)³⁴ have an average income of \$30,319, although 74% of these students attend University of Ottawa.

Community colleges, on the other hand, have lower student per student revenues, somewhere between \$16,000 and \$17,000 per student (see Figure 5), depending on the comparator. IIs have more comprehensive requirements than community colleges; however, at this time, they do not offer the full range of academic programs that would be available at a university. Over time, funding should permit First Nations to grow the Third Pillar and its model so that IIs do not have to rely on non-Indigenous institutions to deliver curriculum.

Depending on the comparator, and depending on which student numbers are most accurate for the IIs, we would conclude that IIs require at least \$5000 per student more in core funding to achieve equality. If we compare to the provincial or national average with small universities, the gap is above \$10,000 but we recognize

that delivering an Essential Life Skills course does have different costs than delivering curriculum to a full-time student in a degree-granting program. Although Indigenous students taking one course require supports, services and access to technology and infrastructure, curriculum delivery in this case is not as costly as it would be for a full-time student. At the same time, these students are likely to have higher needs and require a variety of supports and wrap-around services, and so student services may be just as costly or more so. At this time, we are taking the approach that "a student is a student," even though we recognize that governments will count learners and FTEs in narrower ways than we use in this report.

Fundamentally, these differences in who counts as a student underscore the different PSE model delivered by Indigenous institutions: they provide comprehensive services and programs in communities throughout a learner's life. They are community hubs, providing supports, services, education, essential skills and cultural and linguistic teaching to a wide range of community members. They act as a key piece of social, cultural and economic infrastructure in communities and their staff and leadership are embedded in communities. Investing in them and their capacity – just as governments have done for decades in non-Indigenous institutions – is an important step towards prosperity for Indigenous communities in Ontario.

If we compare to the Francophone universities, the gap is likely higher (although that is heavily influenced by University of Ottawa, which is a research university and part of the U-15, whose members tend to have much higher revenues). But as we will see below, if we compare IIs to community colleges, the gap exists but is likely below \$5000.

Figure 2: Distribution of Total Revenue by Source, selected institutional groupings, 2019-20

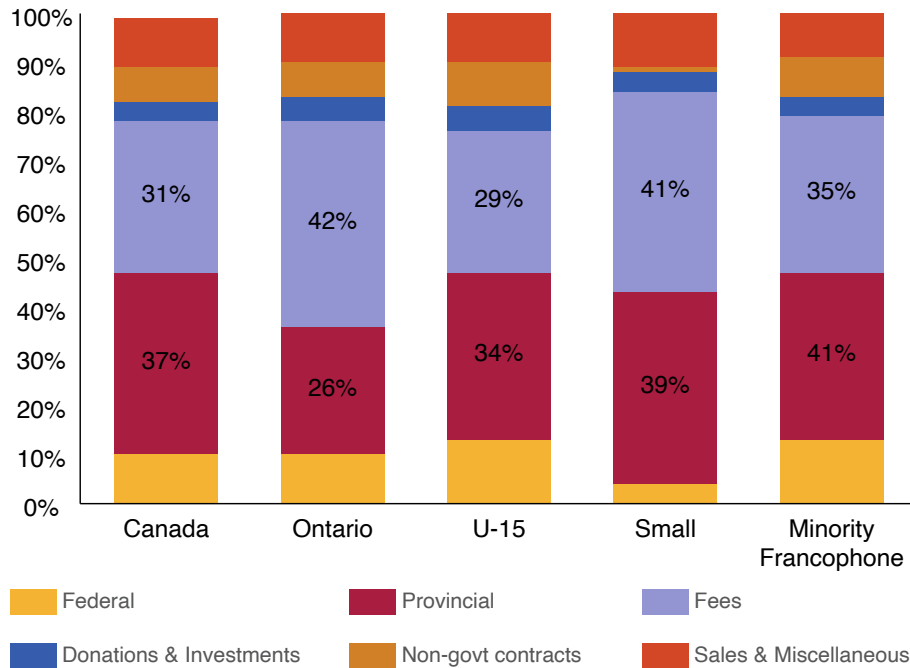


Figure 2 presents the sources of this revenue.³⁵ What can be understood as ‘core funding’ (i.e., regular, predictable funding from provincial governments) makes up less than 40% of university funding across Canada. The percentage varies by category, as high as 39% at the small universities but just 26% across Ontario. Student fees/tuition make up almost as large a component: 31% nationally and 42% in Ontario. Given that Ontario non-Indigenous institutions rely disproportionately on tuition, this means that the Government of Canada program that supports Indigenous students – the PSSSP – must continue to grow. **The PSSSP should be increased to provide support for all Indigenous students and should cover the real cost of their post-secondary education, which includes not only tuition but also housing and other expenses.**

The remaining funds are all competitively-generated donations, sales, non-government contracts, and money from the Government of Canada in the form of research contracts and grants (from the three granting councils) or competitive funding (e.g. Canada First Research

Excellence Fund). Nationally, these self-generated funds make up 32% of all income. Again, this varies a bit across comparison groups: at U-15 institutions it is 33% while at small universities it is just 20%, but everywhere it is a significant portion of institutional finances.

Two general observations arise from this comparison. First, **non-Indigenous universities generate a significant portion of their revenue from access to competitive processes.** While core funding is important, it remains crucial that IIs have access to a full range of programs to support research, digital infrastructure, capital projects and others. Second, we have excluded endowment income due to it being mostly reported as ‘negative’ last year due to a significant drop in value of markets in March 2020. However, **in most years, endowments represent a small additional source of income, at some institutions 2-4% of total income.**

Benchmarking against expenses also yields helpful insights, particularly when we examine operating expenses.³⁶

Figure 3: Distribution of Total Expenditures by Category, selected institutional groupings, 2019-20

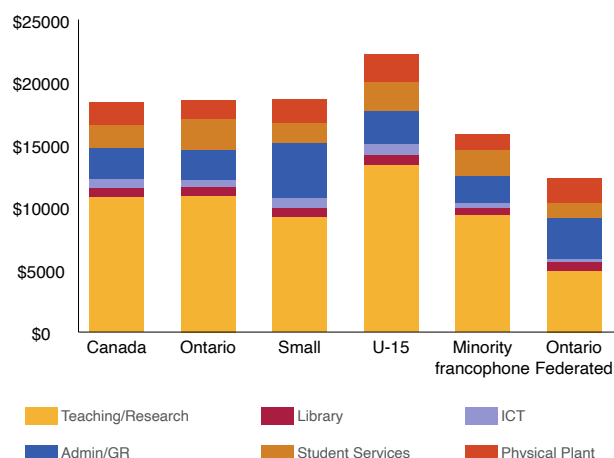


Figure 3 shows how different groups of Canadian universities divide their operations spending. Though the *amount* of operating spending at these different institutions differs somewhat, mostly in line with their per-student revenues, the *distribution* of spending is actually quite similar. Across all groupings of mostly large universities, roughly 60% goes to instruction³⁷, about 13% to administration³⁸, about 10% each to student services and physical plant³⁹, and 7-8% on ICT⁴⁰ and libraries combined. However, in the groupings of smaller institutions – the Ontario federated institutions and the group of stand-alone institutions with under 3000 students – the expenditures on instruction were much lower – 40-50%, while institutions on administration and physical plant were much higher.⁴¹

These distributions suggest that there are certain core corporate and administrative functions that must be performed, even in small institutions.

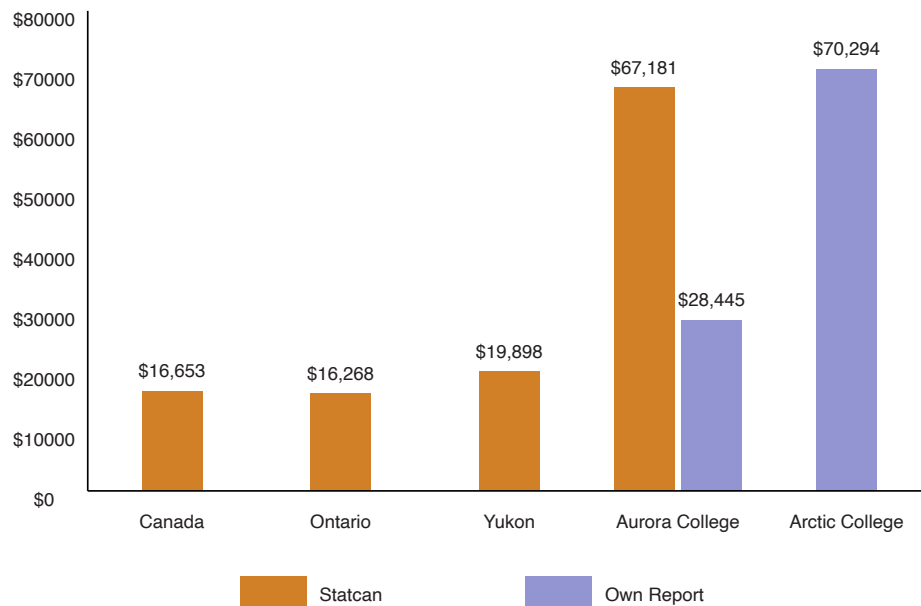
Even though they tend to be smaller, Indigenous Institutes need financial resources to provide core administrative functions. This reality is well-understood and consistently acknowledged by the Government of Canada in targeted fiscal transfers. For example, all provinces and territories regularly receive a common base amount in fiscal transfers to account for the fact that PEI needs to build out certain core administrative functions, just as Ontario needs to do. Regardless of relative size, per capita or per client allocations are layered on top of these usually small but recognized base amounts. A similar approach is used by the Government of Ontario in grants to schools: a recognition that every school has some core administrative functions that must be provided regardless of size. This reality will be built into our approach to assessing need, equity and comparable services.

The data in Figure 3 are shown in Table 2 below, and expressed in terms of dollars per student. Two of the important insights that emerge from this analysis are that **at smaller institutions, administration is about twice as much as at other institutions**, which we will accommodate in our methodology. Also notable in the Table is that **Student Services at non-Indigenous institutions tend to average around \$2000 per student**.

Table 2: Expenditures per Student by Category, selected institutional groupings, 2019-2020

| | Teaching/Research | Library | ICT | Admin | Student Services | Physical Plant |
|--------------------------|-------------------|---------|-------|----------|------------------|----------------|
| Canada | \$10,783 | \$696 | \$756 | \$ 2,425 | \$1,895 | \$1,804 |
| Ontario | \$10,880 | \$700 | \$559 | \$ 2,427 | \$2,406 | \$1,580 |
| Small | \$9,198 | \$684 | \$818 | \$ 4,424 | \$1,552 | \$1,979 |
| U-15s | \$13,295 | \$845 | \$877 | \$ 2,666 | \$2,251 | \$2,240 |
| Franco | \$9,320 | \$627 | \$368 | \$ 2,159 | \$2,046 | \$1,328 |
| Ontario federated | \$4,883 | \$654 | \$299 | \$ 3,291 | \$1,178 | \$1,963 |

Figure 4: Per-Student Revenue, 2018-19, Selected Groupings of Community Colleges



We can also benchmark against community colleges in Canada but, in general, enrolment and financial data for community colleges in Canada are challenging to use. Nonetheless, we do want to do some quick benchmarking against some colleges. We have chosen the three colleges in the territories: Yukon University (which largely provides college, not university courses), Aurora College (which serves NWT), and Arctic College in Nunavut, which is particularly relevant given that its enrolment is approximately 90% Inuit.

There are issues with the comparability of data across institutions.⁴² The numbers that Aurora College reports to Statistics Canada are different than the ones reported in its annual report (probably because the majority of its students are enrolled in short courses/continuing education, which are not in session at the time of Statistics Canada’s annual October enrolment snapshot). For that reason, Aurora’s per-student income

is reported both ways, using its own data and that which it reports to Statistics Canada. As can be seen, the two figures differ: using its own data, income per student is \$28,455, but using the Statistics Canada data, it is over \$67,000 (see Figure 4).

It is worth noting that how IIs count students and how official statistics count students differ in the Ontario II context as well, and this challenge seems to exist elsewhere for other institutions. As the Government of Canada moves to meet its commitments in the coming year, technical work will be required to define different types of learners and assess their different cost structures.

Arctic College reports costs of over \$70,000 per student. Yukon, on the other hand, has per-student costs which are much more in line with national norms.

Arctic and Aurora Colleges spend much more than other institutions because they have much lower student-to-staff ratios compared to other institutions. This is driven by the need for more staff to deliver curriculum, programming and services to students. It is also related to the number of delivery sites each maintains. Aurora College splits its enrolments between campuses in Inuvik, Fort Smith and Yellowknife and also maintains almost two dozen community learning centres across the rest of the territory. Arctic College also has three campuses (Iqaluit, Cambridge Bay and Rankin Inlet), a headquarters in a fourth city (Arviat), a research institute with branches in all four of these cities plus Igloolik, and 24 community learning centres. There are also elevated infrastructure costs associated with living and delivering programs in Canada's North.

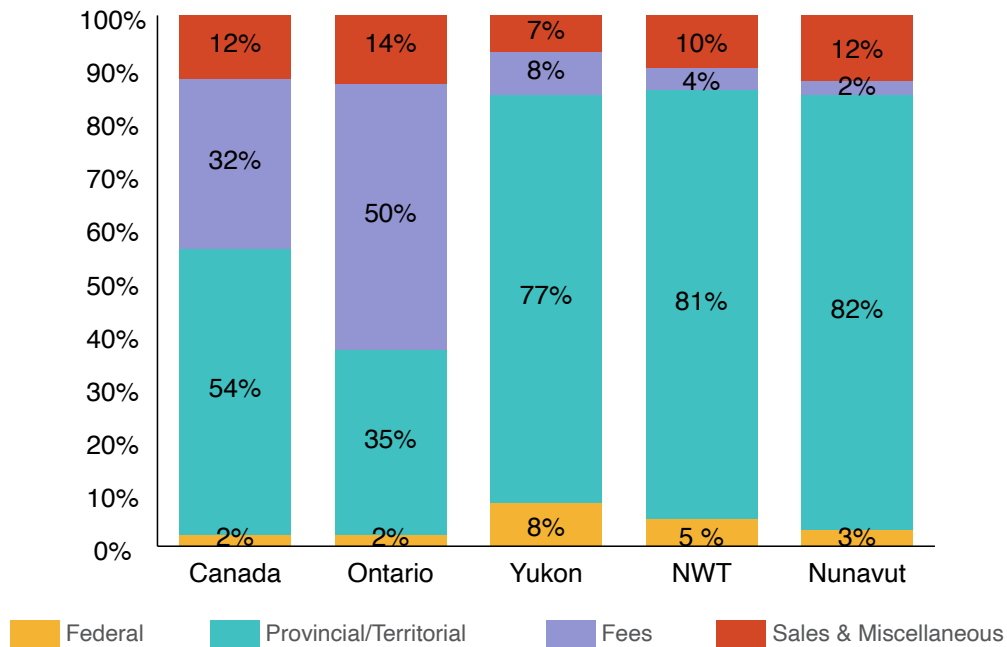
We do not want to make too much of the specific numbers, but instead draw insights from this comparison. In particular, northern and more remote institutions, with high percentage of Indigenous students, cost more. Distributed models of community

delivery to Indigenous populations, as well as remote and northern delivery for some IIs, will increase costs and require lower student-to-staff ratios.

Looking at the distribution of revenue sources for colleges (Figure 5), we want to highlight one key observation: **colleges generally have fewer sources of revenue than do universities.** Anywhere between 80 and 90% of revenues come from government and student fees. In the three northern colleges, over 80% of revenue comes from government alone (in these cases, the territorial government and, indirectly, the federal government through Territorial Formula Financing).

These are relevant comparisons for the IIs. At least at this stage of the IIs' journey, they are unlikely to be able to generate the kinds of ancillary and research revenues that non-Indigenous universities generate, and **they are likely to rely disproportionately on government grants, much like the three territorial colleges.**

Figure 5: Distribution of Income by Source, select groupings of community colleges, 2018-19



It is also relevant to consider the case of First Nations University of Canada, which is provided with core operating funds from the Government of Canada. Comparisons are somewhat challenging because FNUC is a federated university, which has very different cost and revenue structures compared to IIs or other colleges and universities. For example, many of the students FNUC teaches are actually enrolled at the University of Regina.

That said, we do know details of FNUC’s budget, so we can say something about their sources of income. With respect to income, in 2019-20, FNUC reported total income of \$23.8 million (see Figure 6). Roughly 40 percent of this came from the government of Canada, and another 16% came from the Government of Saskatchewan. The remainder was various kinds of self-generated revenue, including tuition fees. The funding relationship between ISC and FNUC more closely resembles the model proposed in this report and more fully complies with Canada’s Treaty obligations and commitment to devolution and self-government.

This benchmarking exercise shows that IIs operate with far lower revenues per student, smaller budgets and less government funding than universities or colleges of all kinds. The exercise also provides useful information with implications for developing an approach to estimate the appropriate core operating grants to fund the IIC Regional Model.

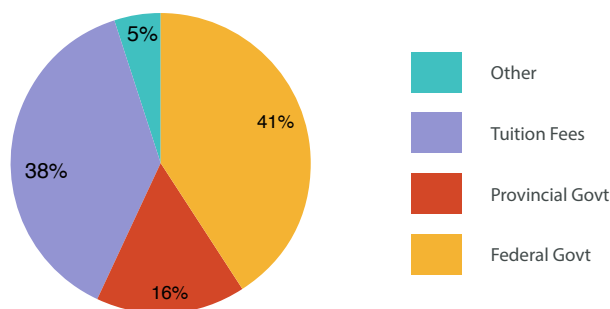
The data for IIs, as well as data for non-Indigenous institutions, is not always presented in similar formats and categories that allow for straightforward comparisons. The operating environments and revenue and cost structures are often very different: IIs deliver a wide range of community and social supports. We therefore treat these findings as illustrative only and apply caution before giving these data more significance than they merit. They will, however, inform the development of the more important needs-based process undertaken below.

Expenditure Needs Approach

One of the important objectives of the three-year PSE engagement process was to increase the capacity of the IIs to engage in a comprehensive discussion with the Government of Canada, with a view to generating appropriate allocations for IIs in Ontario.

During the engagement process, significant progress was made in Ontario to understand the existing and successful Indigenous PSE regional model and its costs. Below, we lay out a framework and considerations for developing a funding model. Although more empirical and conceptual work must be undertaken, Ontario’s model is well developed and successful. We believe that, given Ontario’s already-existing governance, funding and institutional infrastructure, this approach can be refined within a year, with funding agreements concluded within the 2022-23 fiscal year, and initial funding for institutions and capacity to begin immediately in 22-23. Ultimately, it will be up to First Nations, through negotiations and delivery of the model, to determine what represents adequate funding from the Government of Canada.

Figure 6: Income by Source, FNUC 2019-20





Rapid progress should be possible. The Government of Canada and First Nations should apply the concepts of “expenditure need” and “comparable levels of service” to build out estimates for a “standard institutional budget” and what it would cost for Indigenous Institutes to deliver a bundle of services and programs in an equitable manner. As discussed earlier, the notions of “expenditure need” to deliver “comparable services” are explicit to many Government of Canada programs, including the Equalization Program, Territorial Formula Financing (TFF), and the *Collaborative Self-Government Fiscal Policy*, discussed previously.

Also as discussed, similar principles and approaches are used in provincial granting in education. Ontario’s Grants for Students Needs, which funds the K-12 education system in the province, includes base funding for each school and a per student allocation, as well as 15 needs-based special purpose grants and adjustments. Some of the factors that the Ontario Government recognizes as creating greater need include remoteness, Indigenous populations, language instruction, special needs, mental health supports, and adjustments for low income/marginalized communities. All of these factors create larger grants for some schools in order to achieve equity.

The approach used to allocate funding for public (K-12) education in Ontario is a success story, delivers positive outcomes, and uses formulae to help ensure that students in schools with higher needs receive greater funding and have a better chance to succeed. There is a commitment to equity and needs-based allocations. Ontario’s approach to funding school boards and K-12 public education is not perfect and choices are sometimes politically contentious. However, the Government has built up a history of real efforts to achieve equity and recognize and estimate the needs of different kinds of schools with different kinds of student populations. These good faith efforts are made manifest through an evidence-based, principles-based and transparent process that determines and refines the funding formulae.

There is much to learn from this approach in the development of an appropriate funding methodology,

and this speaks to the value of having the Government of Ontario at the table in the development of this funding partnership. The Ontario Government has experience with funding formulae for education, both at the K-12 and PSE levels. By way of reminder, it should be noted that current operating grants provided by the Province to IIs are based on estimates of actual costs at the time they were developed, not on the goals of achieving equity, meeting needs or building capacity. These are legal obligations of the Government of Canada and will need to be goals of new federal operating funds.

In the case of the Ontario IIs, achieving equity requires more than simply providing funds comparable to what a non-Indigenous institution receives, although that is an important step. It requires accounting for needs as well as the unique costs associated with successfully delivering PSE by Indigenous institutions for Indigenous learners.

As outlined in the Government of Canada’s document that describes its approach to self-government discussions, the [Collaborative Self-Government Fiscal Policy](#):

- “Expenditure need is a key element in the design of systems for intergovernmental fiscal relations. Expenditure need is a measure of the estimated cost of performing a set of services, functions or activities to meet a set of responsibilities, based on comparative measures or standards. This can be viewed as representing a standard budget suitably modified for individual circumstances. The use of expenditure need costing methodologies does not dictate how an Indigenous Government is structured or chooses to fund its responsibilities.
- The main purpose in developing and using measures of expenditure need is to provide a systematic and objective set of measures of fiscal resources required to deliver comparable levels of services. From that basis, methodologies can then take into account the specific and different circumstances of IIs and allow the Government to agree to funding levels to deliver a set of

responsibilities in a defensible and equitable manner.”

The words of and rationale inherent in these commitments are important and we are confident that they will be taken seriously as the Government of Canada moves forward with realizing its commitments to Ontario First Nations on PSE. The Government of Canada’s policy is consistent with the principles of adequacy, flexibility and autonomy and aligns with the principles and evidence-based approach adopted in other transfers familiar to the Governments of Canada and Ontario.

This methodological approach can provide a starting point to assess the needs of the IIs in terms of operating funding through evidence-based tests of need, formally defined and publicly available estimates of costs, and then the provision of resources to ensure equitable treatment of all post-secondary learners.

During the three-year engagement process, IIs identified many of their needs, some of which are common to PSE institutions generally and others of which are unique to First Nations institutions. These include:

- improving wrap-around supports and trauma-informed services for students;
- providing services and instruction in Indigenous languages and developing resources in Indigenous languages;
- improving community delivery and transition services and supports;
- developing new and adapting existing programs so they are grounded in Indigenous ways of knowing; and establishing new delivery methods, including online and land-based curriculum;
- hiring full-time faculty who can plan to deliver curriculum over the medium-term;
- developing and delivering new microcredentials to respond to local labour market needs and innovating in response to the needs of communities;
- deferred capital maintenance and support for Indigenous spaces;

- building administrative capacity amongst staff across a range of expected functions (e.g. data management, partnership negotiations, student support, etc.) and undertaking professional recruitment and permanent hiring;
- building out data infrastructure and standards;
- preserving and documenting Indigenous languages and archiving; and
- new capital investments, including new investments in student housing, archiving, and Indigenous spaces.

The challenges have been documented by the IIs themselves. Although this report has outlined these issues in detail, and summarized them above, it is worth quoting from the IIC itself:

“Indigenous Institutes are unable to support core functions and capacities that are essential to function as effective post-secondary education providers. Institutes operate with absolutely minimal full-time staff. Many of the institutes, for example, do not have full-time registrars, information technology staff or financial aid advisors. As a result, the institutes are challenged to plan effectively, collect and analyze data, ensure technology currency and meet many of the normal expectations of publicly funded post-secondary institutions.

With the exception of a few positions, there are no full-time faculty employed to deliver the programs. This deficiency severely limits program development work, curriculum renewal and support for students which, in turn, negatively impacts the capacity of Indigenous Institutes to meet student and community needs.

Student access to programs is compromised as the mix of programs is limited by resource shortfalls and uncertainty about future funding levels. There is both a great need and an opportunity to expand the programs delivered by Indigenous Institutes, but institutes have not been able to achieve their potential program expansion plans.



Enrolment has not grown to the extent possible because several Indigenous Institutes have reached or exceeded capacity in their existing facilities.

Reinforcing the identity of Indigenous people throughout the learning process (such as through language and arts) has significant financial implications. Fully delivering on this responsibility and providing robust student services has been compromised.

The maintenance, upgrading and renewal of the physical facilities and equipment is seriously compromised because Indigenous Institutes do not have access to a secure funding source for capital projects.

Inordinate amounts of time, resources and energy are devoted to funding challenges, which takes time away from educational delivery needs and opportunities. Federal funding is not a secure or predictable source. While the federal government is reviewing its funding program, it is currently not designed as a long-term source of funding."⁴³

As we define a staged process for assessing need and the amounts needed to achieve equity, it is worth reflecting on these words from the IIs themselves.

Assessing Needs and Achieving Equity

As we undertake an initial costing exercise, it is important to note that there are many assumptions built into this exercise. For simplicity sake, we are using 3000 as the number of students to simplify calculations. This is a rough approximation and will grow from year-to-year and, as used by the Government of Ontario, a three-year weighted average could be employed. We are also undertaking costing for the seven members of the IIC only. Although we believe the costing and approach applied here could be used for other Indigenous Institutions in Ontario – or elsewhere – this report is based on the inputs from IIC members only and nothing in this report represents itself as speaking for any other institution.

We have seen that all institutions, regardless of size, have some core central administrative responsibilities that must be fulfilled. We would suggest that a small amount of base funding per institution, \$500,000 per year, be provided in addition to Ontario's core grant, resulting in an amount of \$3.5 million in 2022-23, growing over time.

Then, as a substantive starting point, IIs should receive, as part of a core operating grant from the Government of Canada, at least \$5000 per student beyond what the Province provides. This would begin to move towards equality, and represent a foundation on which to build. This can be understood as constituting both a base amount and a per student allocation, resulting in \$15 million in funding in the core operating grant. For simplicity sake, we will use \$15 million at this stage, while additional analysis may be conducted. This amount should be phased in over three years to allow IIs to absorb the new funding, build out new programming and services and undertake professional recruitment efforts of permanent staff.

Most importantly, this core operating grant, which combines a base amount and a per student amount, can be used to begin to build capacity and close gaps with non-Indigenous institutions, gaps which are rooted in colonial practices and systemic racism. Non-Indigenous PSE providers have, over generations, built the capacity to fulfill the required functions of post-secondary, public-facing institutions. **Some of the kinds of capacity building investments that First Nations Institutions may choose to pursue with these funds include:**

- Ongoing capacity building and support for administrative and executive functions. As documented, IIs have not achieved equity in this regard, which inhibits their capacity to perform a variety of expected management functions, like data collection, program evaluation, talent recruitment, sharing of best practices, and partnership negotiation.



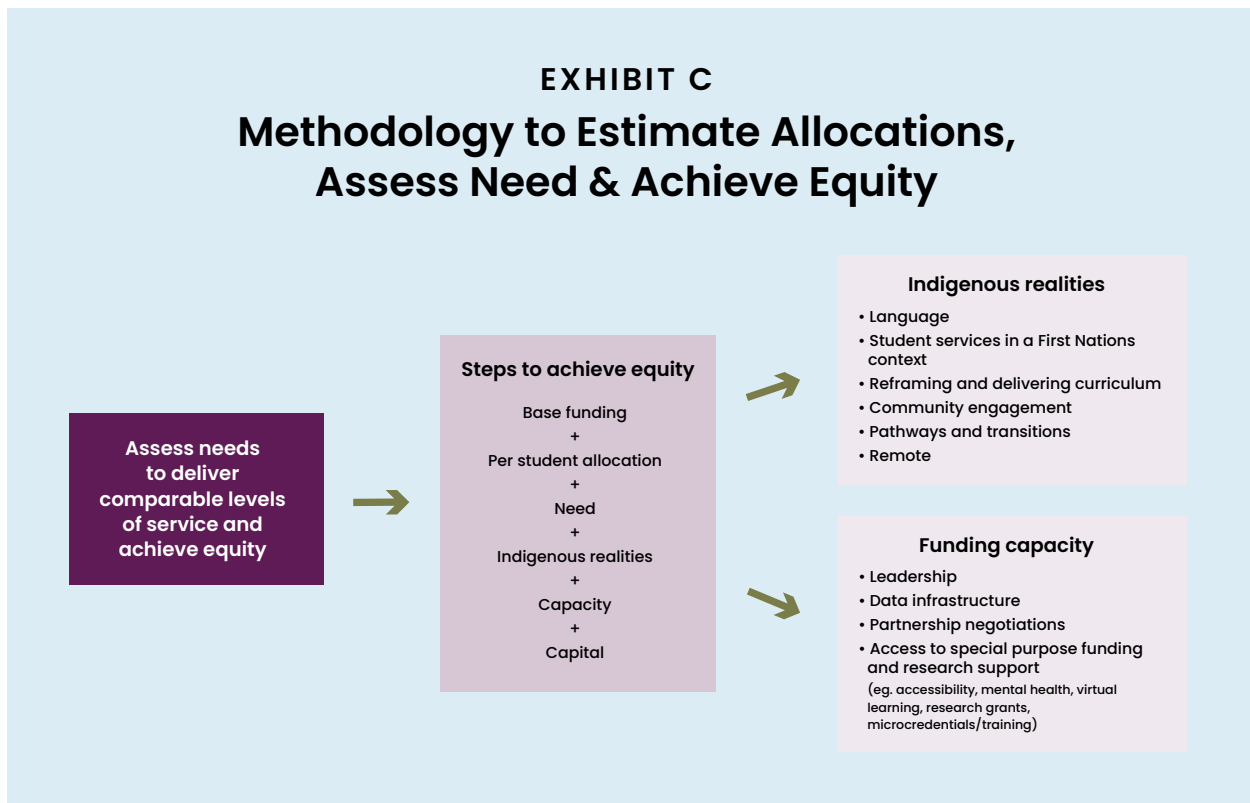
- Capacity is required to undertake curriculum and program innovation. This includes traditional innovation, such as adapting curriculum for Indigenous learners, and also new capacity to stay up-to-date on current educational practices, such as development of microcredential offerings that provide an agile response to labour market needs in communities.
- Curriculum innovation also includes new methods of delivery, including synchronous and asynchronous models that can supported hybrid and distributed learning for students in a variety of circumstances.
- With sufficient capacity, IIs can play a key role in delivering content to non-Indigenous communities and organizations (e.g. school boards, businesses, etc.) on issues related to reconciliation. Over time, with investments allocated by First Nations and IIs, these efforts will produce revenue-generating activities, just as non-Indigenous institutes generate ancillary revenues from professional and executive education offerings of various kinds.
- Currently, IIs often rely on their non-Indigenous partners to perform some administrative functions. As IIs continue to mature and build their own independent programs, relying on others to perform basic administrative functions will not be appropriate.
- At non-Indigenous institutions there are accepted formulae that notionally allocate faculty time to the provision of a variety of services. At many universities, it is understood that 20% of faculty's time will be allocated to providing core support to the institution and the discipline. This expectation that faculty should provide some service to the institution should also be included in estimates of the size of core operating grants.
- Likewise, non-Indigenous institutions provide administrative support for research and faculty who are submitting grant applications. Administrative support for faculty at non-Indigenous institutions, who compete with Indigenous researchers who do not have the same access to supports, is one manifestation of systemic racism.
- One of the immediate capacity-building investments is in data infrastructure, data collection, data standards, digital learning management systems and digital capacity. The way IIs collect and report data is not always perfectly comparable between each other and other PSE institutions. Some [good work](#) has already been done on how IIs can approach this challenge. The Government of Canada's first year investment in the IIC's Regional Model should include support for better data collection, architecture and infrastructure.
- Capacity is also required to support IIs in discussions with the Government of Canada on funding Ontario's regional model.
- Over the next year, funding should support the development of common data standards.
- Over the next three years, IIs should use funding to develop outcomes frameworks that they will use to report to their Nations.
- These funds can also be used to explore where partnerships and collaboration between IIs will be most useful and could deliver positive results and financial savings through economies of scale and sharing of best practices in future years.

These investments would likely move towards equity, but we reiterate the conclusion from earlier work (Medow Consulting work for the AFN; Juniper Consulting work prepared by the IAHLA): Indigenous institutes cannot meet operational requirements if they are funded at levels equal to non-Indigenous institutions. Achieving equity and meeting obligations will require additional funding. The elements of the IIC Regional Model that will require additional funding are outlined below, and depicted in Exhibit C.

Because so much of core operating grants to PSE institutions are allocated on per student basis (over

80% of the Ontario Government’s core operating grant to IIs are based on student counts), it will be particularly important to agree on common definitions and determine how learners are counted and compared. The support IIs provide through professional development, cultural education, essential skills seminars, continuing education courses, post-graduation transition supports and pathways to PSE for younger learners all have enormous and positive impacts on learners and communities. We consider a learner a learner, but it is possible that formulae will need to be developed that assign different costs to different kinds of learners.

Exhibit C





Student supports and services

It is important to understand the unique cost structures and operating model of IIs. The lifelong learning approach empowers communities and engages with the typical learners through their lives, not for 2-4 years of formal PSE. This changes the costing model and makes comparators and concepts like FTEs less relevant. The students walking through the doors at an II often have very different life circumstances and challenges than other students in Ontario.

The Indigenous Institutes Consortium has [done extensive work](#) on the model of student services at IIs, compared to non-Indigenous institutions. We will not attempt to summarize their comprehensive report based on interviews, surveys and systems mapping, but we would urge the Government of Canada to read the report and appreciate the II model of student support.

It is clear that ensuring student success at an II requires comprehensive services, delivered by more staff than at other institutions. These include cultural, academic, psychological and well-being supports, as well as personal supports. While some of these services would be delivered at a non-Indigenous institution as well, the reality is that demands for tutoring, spiritual support, trauma-informed services, mental health services, support to navigate administrative processes, food and financial security, transportation, childcare and IT support are all significantly higher at an II. Moreover, these supports will sometimes begin before the student arrives and continue after they have left the institution, consistent with the IIC Regional Model of Indigenous PSE.

Needs increased during COVID, as documented in the IIC's report: *IIC Student Success & E-Learning During COVID-19*. In particular, over 70% of students reported needing tutoring, over 70% needed personal or non-academic counselling, and over 60% reported accessibility challenges.

It is our rough estimate, based on our understanding of student services at non-Indigenous institutions, which

cost about \$2000 per year per student, that student services at IIs should be costed at twice the amount at another institution, or about \$4000 per student. This would result in additional \$6 million annually for student services.

These funds should be part of the Government of Canada's financial contribution to IIs, beginning in 2022-23 and phasing in over time as the IIs and the Government agreement to common standards for measuring student numbers.

Delivering curriculum in an Indigenous context

The central purpose of all PSE institutions is to deliver curriculum and teach students. Although IIs have a variety of additional missions beyond their core teaching one, delivering curriculum is crucial.

While IIs, like other PSE institutions, spend most of their resources teaching courses to learners, the delivery model for IIs, as documented earlier, is more cost-intensive.

Adapting curriculum, developing culturally-appropriate materials and teaching, integration of Indigenous knowledge, land-based and other modifications, and delivering content to higher need students all make curriculum delivery more costly for IIs.

The Ontario operating grant provides some core operating funds. But to approach equity, multipliers are required to accommodate Indigenous approaches to PSE. We would suggest that teaching will be 50% more costly in an Indigenous institution and funding formulae should accommodate that. Given that a rough estimate of costs in other institutions are about \$10,000 per student, we estimate that costs of instruction per student are \$5000 higher at IIs, resulting in additional \$15 million per year in the core operating grant. This amount should be phased in over three years as the IIs and the Government agree to common standards for measuring student numbers.



Community engagement and community programming

The Indigenous model of PSE includes community engagement, adult education, and lifelong learning. IIs can only be successful if they support learners throughout their journeys and provide a variety of different support programs in communities to students and their families.

Indigenous institutions also play a key role as community infrastructure and provide multiple social, economic and cultural benefits in communities. By acting as crucial social and economic infrastructure, IIs offer community services, cultural events and safe spaces to work and study.

Providing programming in communities is more expensive, requiring more complex delivery models and additional infrastructure. At this stage it is difficult to estimate these costs, although if proper impact analyses were undertaken that consider the role of anchor institutions, local employment and local procurement, we are confident that additional investments in community programming would pay for themselves in medium-term returns. We allocate an on-going estimated amount for community programming of \$6 million per year, phased in over three years.

Indigenous Languages Support

The Government of Canada has committed to the revitalization of Indigenous languages through the *Indigenous Languages Act*. The IIs are key actors in preserving, teaching and revitalizing Indigenous languages.

There are additional costs to providing instruction, delivering services, developing resources, and delivering community services and support in Indigenous languages. The Government of Canada understands this and has models to estimate costs both for

Indigenous languages and other comparators, like the costs associated with providing minority language education and meeting the obligations of the *Official Languages Act*.

IIs also play a key role in language documentation, recording and archive development.

As additional technical work is undertaken, we allocate \$2 million ongoing for language instruction and resource development, using the Ontario allocation in the GSN as a benchmark, and \$2 million ongoing for documentation and archival work.

Northern, rural and remote supplement

Additional work should be undertaken to estimate the costs of some IIs associated with delivery of programming in more remote communities, which will include expenses associated with travel for some students and staff.

These models should be based on existing work, including the multipliers used by the Government of Ontario in Grants for Student Needs, as well as formulae used by the Government of Canada with respect to child welfare and policing.

As additional technical work is undertaken, we allocate \$3 million on an on-going basis at this stage for Northern, rural and remote supplements.

Capital

There are real and immediate maintenance requirements for IIs. The independent Capital Assessment Project for Asset Condition Reporting System (ACRS) Assessments, prepared by K.L. Martin & Associates Corp, found an immediate need of \$1.8 million in capital maintenance needs. These should be made available immediately in 2022-23.

In addition to on-going maintenance costs, IIs have been developing capital plans, with goals related to new facilities of various kinds (e.g. new campuses, residences/student housing, libraries, archives, gyms, cultural centres, longhouses, lodges, training facilities, etc). Non-Indigenous institutions have had decades to build up significant infrastructure and real estate holdings. K.L. Martin & Associates Corp has worked with IIs to develop long term plans that identified these needs, with over \$150 million in projects being identified.⁴⁴ Beginning in 2023-24, \$20 million should be made available for new infrastructure for IIs, increasing to \$30 million ongoing as the IIs mature and build out their campuses and community infrastructure, more ambitiously fulfilling their role as community anchors and hubs. These infrastructure investments could include building or purchasing student housing. Capital plans and submissions can be developed in 2022-23.

Access to additional, non-core supports – not included in core operating grant

The Government of Canada delivers a variety of additional funding to PSE institutions in Canada through a variety of programs delivered by multiple ministries. Some of these competitive processes have not been easily accessible to IIs. For example, the three research granting councils acknowledge that some of their granting processes did not make Indigenous researchers likely recipients and they have committed to providing a more inclusive and respectful research environment for Indigenous participation.

There is also an acknowledgement that researchers at non-Indigenous institutions benefit from a variety of institutional administrative support when submitting grant applications, supports that are not equally available at IIs, creating systemic biases in awards.

The three granting councils and the Canada Research Coordination Committee have produced a new strategic plan to build capacity with Indigenous Research and have made some policy changes that should help support Indigenous researchers compete for research grants.⁴⁶

There are a variety of other special purpose funds that are available to institutions, some of which, like targeted mental health supports during COVID, have been made available or event targeted to Indigenous learners. Other funds, like those available through the Indigenous Skills Strategy or the *Indigenous Languages Act*, may be accessible for IIs.

The Government of Canada should proactively monitor these and other special purpose funds and ensure that authorities are sufficiently permissive that IIs can compete, and should share its conclusions with IIs. More importantly, the Government of Canada should include immediate funding to build out capacity of IIs to support researchers who wish to apply for competitive research grants.

Summary

Depending on the methodology adopted, we estimate an annual ongoing funding gap of about \$52 million for the seven member institutions in Ontario, which should be filled by the Government of Canada by transforming the PSPP into core operating grants for IIs.

IIC members, mandated by their Nations, should also receive their share of dedicated adult education funding, announced in Budget 2021. This funding should be delivered in a manner consistent with self-government and Treaty and inherent rights.

The Government of Canada should also create a dedicated fund for infrastructure projects. Our overall estimates are presented in Table 3.



Any funding delivered prior to final agreements being signed must be delivered in a way that respects First Nations' Treaty and inherent rights. This requires funding to be delivered in a way that is as unrestricted as possible. Flexible and permissive authorities must be clearly outlined during any Treasury Board process.

Any subsequent funding made available to other First Nations using different methodologies and estimates should also be made available to the IIs in Ontario that are members of the IIC. That is, Ontario First Nations should be able to opt in or out of new arrangements

negotiated subsequently. Moreover, nothing in this report should limit the ability of First Nations in Ontario or member IIs to negotiate appropriate funding arrangements to meet the needs of their learners, communities, Nations and institutions.

Funding should be phased in to allow Indigenous Institutions to undertake strategic planning, recruit permanent staff and faculty and absorb funding a way that allows for maximum delivery of positive impact on learners, communities and the institutions themselves.

Table 3: Summary of Recommended Government of Canada Core Operating Grant Costs

| Item | 2022-23 | 2023-24 | 2024-25 | Ongoing |
|---|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| Base amount | \$2M | \$2.5M | \$3M | \$3.5M |
| Base per student allocation, capacity building | \$5M | \$10M | \$15M | \$15M |
| Student services | \$2M | \$4M | \$6M | \$6M |
| Curriculum and Teaching | \$5M | \$10M | \$15M | \$15M |
| Community programming and support | \$2M | \$4M | \$6M | \$6M |
| Northern and remote supplements | \$1M | \$2M | \$3M | \$3M |
| Indigenous languages instruction and resource development; Indigenous language archival work | \$2M | \$3M | \$4M | \$4M |
| Technical tables | \$2M | \$2M | \$2M | |
| Sub-Total, operating grant | \$21M | \$37.5M | \$54M | \$52.5M |
| Capital maintenance and new infrastructure | \$2M | \$20M | \$30M | \$30M |
| TOTALS | \$23M | \$57.5M | \$84M | \$82.5M |

Note that Ontario's share of Adult Education funding, announced in Budget 2021-22, is not included in these amounts. Also not included in these numbers are expected increased allocations to support First Nations students through PSSSP.



Conclusion

The Path Forward

In coming months, more work should be undertaken to develop these costing frameworks with more precision. The IIC should lead that work on behalf of its' member institutions, with ISC and the Government of Ontario in a tripartite process. Part of this tripartite dialogue should include the development of common definitions and key data categories to ensure horizontal equity – i.e., fairness – across institutions. Funding will be needed to support this work.

The Government of Canada's historic approach to funding Indigenous post-secondary institutions in Ontario is not consistent with its commitments and obligations in respect of Indigenous control of Indigenous education. It does not provide funding at a level or in a form that discharges their legislative or Treaty obligations. In fact, the delivery of PSE funding as just another Grant and Contribution program, with onerous and restrictive conditions rooted in colonialism is a violation of Canada's commitments under UNDRIP to meaningful self-government and control over post-secondary education.

The Government of Canada has acknowledged this reality and thus launched a three-year engagement process with First Nations to map out a path forward. Indigenous Services Canada has confirmed that it seeks to fulfill its obligations and is approaching the engagement process as an opportunity for First Nations to develop and cost their own regional models and move toward a funding arrangement that is consistent with commitments to Indigenous control of post-secondary education.

This report has laid out an approach to identify appropriate funding for an IIC Regional Model- one in which the approach to education is fundamentally different than one would find at a non-Indigenous institution. The approach of the IIs is to focus is on lifelong learning and engages with students throughout their lives. Their approach to learning engages with

the academic, cultural, spiritual and mental health well-being of students. Improving community well-being is at the heart of the model and the IIs play an important role in economic development and deliver positive impacts over the medium- and long-term for learners, communities and First Nations. Graduates find work and stay connected in their communities and make important cultural, spiritual, social and economic contributions to their Nations.

The Ontario Indigenous PSE sector is in a unique position and at a different stage than other regions. Ontario already has a well-functioning model, established institutions mandated by their Nations, a transparent and successful legislative and regulatory framework, an accreditation body, and some core funding from the Government of Ontario. First Nations are seeking a federal partner to fulfill its commitments.

The Indigenous Institutes that are members of the Indigenous Institutes Consortium, through this report, have provided more detail on the model and have outlined a well-established principles-based approach to costing the model. Funding this model can serve as a demonstration of successful self-government in the area of PSE from which the Government of Canada and other regions can learn and adapt as they design their own models to meet their own priorities in coming years.

Although more empirical work needs to be done, it is our belief that this work can be undertaken in a matter of months not years. The Government of Canada has well-established principles for determining need and comparability; the Ontario Government has expertise in using complex funding formulae that strive for equity across diverse geographies and populations; and previous work, including this report, have documented the many criteria that should be used to determine allocations.

Applying and refining these methodologies, and investing time and resources into some data work, will allow the Government of Canada to fund the IIC



Regional Model in a manner that achieves equity. It can also serve as one model within Canada that can be studied and adapted. IIs in Ontario have an on-going commitment to continue to document and spread good practices and their learnings about successful models of delivering Indigenous PSE.

In conclusion, we note that governments have at other times in Canada's history made choices to build up sectors because of the expected medium-term impact. In Ontario, governments did this by investing in the capacity of the community college system in the 1960s and 70s. By doing so, governments gave time for the ecosystem to develop and institutions to mature. Those were not the kinds of investments in institutional capacity that governments have historically made in Indigenous communities. Now, however, governments know they must make these new long-term investments in Indigenous Institutes as well.

This funding should complement the operating grants provided by the Government of Ontario and layer on additional financial supports that would fund remaining core operational needs and realize the Government of Canada's commitments to the TRC's Calls to Action and UNDRIP.

The IIC Regional Model is working. It is a success story. Learners are succeeding, communities are benefiting, institutions are maturing, governance is transparent and the Government of Ontario is receiving positive outcomes for its contributions. It is now time for the Government of Canada to come to the table as well, provide core operating grants to the IIs beginning in 2022-23, and seize this opportunity to move forward together.



Appendices

Appendix A: Indigenous post-secondary institutions in Ontario recognized through the *Indigenous Institutes Act*

Anishinabek Educational Institute (AEI)

The Anishinabek Educational Institute (AEI), established in 1994 through a resolution at the Anishinabek Grand Council on the Rocky Bay First Nation by the Chiefs in Assembly. AEI provides programming that is responsive to the Anishinabek member communities, as well as common needs amongst other Indigenous communities in Ontario. AEI provides a comfortable, supportive learning environment that promotes the traditional values of sharing, caring and respect. AEI committed to assisting its students achieve their highest potential.

AEI offers full-time diploma, certificate and post graduate certificate programs. AEI programs are designed with students in mind and are delivered in a way that reduces the high stress levels which can develop when students are away from their family, community and workplace responsibilities. In addition, AEI's programs are delivered in such a way that students are able to retain their jobs while being trained. AEI delivers their academic programming with three methods across their campuses, 1) on-campus delivery (two campus locations Nipissing First Nation and Munsee-Delaware First Nation); 2) community-based delivery (delivery is in a specific Indigenous Community); and 3) combination delivery (both in an Indigenous community and on campus attendance). AEI provides programming that positions students for success in an ever-changing world.

Program curriculum is adapted to provide the student with both Western and Indigenous views and a culturally appropriate curriculum, where possible. The Anishinabek Educational Institute encourages registration applications from both First Nations and non-First Nations prospective students.

[Please click here for the most updated Audited Financial Statements.](#)

Iohahi:io Akwesasne Education & Training Institute

Established in 1989, Iohahi:io Akwesasne Education & Training Institute (IAETI) was founded to provide greater access to post-secondary education for the Akwesasne Mohawk people. In Mohawk, Iohahi:io means "the good road." IAETI functions "to provide the best possible education and training services to the members of Akwesasne. Courses are offered based on community need and in a setting that offers both a comfortable and culturally supportive learning environment, with which Akwesasro:non are familiar.

IAETI offers its students the tools to succeed in all stages of their educational journey. The Institute offers high school credits for completion of the OSSD diploma through the TR Leger School of Adult, Alternative and Continuing Education. The Literacy & Basic Skills Program is on site to assist students who lack higher level math and English courses needed by some post-secondary programs by offering Upgrading courses. The post-secondary programs Iohahi:io provides are college certificate and diploma programs through partnerships with Ontario colleges (for example, Early Childhood Education Diploma, Personal Support Worker Certificate). Some of the post-secondary programs are in the trades fields such as: Carpentry, Energy Systems Engineering Technician, HVAC, Masonry, and Welding.



Iohahi:io also offers pre-employment workshops for Akwesasro:non to assist them in gaining employment such as Bus Driver Training and Supply Teacher Training. Iohahi:io also provides online courses to the Akwesasne community, such as Mohawk Language, Chainsaw Maintenance and Small Engine Repair. Iohahi:io serves all members of Akwesasne interested in continuing on their education journey, and also serves Indigenous people from other communities, as well as non-Indigenous students interested in attending courses at Akwesasne.

Iohahi:io offers programs and courses of study which promote individual and collective economic and social well-being; address issues and needs from an Akwesasne Mohawk perspective; serves as a center of excellence for Indigenous community-based learning; and enables learners to gain knowledge and skills needed to be self-sufficient, educated and employable. The Institute's goal is to provide learning and training opportunities that increase student abilities, allow students to acquire new skills, and further enhance their potential to obtain employment.

Kenjgewin Teg

Established in 1994 to serve the Mnidoo Mnising communities of the Anishinabek people, Kenjgewin Teg offers a multitude of educational programs and services; a pathways approach enables Kenjgewin Teg learners the ability to explore their goals and choose the pathway that inspires them to find success.

At Kenjgewin Teg, learners can choose from obtaining secondary school credits, literacy and basic skills, academic upgrading, online/e-learning courses, college and/or university programs, or general interest/skills development opportunities – everyone, both Indigenous and non-Indigenous, are welcomed to gain an inclusive understanding of Indigenous worldviews within the Anishinabek learning environment at Kenjgewin Teg – inspired learning!

The institute offers variety of trades program such as welding, carpentry, electrical, and heavy equipment. The institute also offers diplomas in Business, Early Child Education, Indigenous Teacher Education Program, and Master of Social work, to name a few. The Institute offers learning secondary school credits, literacy and basic skills, academic upgrading, and online/e-learning courses delivered to community members and lifelong learners. Indigenous and non-Indigenous, are welcomed to gain an inclusive understanding of Indigenous worldviews within the Anishinabek learning environment at the Institute. The Institute's is driven by the philosophy that “emotional, spiritual, intellectual, and social learning is critical within the educational and learning experience for each and every student that comes through the doors of Kenjgewin Teg . . . (and) that this balanced learning philosophy will nurture the ‘whole person’ – and . . . will ultimately help make Kenjgewin Teg students realize their limitless potential.”

[Please click here for the most updated Audited Financial Statements and Annual Report.](#)

The Ogwehoweh Skills and Trades Training Centre (OSTTC)

The Ogwehoweh Skills and Trades Training Centre (OSTTC) was established in 2003 as a community owned Indigenous training and post-secondary institute that has been educating, training, and certifying The Six Nations of the Grand River Territory and surrounding communities since first opening its doors in 2003. OSTTC is wholly owned by the Grand River Employment and Training Inc. and located in the heart of the village of Ohsweken. OSTTC was established to address employer needs for skilled workers and the needs of individuals looking to increase employability and employment skills. The word Ogwehoweh is Cayuga for “People of Turtle Island”. And putting the needs of our people first, is our priority.



Specializing in trades training, education, and professional development, allows OSTTC to meet the needs in the labour market, offering employability and empowerment to individuals of its programming. The Centre provides courses in pre-trades/pre-technology, academic upgrading, pre-apprenticeship, youth programming, and small business management.

Always interested in meeting the needs of many employers and employees through good working employer relations, allows for custom training programs developed to meet the needs of open employment opportunities.

By analyzing labour market needs and staying on top of market trends to develop training programs and certifications, provides students with employment opportunities and a competitive edge. The programs offer state of the art classrooms, trade bays, computer labs, automotive, gas fitting, and construction work areas for students to acquire a practical hands-on learning experience. With a full complement of qualified instructors, and class sizes on average of 12-15 students per 1 instructor maximizes the learning experience. The institute currently houses several computer labs with certified training that is recognized by Microsoft and other industry standards. OSTTC also offers certified training in welding, automotive and construction trades that run on demand of the individuals needs.

The Institute provides courses in Pre-Trades/Pre-technology, Academic Upgrading, Pre-Apprenticeship, Youth Programming, and Small Business Management, amongst others. For example, the institute offers programs such as Introduction to Healthcare, Drivers Education, Introduction to Broadcasting, Welding, Maintenance Worker, and Landscaping.

[Please click here for the most updated Audited Financial Statements.](#)

Oshki Pimache-O-Win: The Wenjack Education Institute

Oshki-Pimache-O-Win was established in 1996 in Thunder Bay to advance the holistic educational needs of Nishnawbe Aski Nation and others. In 1996 the NAN Chiefs adopted Resolution 96/64 which gave a mandate to establish the Oshki-Pimache-O-Win (“Oshki Wenjack”) Education and Training Institute. The Oshki-Pimache-O-Win Education & Training Institute (“A New Beginning”) was federally incorporated in 2001 as an independent Aboriginal Institute. For twenty years, Oshki Wenjack has been providing holistic, culturally appropriate, accessible and flexible education and training programs to meet individual, community and organizational learning needs.

Oshki Wenjack promotes lifelong learning for all members of Nishnawbe Aski Nation and is committed to increasing access to, and success in, education and training to the NAN people and other learners. It delivers its programs primarily through partnerships with other post-secondary institutions. The institute’s mandate is “To enhance, organize and coordinate the delivery of post-secondary education and training programs and services which promote and support Nishnawbe Aski Nation culture, traditions, teachings, beliefs, language, values and life-styles.” Oshki-Pimache-O-Win provides diplomas and certificates. This combination of post-secondary lessons and workshops fulfills Oshki-Pimache-O-Win’s dedication to promote and support the traditions, beliefs, language, and values that make up the culture of Nishnawbe Aski Nation.

Oshki Wenjack innovative post-secondary programs deliver courses that best meet the needs of the Indigenous community, blending on-campus, online and distance learning, and in-community sessions. This approach gives NAN community members the opportunity to earn a post-secondary credential while remaining in their home community and at the same time maintain local employment opportunities.

[Please click here for the most updated Audited Financial Statements and Annual Report.](#)



Shingwauk Kinoomaage Gamig

Shingwauk Kinoomaage Gamig was established in 2008 was founded on the Anishinaabe vision of learning as established by Chief Shingwauk in Sault.Ste Marie, Ontario to serve the Anishinaabe people.

Chief Shingwauk (1773-1854) envisioned a “teaching wigwam” for his people, providing educational tools to support Anishinaabe students to thrive in modern society without compromising the values or integrity of our culture, knowledge, and traditions. Shingwauk Kinoomaage Gamig, in collaboration with Algoma University, offers the only Anishinaabemowin (Ojibwe language) and Anishinaabe Studies B.A. programs in Canada. Language immersion and land-based education courses are available throughout the year for full- or part-time study. These programs are part of the overall mission of Shingwauk Kinoomaage Gamig to restore the original spirit and intent of Chief Shingwauk’s vision.

The institute is founded on an Anishinaabe vision of learning, providing educational tools to support Anishinaabe students to thrive in modern society without compromising the values or integrity of our culture, knowledge, and traditions. Shingwauk Kinoomaage Gamig, in collaboration with Algoma University, offers the only Anishinaabemowin (Ojibwe language) and Anishinaabe Studies B.A. programs in Canada. Language immersion and land-based education courses are available throughout the year for full- or part-time study.

Six Nations Polytechnic

Six Nations Polytechnic was established in 1993 to offer first-hand Indigenous knowledge, education and skills training, through one of the most unique learning experiences in Canada primarily serving the Haudenosaunee Nations.

SNP is unique is its ability to offer first-hand Indigenous knowledge, education and skills training in a culturally supportive environment to everyone who is committed to learning. At SNP, students can earn degrees, diplomas and certificates in a range of areas including Indigenous languages, education, health, human services and trades through partnerships with regional colleges and universities and SNP accredited programs. SNP is internationally accredited with the World Indigenous Nations Higher Education Consortium and is the only place in Canada where one can attain a Bachelor of Arts in Ojwehoweh languages (Mohawk or Cayuga).

The institutes' philosophy is that “all elements of the natural world are connected physically and spiritually and are to interrelate to each other to benefit the whole. The responsibility falls on the people to peacefully maintain nature’s delicate balance to ensure that unborn generations can enjoy what we enjoy today. Six Nations Polytechnic accepts this responsibility and is devoted to facilitating the will and determination of our community to maintain an environmentally friendly world through education, training and research”.

[Please click here for the most updated Audited Financial Statements and Annual Report.](#)



Appendix B: Summary of Feedback from the IIC Indigenous PSE Engagement Process

Context

The Government of Canada has made commitments to First Nations to support the development of First Nations Regional Models of Indigenous post-secondary education. Indigenous Services Canada funded a three-year engagement process with First Nations, beginning in 2019-20, to discuss and research regional models. While the pandemic has presented significant challenges to the engagement process, the IIC has ultimately succeeded in collected meaningful input from its members, students, funding partners and other stakeholders within the sector. The themes of this engagement process are summarized here.

About the Engagement Process

This report provides a summary of what we heard during the IIC engagement process with the participants from the IIC, Indigenous institutions, members of other Indigenous organizations, funders, students, PSE sector partners and elders. The engagement process took place primarily through three modes:

- Two online engagement sessions (September 23, 2021 and October 25, 2021) to discuss the IIC Regional Model of Indigenous post-secondary education.
- Bilateral interviews with IIC member institutes conducted from August- October 2021.
- A comprehensive review of the existing knowledge base about the needs, priorities and costing of Indigenous PSE in Ontario.

The purpose of the interview and online engagement sessions was to facilitate a dialogue about participants' concerns, suggestions, input and ideas about what should be included in the IIC's proposed submissions regarding the IIC Regional Report for Indigenous PSE. The agenda of the engagement sessions covered (among other things) the following topics: Overview of the System and Potential Models, What Makes Indigenous Institutes Unique, Student Needs, Community Needs, Funding and Governance, and Partnership and Collaboration.

Overview of the System and Potential Models

The Government of Canada provides student support through the Post-Secondary Student Support Program (PSSSP); and some application-based program funding through the Post-Secondary Partnerships Program (PSPP). IIs also receive some purpose-based application-based funding (e.g. support for mental health). The system does not provide on-going, sustained, adequate, equitable funding to the institutes. The lack of adequate core grants to institutions is a significant problem with the current system. The resulting gap has become a real obstacle for IIs in terms of their growth in all aspects of service delivery, whether it is student service, program design and delivery, infrastructure, or community service. Participants pointed out that funding for the regional model should support the IIs lifelong learning model, centre Indigenous culture and language, and provide community-based programming. Federal engagement should acknowledge the potential of Indigenous PSE as an engine for economic growth within local communities and a means to respond to local labour market needs and the challenges faced in many communities, whereby those First Nations learners with good formal training often leave the community for urban centres.



What Makes Indigenous Institutions Unique?

We heard that Indigenous institutions take a holistic approach. This includes one's understanding of the self and one's relationship to community, other living things, the earth, and aspects of spirituality and spiritual health. Indigenous PSE emphasizes the preservation of Indigenous knowledge, language, and culture. IIs see a role for themselves in building the bridge between traditional ways of teaching and learning and the broader culture and society.

Student Needs

We heard from engagement process participants that the current funding model does not meet their students' needs. For example, one of the Directors for PSE at a member institute stated they are forced to provide many of the services that their students need without adequate capacity or resources and have no gym or library.

Many of the needs were raised by multiple participants. The most pressing included: student housing, infrastructure, facilities of all kinds that are expected at a PSE institution, and new equipment to support training and learning.

Participants identified several challenges that the students face on their journey to success in PSE; most of the students in the institutes come from communities facing challenges to meet the basic needs of community members, and where financial hardship disrupts and can limit their educational ambition. For many learners attending IIs, they still have a primary focus on providing the basic needs for their families. There are a variety of atypical learning trajectories for students. These require unique and personalized approaches to student supports and services than one would find in a non-Indigenous institution.

Community Needs

Indigenous institutions have been mandated by their Nations and they have a responsibility to serve their communities. We heard of the many activities that staff take to support community, beyond their job description and beyond the defined-needs of registered students. IIs provide services well beyond post-secondary education and support families, younger learners and older learners with a variety of social, emotional, and spiritual supports. They help younger members of their communities prepare for a path to PSE. Providing wrap-around and trauma-informed services to community members is core to IIs' mandate.

IIs already have a dramatic impact on their community, even with their limited capacity - and they play a key role as anchor institutions.

There are many examples of providing extended community learning supports. Within the teacher education programs, there are now teachers in the community teaching languages, supporting overall well-being, dignity, and psychological and spiritual health. Acquisition of language, in community by non-traditional PSE students, is part of an antidote to the cultural genocide of colonial policies, and can have a profound and disruptive impact on the cycles of inter-generational trauma. In addition, the positive learning atmosphere, reinforced by traditional teachings and ways of learning and being, has a positive impact on mental health, which often ripples well beyond the student and has a wider influence on family members and community.

Other community benefits are more direct. By providing programs and spaces to support students with their homework, the IIs assist families in the after-school period, often allowing other family members or caregivers to be engaged in other paid or community work, which serves as a positive influence to help high school students to succeed and encourages young people to stay in school.



Participants identified a need for any new funding model to allocate specific funds to community service so IIs can adequately meet the needs of community. For instance, one of the participants pointed out that the connection between transportation and program success. An II can have an excellent academic program but if the students cannot get to the school because their community lacks basic transportation infrastructure then the program will not succeed.

Funding and Governance

The lack of stable predictable core funding from the government of Canada for operations and capital makes long-term planning for strategic development and growth difficult for the institutions. This is, without question, the single largest challenge facing the Indigenous PSE sector in Ontario.

The Vice President from one of the IIs pointed out that they need strong central support in IT, administration, and infrastructure and the current funding model does not adequately meet these core operating needs. There is space and broad willingness to collaborate across the sector to address some of these challenges, but IIs lack funding and capacity to convene, negotiate partnerships and develop solutions. The relative lack of support for administrative capacity and basic executive functions is a legacy of colonial practices when compared to non-Indigenous PSE, who have easy institutional access to all of these resources.

We heard about challenges and delays with the release of some government funding, which for small institutions can dramatically impact their ability to function, deliver their programs or recruit and hire with some level of stability. Delays of the release of funds sometimes produce additional costs and penalties, which could have been avoided if funding was more predictable.

Several participants raised questions about their funding partners' understanding of what is required to ensure educational equity for learners.

Partnership and Collaboration

We heard that current approaches to partnership and collaboration within the PSE sector require IIs to come to the table as second-class participants. Currently, IIs often require the assistance of larger institutions to meet student needs, grant degrees and provide other programs or services. Unfortunately, the IIs' sophisticated understanding of the needs of their students and their pedagogical needs are not usually appropriately valued by their partners, undermining student success.

Because IIs often lack resources to meet some aspects of their students needs based on their current levels of funding and institutional capacity, they are left with little choice than to accept the "terms" of partnership being offered (and often imposed) by their sector partners, and rely on services that may be inadequate for the needs of Indigenous learners facing multiple barriers.

Participants also discussed how they can work to improve mutual recognition and transferability of credits, which is an issue at many non-Indigenous institutions as well.



Endnotes:

- 1 A region is defined as any territory which First Nations choose to implement First Nation control of First Nation education and negotiate First Nations post-secondary education models. This could include, but not be limited to, a territory defined as a single First Nation, Tribal Council, Treaty affiliation, language family, or an entire province.
- 2 A temporary workaround was identified by ISC to make up this shortfall, but funding remains precarious.
- 3 O Reg 239/18, s 2.
- 4 *Indigenous Institutes Act, 2017*, SO 2017, c 34, Sched 20 [I Act].
- 5 *Aboriginal Institutions of Higher Education: A Struggle for the Education of Aboriginal Students, Control of Indigenous Knowledge, and Recognition of Aboriginal Institutions* (Aboriginal Institutes Consortium, Canadian Race Relations Foundation, August 2005).
- 6 I Act, Preamble.
- 7 *Ibid*, ss 2–4.
- 8 *Ibid*, s 4(1).
- 9 *Ibid*, s 7.
- 10 O Reg 70/17, *Ontario Student Grants And Ontario Student Loans*, s 8(1)-6; O. Reg. 768/20: *Ontario Student Grants and Ontario Student Loans for Micro-Credentials*, s 8-4.
- 11 See e.g. Westbank First Nation Self-Government Agreement, s 187; Anishinabek Nation Education Agreement, Chapter 7, online: <www.rcaanc-cirnac.gc.ca/eng/1517588283074/1542741544614>.
- 12 See e.g. Th ch Land Claims and Self-Government Agreement, s 7.4.4(j).
- 13 See e.g. Sechelt Indian Band Self-Government Act, SC 1986, c 27, s 14(1)(g).
- 14 National Indian Brotherhood, *Indian Control of Indian Education* (Policy Paper presented to the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, 1972).
- 15 Assembly of First Nations, *Tradition and Education: Towards a Vision of Our Future, Volume 1* (1998); Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, *Report of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, Volume 3: Gathering Strength* (Ottawa: Minister of Supply and Services, 1996), Chapter 5: Education [RCAP]; Paulette C Tremblay, *First Nations Educational Jurisdiction* (Assembly of First Nations National Background Paper, April 2001); Assembly of First Nations, *First Nations Control of First Nations Education: It's our Vision, It's our Time* (2010); Assembly of First Nations, *Taking Action for First Nations Post-Secondary Education: Access, Opportunity, and Outcomes Discussion Paper* (First Nations Post-Secondary Education: Access, Opportunity, and Outcomes Panel, 2010).
- 16 *Our Children, Our Future, Our Vision: First Nations Jurisdiction over First Nations Education in Ontario* (Chiefs of Ontario, New Agenda Working Group, 2012) at 4 [*Our Children, Our Future, Our Vision*].
- 17 Assembly of First Nations, *A Declaration of First Nations Jurisdiction Over Education* (1988).



- 18 RCAP, Volume 3, Chapter 5 at 3.
- 19 *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*, GA Res 61/295 (Annex), UN GAOR, 61st Sess, Supp No 49, Vol III, UN Doc A/61/49 (2008) 15.
- 20 See e.g. *Principles Respecting the Government of Canada's Relationship with Indigenous Peoples* (Department of Justice Canada, 2018); "The Government of Canada's Approach to Implementation of the Inherent Right and the Negotiation of Aboriginal Self-Government" (last modified 15 September 2010), online: <www.rcaanc-cirnac.gc.ca/eng/1100100031843/1539869205136>.
- 21 *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act*, SC 2021, c 14.
- 22 *Indigenous Languages Act*, SC 2019, c 23.
- 23 See e.g. *First Nations Child and Family Caring Society of Canada et al. v Attorney General of Canada (for the Minister of Indian and Northern Affairs Canada)*, 2016 CHRT 2.
- 24 We are not aware of any s. 35 cases addressing a right to education; this has primarily been addressed through political channels and self-government negotiations, with a focus on elementary and secondary education (as described further below). However, in the early 2000s, the Day Star First Nation attempted to argue that government changes to the federal funding structure for First Nations post-secondary education breached its s. 35 Aboriginal and Treaty rights. The Saskatchewan Court of Queen's Bench found that the Federal Court had exclusive jurisdiction and dismissed the claim: see *Day Star First Nation v Canada (Attorney General)*, 2003 SKQB 261, which does not appear to have been re-commenced in the Federal Court.
- 25 See Sheila Carr-Stewart, "A Treaty Right to Education" (2001) 26:2 Can J Ed 125.
- 26 See e.g. *R v Marshall*, 2005 SCC 43 at paras 12, 25.
- 27 Carr-Stewart at 126.
- 28 *Our Children, Our Future, Our Vision* at 11.
- 29 Evaluation of the Post-Secondary Education Program, Indigenous Services Canada (2021)
- 30 As well, we have relied on the best available data that we could identify, some of which is self-reported. Although most data has been subject to independent third party verification, some has not
- 31 Data for Canadian universities are taken from the most recent year available from Statistics Canada. With respect to student enrolments, the reference year is 2018-19, while for finances it is 2019-20. Institutional student counts are normally fairly stable from year to year, so the difference in reference years is unlikely to matter much.
- 32 The "Small" group includes The Atlantic School of Theology, Algoma, Bishop's, Canadian Mennonite University, Concordia University Edmonton, Emily Carr University of Art and Design, Ecole Nationale de l'Administration Publique, The King's University, University of King's College, Mount Allison, Nova Scotia College of Art and Design University, Royal Roads University, Université Sainte-Anne, Saint Thomas University and Université Saint-Boniface



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- 33** The “U-15” includes Alberta, UBC, Calgary, Dalhousie, Laval, Manitoba, McMaster, McGill, Montreal, Ottawa, Queen’s, Saskatchewan, Toronto Waterloo, and Western
 - 34** The “Minority Francophone” group includes Ottawa, Moncton, Université Sainte-Anne and Université Saint-Boniface
 - 35** Endowment income is excluded from this calculation because it is negative at most institutions for 2019-20 due to the COVID-related market dip in March 2020.
 - 36** Statistics Canada collects data on expenditures by functional area, but only for operating budgets not total budgets. In general, operating budgets tend to make up about two-thirds of all expenditures and they exclude spending on things like capital, ancillary operations, special purpose and trust funds, and on sponsored research (though it does include academic salaries related to research). Since none of these categories are especially prominent as expenditure categories at Indigenous post-secondary institutions it seems that operating spending might be the best comparator. But it does highlight that at other institutions, there are a variety of sources of income – such as revenue from trust funds – that can be used to supplement operating expenses. IIs do not have access to these revenues to the same extent.
 - 37** The cost of teaching includes teaching both for-credit and not-for-credit; this category also includes what is called “non-sponsored research” which for the most part simply reflects the fact that salaries for researching faculty cannot be neatly divided into research and non-research components.
 - 38** Administration here is essentially central administration, including fundraising and government relations. It does not include any sums spent on administration at the faculty level, which are included under “teaching/research.”
 - 39** Physical plant here is current spending (i.e. maintenance) only; it does not include capital acquisitions.
 - 40** As with “administration,” ICT costs only capture costs spent centrally on telecommunications and computing; anything spent by faculties would appear under “teaching/research”.
 - 41** The higher physical plant costs for federated institutions is likely a function of what was noted under figure 5: namely, that some federated institutions to a large extent are dependent on residence halls for income: as a result, they also spend a lot on maintenance/upkeep of said properties.
 - 42** Arctic College has not reported to Statistics Canada in a number of years and so the data in figure 9 is based on data from its 2019-20 annual report.
 - 43** Funding Strategy: A Funding Strategy for Indigenous Institutes, Report 2. Indigenous Institutes Consortium, 2019, p. 5.
 - 44** K.L. Martin and Associates Corp. Capital Requirement, 2022-2046, Indigenous Institutes Consortium, 2021.



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I believe we can build the hopeful future in a way that is respectful of what has happened in the past. It means supporting the wellbeing of people by focusing on our youth, and in improved educational outcomes for all of our children. It means prioritizing the protection of our natural world, so that we can have a healthy climate and planet for generations to come.

”

Mary Simon, 2021



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